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Policy Paper

**INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES
AS AN INFLUENCING FACTOR
IN THE PROCESS OF ALIGNING
ALBANIAN LEGISLATION
WITH THE EU ACQUIS**

Institutional capacities as an influencing factor in the process of aligning Albanian legislation with the EU *acquis*

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Introduction

Albania signed in 2006 the Stabilisation and Association Agreement which entered into force in 2009. Since 2014 Albania has held the status of candidate country for accession to the European Union.

Article 70 of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) defines a specific legal commitment of the Republic of Albania: the approximation of the domestic legislation with that of the European Union. Approximation and implementation of the legislation will boost economic development and trade with the European Union, improve the well-being and living conditions of Albanian citizens, ultimately paving the way for the accession of the Republic of Albania in the European Union.

The candidate status and the expressed political will to join European Union, are a second obligation to approximate the national legislation with the EU *acquis*. In fact, this obligation, although it lacks the element of the legal obligation, goes beyond its scope. The accession process will require the transposition of the entire EU *acquis* in the Albanian legislation.

The pre-accession approximation requires not only technical compliance of the Albanian legislation with EU *acquis* but also proper implementation of the national rules.


The European Commission initiated in October 2018, explanatory meetings within the screening process as the first step of accession negotiations. Explanatory meetings for all negotiating chapters were completed within 2019.¹ The explanatory meetings were a major step forward that gave a new impetus to fulfil the conditions for the opening of accession negotiations and the process of approximation of legislation. Following the explanatory meetings, the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs initiated preparations for the bilateral meetings.

In March 2020, the European Council decided to open the accession negotiations with the Republic of Albania. However, the date of the first Intergovernmental Conference for Albania was linked with the opening of negotiations with the North Macedonia, which was blocked by the Bulgarian veto. Therefore, the Council adopted the negotiating framework for Albania and decided on the date of first Intergovernmental Conference only on 18 July 2022.

As an historical event for Albania, on 19 July 2022, the EU held the first Intergovernmental Conference with Albania in Brussels.

In September 2022, the screening process recommenced for Albania and North Macedonia. The Commission taking into account that the explanatory meetings were held more than two years ago, decided to hold updating explanatory meetings for almost all the negotiating chapters. The explanatory meetings were followed by the bilateral meetings.

1 NPEI 2021-2023



In November and December 2022, there were held in Brussels the first bilateral meetings dedicated to Chapter 23 “Judiciary and Fundamental Rights” and Chapter 24 “Justice, Freedom and Security”. Until now, all the bilateral meetings for the first cluster “Fundamentals” and the second cluster “Internal market” are completed. It is planned that all the bilateral meetings will be completed by November 2023.

Bilateral meetings are of extreme importance, as they will pave the way for the Commission to draft screening reports and present it to the Council. The Council will, therefore, decide on the start of negotiations in each of the clusters, based upon the recommendations of the Commission.

Overview of Albania's preparations for the European Union membership process

Approximation is the one-sided process in which a third state implements (which might be considered quite a technical activity) an external legal system (which it has had no opportunity to participate in the creation of) into its domestic legal system.² The highly important issues of the scope, timetable and methods of approximation activities remain the exclusive competence of the Albanian authorities. This process is a very complex and time-consuming one. It affects different fields of the law and refers to both material and procedural rules.

The process of approximation of legislation is conceived as a gradual process, in function of the country's economic development, institutional modernisation and the necessity of moving to the next stages of the European integration process.³

Primarily, the countries by choosing the most appropriate national mechanism to reflect Union's obligations, need to change their national laws, rules, and procedures in order to fully incorporate the requirements of the relevant EU law. This is a process known as transposition, where countries have considerable discretion in choosing the appropriate national legal act to transpose the EU legislation. Afterwards, the country needs to have the institutions and budgets necessary to carry out the laws and regulations, also known as the implementation or practical application of the EU law. In order to fully and properly comply with the EU legislation, the country needs to provide the necessary controls and penalties to ensure the enforcement of the rules.

