

EN

E-001355/2022

Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(16.6.2022)

Article 49 of the Treaty on the EU stipulates that any European country which respects the values referred to in its Article 2 and is committed to promoting them may apply to become a member of the Union. Furthermore, the December 2006 European Council¹ stated that the enlargement strategy based on consolidation, conditionality and communication, combined with EU's capacity to integrate new members, forms the basis for a renewed consensus on enlargement. In December 2021, the Council reiterated the EU's unequivocal support to the European perspective of the Western Balkans².

As regards Albania, the Commission assessed in October 2021³ that the country continues to fulfil the conditions to open accession negotiations. In particular, the country has made progress on judicial reform, including on the vetting of magistrates. Albania has also made progress in the fight against corruption and organised crime, notably by putting in place new specialised law enforcement bodies, and by actively participating in a number of international law enforcement operations. It is aligning its legal framework to fight against money laundering and terrorism financing with the EU acquis. It is implementing the action plan of the Financial Action Task Force, too. Of course, all these reform efforts need to continue, notably in developing the track record of law enforcement and implementing the new legal framework.

¹ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-16879-2006-INIT/en/pdf>

² 15033/21: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2021/12/14/council-conclusions-on-enlargement-and-stabilisation-and-association-process/>

³ COM (2021) 644 final and SWD (2021) 294 final.