

The stakes are high for Albania, warn leading MEPs

- Full implementation of the 5 June agreement on electoral reform needed before the start of accession negotiations
- Government and Opposition should maintain the cross-party consensus

In a joint statement, the three MEPs send a firm message: If Albania wants to start the accession negotiations, it has to fulfill its commitments.

In a joint statement, the Foreign Affairs Committee Chair [David McAllister](#) (EPP, DE), the standing Rapporteur for Albania [Isabel Santos](#) (S&D, PT) and the Chair of the Parliament's Delegation for Albania [Manolis Kefalogiannis](#) (EPP, EL) urged the Parliament of Albania to swiftly adopt the 5 June Agreement on Electoral Reform

“We expect that the parliamentary majority will adopt the necessary changes without undermining the consensus reached between the Government and the Opposition on 5 June. It is important to reach an agreement, maintaining the dialogue and consensus with all political parties, so that the first conference for membership negotiations can be convened, and therefore continue the European integration process.

Each country is free to set and improve its electoral system according to the national context and consensus. However, best international practices recommend that any changes to the electoral system should be conducted in a comprehensive and transparent manner starting at least one year before the next planned elections. We believe that Albania will respect these recommendations and will work further towards achieving sustainable results in the key reform areas.

The European Parliament is committed to support Albania on its European integration path and is ready to work with the Albanian Parliament in facilitating dialogue and building consensus on the crucial reforms in the areas of democracy, rule of law and accountability that are necessary for the country's EU future.”

Background

Albania submitted its membership application in 2009, and was granted candidate status in 2014. The Council [decided to open accession negotiations](#) with Albania and North Macedonia

on 25 March 2020, following the Commission's proposals on a [revised enlargement methodology](#).

In June 2020, the Commission presented draft negotiating frameworks that, once finalised, will be used to negotiate the accessions to the EU of the two Balkan countries. The EU Member States need to adopt these documents and the Council Presidency will present them at the start of the accession negotiations. The publication of the European Commission's 2020 enlargement reports has been postponed until autumn due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Further information

[European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs](#)
[European Parliament's Delegation to the EU-Albania Stabilisation and Association Parliamentary Committee \(SAPC\)](#)

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