In the broadest sense, legal approximation means the transposition of provisions of EU law into the national legislation, implementation of the provisions of such national legislation by the national competent public authorities and their enforcement by the courts and law enforcement agencies.⁴

The speed and timetable of the approximation activities depends on a variety of internal and external factors. It is of course, strictly connected with the administrative and financial capabilities of the state, as implementation of the new legislation may, in many cases, require institutional changes in state and local administration. Consequently, it seems obvious that the final timetable and the order of the approximation process must be the result of a deep interdisciplinary analysis. The above factors prove the complexity of the process under consideration. The whole approximation effort must have its basis in a regularly updated timetable and definitely cannot be enforced on an *ad hoc* basis.

2 Lazowski, Adam, Law Approximation Manual, 2016.

3 Lazowski, Adams, Adaptation of the Polish legal system to European Union law: Selected aspects

4 <https://pubhtml5.com/qzcc/wboq/basic/>

Approximation methods

The European Union uses three types of law approximation in order to harmonise the legislation of its Member States:⁵

1. Unification, where the national acts of Member States are replaced by the EU legislation in a certain field where the EU has the full competence. Such is the case of regulations which have direct effect.
2. Approximation, where the national legislation should be adapted to comply with the objectives of the EU legislation. In this case, the EU Member States can decide on how they will technically regulate the matter. The approximation is carried out through directives. The practice of the EC Court of Justice requires that the directives are transposed into legally binding documents (normative acts). Alternative acts like labour contracts and agreements of the state administration with the trade union are not admissible.⁶
3. Coordination, where the EU legal act requires from the Member States to coordinate their activities and to exchange information or provide information to the Commission.

In Albania, as a candidate country, the common method is the legislative approximation. The legislative method, providing that it is organised in a reasonable way, is already well developed and provides the most certain approximation tool. Based on a written official programme, it creates a large amount of legal certainty for both the state administration involved in the activities and the subjects applying the law. Legislative approximation is achieved by the amendment or repeal of the legislation currently in force or, when required, by the adoption of completely new acts of legislation. As previously noted, in many cases it causes the evolution of undeveloped fields of law and sometimes may even lead to creation of new, previously unknown fields of law. It shall be emphasised that the legislative method does not only cover the legislative process of the adoption of the legal acts (which may be called the 'formal' aspect of approximation). It also extends to their proper implementation and enforcement.

In practice, approximation affects all three elements of Montesquieu's concept of the division of powers: the legislative, executive and judiciary. Since the most effective approximation method is the legislative one, the major role is played by the Assembly. However, the dual role and impact of the executive shall be also taken into account. On one hand, the executive determines the programme of approximation activities, works and prepares legislative proposals. On the other hand, it is the main body responsible for the enforcement of the new legislation. One should also mention the judiciary. Its role is quite limited in the pre-accession phase, but we should not forget about the pro-European interpretation of laws, which can also be considered as an approximation method per se. Judges take into consideration the main principles of

5 http://mei-ks.net/repository/docs/practical_guidelines_for_legal_aproximation.pdf

6 <https://mdtfjss.org.rs/archive//file/resources/guidance%20to%20the%20Acquis%20Communautaire.pdf>

European law which have been used by the European Court of Justice in the interpretation of Treaties. The jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights is playing an important role in the “Europeanisation” of the Albanian legal system.

The approximation has several steps and includes several processes. In order to work properly, all the steps and processes should be carried out under optimal conditions.

Legal and methodological framework for the approximation of legislations

The Decision of Council of Ministers No. 584 of 28.8.2003 “On the approval of the regulation of the Council of Ministers”, as amended, regulates several important moments of the approximation process. The Decision stipulates that the Minister responsible for European Integration is responsible for the assessment of the legal approximation of a draft Decision or draft Law with the EU *acquis*. If the act aims to approximate the EU *acquis*, it should be accompanied by the tables of concordance in Albanian and in English and the assessment of the Ministry responsible for European Integration. Without the assessment of the Ministry, the draft legal act cannot be submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval.

Further, the Rules of Procedure of the Albanian Parliament, stipulate that in the case of the draft laws that aim to approximate the EU *acquis*, the Standing Committee on European Integration should provide its opinion. The Parliament has as well, its own approximation unit that checks again the tables of concordance before the act is examined by the Committee.

In this respect, from a legal point of view, the process is well-regulated and rigorously implemented.

On the other side, there is no methodological tool to guide the approximation of the EU *acquis*. A manual of approximation was prepared in 2016 and later improved by one or two EU supported projects, but these versions were never approved as official guidelines and no trainings were provided for the staff of the Ministry of European Integration, nor for the staff of line ministries.

