



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council conclusions on Albania

*GENERAL AFFAIRS Council meeting
Luxembourg, 24 June 2014*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. In line with its Conclusions of 17 December 2013, the Council welcomes the Commission's report of 4 June and, in light of its examination of Albania's continued progress, decides to grant Albania candidate status, subject to endorsement by the European Council.
2. Following the granting of candidate status, the Council underlines that Albania should act decisively on all of the recommendations in the Commission's report and intensify its efforts to ensure a sustained, comprehensive and inclusive implementation of the key priorities, notably the reform of the public administration and the judiciary, the fight against organised crime and corruption, the protection of human rights and anti-discrimination policies including in the area of minorities and their equal treatment, and implementation of property rights.

The Council underlines the importance for Albania to intensify its anti-corruption efforts and to implement its anti-corruption strategy and action plan, strengthen cooperation between law enforcement agencies, and establish a solid track record of investigations, prosecutions and convictions in cases of corruption and organised crime, particularly organised immigration crime, the use of fraudulent documents, money laundering, drug cultivation and human trafficking. The Council also underlines the importance for Albania to strengthen the independence, transparency and accountability of the judiciary, including to provide greater legal certainty for economic operators and to increase investor confidence.

3. The Council also expects Albania to intensify its support for the timely reduction of migratory pressures on the EU including by pursuing its efforts to ensure the fulfilment of all conditions of the visa roadmap and by taking further steps to address the issue of unfounded asylum applications lodged by Albanian nationals.

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4. The Council welcomes the Roadmap on the key priorities Albania has adopted in order to structure the reform process ahead and build a track record of implementation. Based on this Roadmap it invites the Commission to intensify its support, monitoring and assessment of Albania's reform process, including in the context of the high level dialogue on the key priorities and through close interaction with Member States. This should focus on securing concrete results on all the above issues, based on credible and measurable targets and timeframes, with reliable data and statistics. In this respect the Council invites the Commission to report, in addition to the Enlargement Package and on the basis of the output of the high level dialogue, in a comprehensive and detailed manner on Albania's progress on the key priorities.
 5. The Council welcomes Albania's continued constructive engagement in regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations as well as its alignment with the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy.
 6. The Council reiterates that continued and sustainable dialogue between the government and the opposition on EU-related reforms will remain an important factor for Albania to advance on its EU integration path."
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