In 2021, the manual of approximation was included as a separate chapter in the Law Drafting Manual prepared by the Ministry of Justice. However, trainings for the legal and/or technical departments of line ministries on this particular topic were not provided.

It should be noted, that Kosovo which has just applied for accession to the European Union approved officially its approximation manual in 2014. The same can be said for Ukraine, which has only an Association Agreement with the EU and received the status of candidate country only in June 2022.

The challenges faced by the process of aligning the Albanian legislation with the EU acquis

The institutional framework for the approximation of legislation

Concerning the institutional framework for the assessment of the approximation, until 2012 the assessment of approximation was carried out by the experts working at the Ministry of European Integration, who were responsible to coordinate EU-Albania meetings under the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, to prepare reports, etc. Only in 2013, at the Ministry of European Integration was set up a dedicated unit tasked to check the tables of concordance and to provide legal opinions on the draft legal acts aiming to approximate the EU acquis. This was an effort to streamline the approximation process and to provide a degree of specialisation.

This unit was transferred as such to the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs in 2017. However, in 2019, the units were merged with the other units responsible for the EU integration process, reversing to the pre-2013 situation.

Besides, all the experts of the unit which was set up in 2013 had left the unit by 2017. The high turnover of the staff undermined the specialisation which was one of the goals to set up this unit.

Translation of acquis

In 2007, the Council of Ministers approved a decision that stipulated that the translation of *acquis* was going to be centralised and carried out by the Ministry of European Integration. This was pretty much in line with the experiences of the other countries in the region. The translation of *acquis* is a prerequisite for the approximation process. It is at the same, a condition for the accession country to create its national version of *acquis*. After the setup of the Directorate, it was prepared the implementing legislation and the process of translation started. The process of translation was coordinated with Kosovo, a cooperation that continues even today. At the moment it was established, the Directorate had eight employees tasked to coordinate the translation and to check its quality. Nowadays, it is reduced to a single unit with one head of unit and two experts. This of course, is not very promising for the process and the quality of its end-product.

Allocation of acquis

The first step in the process is the allocation of *acquis*. Probably, the notion doesn't make a lot of sense, but that's how experts used to call it years ago. The allocation of *acquis* in itself means to screen the entire EU *acquis*, according to chapters. The screening included several moments.

First, it was decided which ministry or institutions was responsible to approximate a particular piece of the EU legislation. Further, the responsible ministry decided if the act needed to be approximated in the Albanian legislation or not (not all the acts need to be approximated). The *acquis* contains many decisions that are directed to particular Member States or resolve issues that are not relevant for Albania. A second category that doesn't need approximation are international agreements, such as trade agreements, signed by the European Union with third countries. These will become applicable to Albania at the moment of accession.

Such a process in practice has two direct benefits. First, it put and clears the responsibility for the approximation of a legal act on the distinct ministry or institution. Second, it induces the ministries to know the *acquis* and its latest developments.

Taking into account that the EU *acquis* is a living entity, it is clear that this process should be repeated two, three, even four times a year.

At the Ministry of European Integration, this process initiated in late 2011 and almost finished in a year. Clearly, it was a major challenge due to the enormous number of acts in chapters like Chapter 1 "Free movement of goods" or Chapter 12 "Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy". The process was supported by a dedicated electronic system built in cooperation with AKSHI and financed by the European Union.

Unfortunately, the process was abandoned in 2013 and not repeated. The system was never used again. This proved to be a major hitch during the preparations for the screening process.

Drafting and monitoring of the National Plan for European Integration

The National Plan for European Integration, known previously as the National Plan for the Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, is the planning instrument for the approximation of the legislation. The current legal framework on EU integration, implies that the minister responsible for EU integration should coordinate the preparation and monitoring of the National Plan for European Integration.

On the positive side, currently the National Plan is updated regularly each year. Its approval takes place normally in late January or early February compared to previous periods when the Plan was adopted even in June. The methodology for its preparation is improved each year based on the comments received from SIGMA or EU supported projects. Further, the monitoring of the Plan has improved and the implementation rate is relatively high. In 2022, the Plan was implemented at 76% which is considerably higher than the implementation rates of 2017 and 2018, when the Plan was implemented under 30%. This shows that the planning from the line ministries is much more realistic taking into account the legal drafting, administrative and

financial capacities. In addition, almost 100% of legal acts that are not approved during the current year are postponed to be adopted during the upcoming year.

On the down side, the electronic system built to prepare and monitor the National Plan was used only once for the National Plan prepared in 2012. Currently, the National Plan is prepared and monitored in Excel sheets. This makes the entire process cumbersome and doesn't allow the storing of documents.

Assessing tools of harmonization

The Tables of Concordance (ToC), Legal Gap Analysis (LGA) and Institutional and Administrative Capacity Gap Assessment (IAGA) are by-products of the approximation process. They are produced by the ministry in charge to draft and propose the new legal act. The structure responsible for assessing the approximation bases its analysis on these tables. After this, the tables should ideally be stored in some sort of IT tool. Even better, if the IT tool allows the generation of tables including amendments made to the EU or the national legislation, including other data, such as entry into force of particular provisions, etc. Such a system has never been built in Albania. Therefore, the preparation of the legal gap analyses proved to be a very difficult task in the preparation for the bilateral meetings held in 2022. In many cases the analysis of the approximation had to be re-done in order to provide the correct information to the EC services.

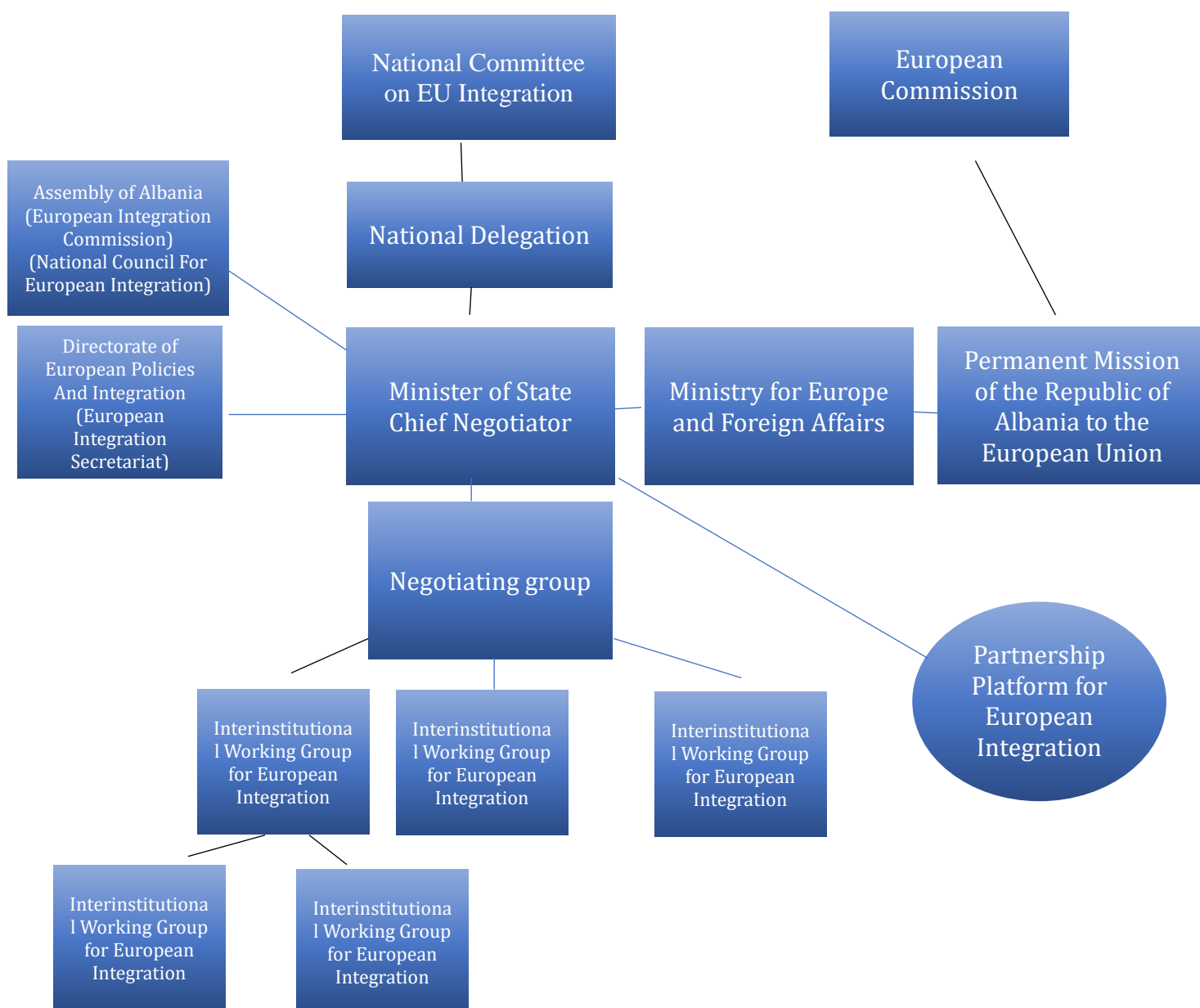
Based on a thorough analysis of ToCs, LGAs and IAGAs that are already prepared by the public administration in many chapters, it is noticed that in some ToCs many columns are empty, in many others the EU pieces of legislation are not translated in Albanian and vice versa. Many of the ToCs are not dated, which represents a problem in determining whether they are up-to-date or not. There are many cases in which the level of compliance is not specifically and clearly determined for each EU law article. The majority of the LGAs are not updated with Albanian legislation and in many IAGAs the financial information is missing.

Current situation of Albanian institutional capacities in the European integration process

As regards to the changes in the overall structuring of the institutional structure responsible for the EU integration, the Ministry of European Integration existed as an independent ministry for over 12 years. In 2017 it was merged with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and from 2022 it functions as part of the Office of Prime Minister. The last two changes were not properly explained and prepared before they were executed.

Based on the by-laws approved for the reorganization of the negotiation structures, it is evidenced that several units and responsible structures for European integration issues, have dual duties and responsibilities. This fact makes their operation more difficult and also affects the process of transparency and accountability to third parties or groups of interest.

Negotiating Structures of Albania



Composition and functions:

National Committee for European Integration:

- the highest body that ensures the supervision of the negotiation structure and the coordination of the negotiating position for each chapter of the *acquis*, before approval by the Council of Ministers;
- evaluates and coordinates the negotiating position for each chapter of the *acquis*, presented by the Chief Negotiator;
- led by the Prime Minister and consists of the head of the State Delegation (the minister responsible for European integration issues), the Chief Negotiator, the Minister responsible for justice, the Minister responsible for finance, the Minister responsible for internal affairs, the Secretary General of the Council of Ministers.

National delegation:

- responsible body for the development of political dialogue and negotiations with the institutions of the European Union, including the opening and closing of negotiations for each chapter of the *acquis* of EU;
- represents the Republic of Albania at the Intergovernmental Conference Albania - European Union, within the framework of accession negotiations to the European Union;
- consists of the minister responsible for foreign affairs (in the role of chairman), the Chief Negotiator (in the role of deputy chairman), the head of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the European Union, representatives of ministries and other central institutions, depending on the area of state responsibility that is the subject of discussion with the institutions of the European Union.

Minister of State and Chief Negotiator

- directs the negotiation process for each chapter of the *acquis* with the EU institutions at the technical level, according to the approved negotiating positions;
- directs the process of assessing the impact of the SAA and the alignment of the *acquis* on public finances and the domestic legal system, as well as directs the assessment of priorities and the monitoring of IPA funds and other projects financed by foreign donors;
- coordinates the work of the European Integration Secretariat and the Inter-institutional Working Groups.

Negotiating group:

- responsible body for developing the technical process of accession negotiations with the institutions of the European Union for each chapter of the *acquis*;
- consists of the Chief Negotiator and not less than 7 (seven) members;
- discusses and evaluates draft proposals for negotiating positions drawn up by inter-institutional working groups for each chapter of the *acquis* and then sends them for review to the State Committee for European Integration;
- develops the process of discussions and negotiations for each chapter of the *acquis*, in accordance with the negotiating positions approved by the Council of Ministers;
- monitors and coordinates the implementation of the obligations of the Stabilization and Association Agreement and strategic documents for the European Integration process;
- follows the implementation of the requirements and instructions of the State Committee for European Integration;
- reports to the State Committee for European Integration on the activities within the European Union integration process;
- directs the process of updating the national plan for the implementation of the Stabilization-Association Agreement;
- evaluates and finalizes the documents and reports prepared within the meetings of the Stabilization-Association Committee and subcommittees;
- evaluates the impact on the public finances of the state budget of the implementation of the Stabilization-Association Agreement;
- evaluates the impact of the alignment of national legislation with the *acquis*;
- evaluates the advantages of the European Union Assistance program (IPA), the progress of projects financed by the European Union Assistance programs or by other donors in the framework of the implementation of the Stabilization-Association Agreement.

Secretariat of European Integration

- responsible for coordinating national policies with those of the European Union;
- provides technical and administrative assistance to the State Committee for European Integration, the State Delegation, the negotiating group and inter-institutional working groups in the preparation of negotiations for each chapter of the *acquis*;
- coordinates and supports the activity of inter-institutional work groups within the obligations of the stabilization-association process and within the negotiation process for each chapter of the *acquis* of the European Union;
- coordinates and supports the drafting of the final analytical report on the harmonization of national legislation with the *acquis* of the European Union (screening) by each inter-institutional working group;
- collects and processes draft proposals for negotiating positions for each chapter of the *acquis*, according to draft proposals and negotiating positions drawn up by each inter-institutional working group;
- coordinates the interaction and exchange of negotiating positions and relevant documentation between the State Committee for European Integration, the State Delegation,

the negotiating group and the Chief Negotiator with the inter-institutional working groups

- administers the electronic database for monitoring the negotiation process and the obligations deriving from it;
- performs other technical and administrative functions, which are determined by the head of the State Delegation and the Chief Negotiator, within the process of the accession negotiations of the Republic of Albania to the European Union.

Interinstitutional Working Groups for European Integration (IWGEI)

For each chapter of the *acquis* of the European Union is created an inter-institutional working group.

The inter-institutional working group is chaired by a deputy minister or general secretary of the responsible ministry, depending on the field of competence and its connection with the relevant chapter of the *acquis* of the European Union or the representative of the independent institution, when the field of competence for the given chapter of *acquis* belongs to an independent institution.

Inter-institutional working groups are responsible for:

- the analysis of policies, legislation, financing, investments, administrative procedures, social interaction and private enterprise and judicial enforcement for the relevant field, covered by the relevant chapter of the *acquis*;
- preparation of the analytical assessment of the harmonization of national legislation with the *acquis* of the European Union;
- preparing proposals for negotiating positions for each chapter of the *acquis* of the European Union and forwarding them to the negotiating group;
- preparation of documentation and evaluation reports for preliminary milestones (opening benchmarks) and final milestones (closing benchmarks) for the relevant chapter, including the discussions or positions taken in the negotiations for that chapter;
- periodically analysing administrative capacities and recommending their strengthening, when necessary;

The heads of the inter-institutional working groups organize the Technical Committee of the Inter-institutional Working Groups. The operating rules of the Committee are approved by order of the Prime Minister⁷.

⁷ <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/albanien/19958.pdf>

National Council for European Integration⁸

- promotes cooperation between political forces, state and independent institutions and civil society in the process of integration of the Republic of Albania into the European Union;
- ensures continuous discussion of European integration policies, implemented by state institutions with civil society and other interested actors;
- monitors the implementation of the obligations during the negotiation process of the Republic of Albania's membership in the European Union, gives the relevant recommendations for the reviewed issues to the responsible institutions and informs the European Affairs Commission of the findings during the monitoring, etc.

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Albania to the European Union

- supports diplomatic and technical communication with the institutions of the European Union and with the Member States of the European Union;
- organizes the agenda of the meetings and the exchange of the respective positions of the parties on the issues discussed within the negotiations for each chapter of the acquis of the European Union.

Partnership Platform for European Integration

Information, consultation, communication and involvement of civil society, interest groups, trade unions, the academic world and the bodies of local self-government units in the process of negotiations for membership in the European Union as well as in the Stabilization-Association process are carried out through the Integration Partnership Platform European.

The forms of participation, operation and institutional structure of the Partnership Platform for European Integration are approved by order of the Prime Minister.

As regards to the leading structures for each chapter that is included in the first Cluster, it is worth noting that separate directorates have been established in each ministry and leading institution.

To concretely illustrate the institutional commitment within the European integration process, we will mention the structures established in the Ministry of Justice. The establishment in 2022 of the Directorate of Integration and Negotiations is an innovation and an indicator of the special focus that the Ministry of Justice devotes to the European integration process as a whole.

⁸ Law No. 19/2023 For some additions and changes in Law no. 15/2015 "On the role of the Assembly in the process of integration of the Republic of Albania into the European Union"

This directorate is part of the General Directorate of Policies and Projects in the field of Justice, Integration and Negotiations.

The Directorate of Integration and Negotiations has two units in its composition, the Unit of European Integration and the Unit for Support and Assistance in the Negotiation Process.

It is noted that none of the other leading institutions such as the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Finance and Economy, the Public Procurement Agency or INSTAT have a dedicated unit for the development of negotiations.

From general research of the institutional structures in the aforementioned institutions, a significant indicator emerges. Specifically, it results that in the structures engaged with European integration issues, 3 employees (PPA) to 10 employees (MFE) are employed. So, on average, each institution has 5.3 employees dedicated to the organization and smooth running of the process. Considering the volume of work carried by the process as well as the special importance of the Cluster 1, 5.3 employees per institution is a very low quantitative indicator.

As for the quality indicator, it must be said that there is still no specialized and unified qualification of employees in the integration structures. The job descriptions for this process are different from institution to institution. Despite the fact that institutions are constantly supported by foreign missions of expertise and technical assistance, there is a lack of continuous training of employees, especially on the process of aligning national legislation with the EU *acquis*.

Conclusions and recommendations

The accession process is a very complex process. It involves all the Albanian public institutions and it will require major changes in the Albanian legislation, the institutional structures and implementing procedures. Further, this process would last for several years.

Approximation of the legislation is a core task under the accession process. As a process, it can be broken down into several subprocesses or steps. Each of these subprocesses should be designed carefully taking into account the characteristics of the accession process. This is necessary in order to accelerate the approximation process.

Since EU law is subject to a constant development, it is obvious that the approximation of Albanian law to the EU acquis currently in force will need to be revised continuously. Ongoing monitoring of EU developments is necessary, both as a pre-accession effort and to prepare Albania for its future EU membership. This requires a careful evaluation of the outcome of the alignment process, a broad political consensus on the importance of the process, as well as increased capacity and professionalism of the civil servants dealing with these issues.


The institutional structures must be reorganized based on the new methodology, divided according to the Clusters. Also, negotiation structures should be harmonized with each other.

The legal framework is complete, while the methodological base should be expanded. For each process there should be prepared and implemented guidelines standardising the process and defining clearly the rules, tasks, expectations, etc. In particular, these guidelines should be continuously improved based on the gained experience. A formal approval of these should be done in order to give them legal power.

The overall integration structures should be as stable as possible. Of course, changes might be necessary, but these should be thoroughly thought, analysed, planned and justified. The staff of the central unit dealing with the integration process should be consulted in this respect. Otherwise, the changes might lead to confusion and differences in approaches to processes, etc. Further, the changes in the structures might increase staff turnover.

Due to the complex nature of the process and its length, it is necessary to design and use IT tools fit for the purpose. The examples of the IT systems for allocation of acquis and preparation of the National Plan for European Integration should not be repeated. All the IT tools should be integrated with each other in order to increase their overall functionality.

Specialisation of the tasks, in particular of the approximation assessment should be aimed. This will require to hire new staff and to properly train it. This will not only streamline the approximation process starting from the preparation of the National Plan to assessment of tables of concordance to storing of these in a proper IT system, but it will improve the quality of the assessments too.



The translation process is currently in limbo. But it should be reinvigorated in order to lay the ground for the approximation process. The staff should be increased and the cooperation with Kosova should be maintained and even strengthened.

The administrative staff needs to be trained for the daily processes and responsibilities of the European Union law-making, implementation and enforcement. Continuous trainings should be delivered to newly appointed civil servants.

The staff turnover at the central coordination directorate should be avoided at all costs. A proper retention policy should be designed and implemented which should include more than just higher salaries.

Following the institutional changes that occurred in 2022, by-laws that regulate and coordinate the European integration process should be amended.

Last but not least, all these recommendations can be implemented only if the political leadership is aware of the situation, the deficiencies and the possible ways to improve the approximation process.

