

**CONFERENCE ON ACCESSION
TO THE EUROPEAN UNION
– ALBANIA –**

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LIMITE

CONF-ALB 8

ACCESSION DOCUMENT

Subject: EUROPEAN UNION COMMON POSITION
- Chapter 25: Science and research

ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS

Albania

EU COMMON POSITION

(In response to additional information provided by Albania)

Cluster 3: Negotiating Chapter 25

Science and research

EUROPEAN UNION COMMON POSITION

This position of the European Union is based on its general position for the Accession conference with Albania (AD 5/22 CONF-ALB 2), and is subject to the negotiating principles endorsed therein, in particular:

- any view expressed by either Albania or the EU on a specific chapter of the negotiations will in no way prejudice the position which may be taken on other chapters;
- agreements reached in the course of negotiations on specific chapters, even partial ones, may not be considered as final until an overall agreement has been reached for all chapters;
- as well as to the requirements set out in points 2, 3, 5, 10, 14, 16, 23, 26, 31, 38, 39, 45, 46, 47 and 48 of the Negotiating Framework.

The EU encourages Albania to continue the process of alignment with the EU *acquis* and its effective implementation and enforcement, and in general to develop already before accession, policies and instruments as close as possible to those of the EU.

The EU notes that Albania, in its positions AD 2/25 CONF-ALB 2 REV 1 and AD 42/26 CONF-ALB 4, accepts the EU *acquis* under Chapter 25, Science and research, as in force on 1 May 2026 and that it will be ready to implement it by the date of its accession to the European Union.

The EU notes that in the area of research and innovation policy, Albania has taken steps to strengthen its integration efforts into the European Research Area (ERA). The EU also takes note of Albania's efforts in strengthening the research and innovation ecosystem, by working towards the adoption and the implementation of the necessary accompanying measures. The EU takes positive note of the increased investment into research and science, including public funding and encourages Albania to take further steps to meet the target of 1% of GDP by 2030. The EU calls on Albania to ensure the actual budget execution of the funds allocated to research.

In view of the above, the EU holds that Albania has met the requirements of the first closing benchmark for this chapter as set out in the EU Common Position (AD 6/25 CONF-AL 6).

The EU encourages Albania to continue reforms in its national higher education and research systems in line with the objectives of the European Research Area.

The EU further invites Albania to intensify its efforts to put in place the necessary structures to enhance cooperation between the private and public sector and continue reporting reliable statistics in this area. The EU also invites Albania to continue the implementation of its Smart Specialisation Strategies, and related necessary measures.

The EU welcomes that Albania continues to progress well in the **Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation**. The EU notes the adoption of the Action Plan to be classified as a Moderate Innovator in the European Innovation Scoreboard and underlines the importance of its effective implementation. The EU also welcomes the efforts in implementing the European Research Infrastructure Consortium *acquis*.

In view of the above, the EU holds that Albania has met the requirements of the second closing benchmark for this chapter as set out in the EU Common Position (AD 6/25 CONF-AL 6).

The EU takes note of the efforts so far to effectively implement the Law on Scientific Research and the National Strategy on Scientific Research and welcomes the adoption of delegated acts of the law.

In view of the above, the EU holds that Albania has met the requirements of the third closing benchmark for this chapter as set out in the EU Common Position (AD 6/25 CONF-AL 6).

The EU notes that Albania has a framework in place to **fight corruption in the area of research and science**. The EU encourages Albania to further enhance active monitoring and reporting to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of the strategy against corruption, its tools and its action plan notably in the field of research and innovation.

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In view of the above considerations, the EU notes that, at this stage, this chapter does not require further negotiations.

Monitoring of progress in the alignment with and implementation of the EU *acquis* will continue throughout the negotiations. The EU underlines that it will devote particular attention to monitoring all specific issues mentioned above with a view to ensuring Albania's administrative capacity, full legal alignment, as well as effective implementation and enforcement of the *acquis* in this chapter. Particular consideration needs to be given to the links between the present chapter and other negotiation chapters. A final assessment of the conformity of Albania's legislation with the EU *acquis* and of its implementation capacity can only be made at a later stage of the negotiations. In addition to all the information the EU may require for the negotiations in this chapter, and which is to be provided to the Conference, the EU invites Albania to provide regularly detailed written information to the Stabilisation and Association Council on progress in the implementation of the *acquis* and in the strengthening of the administrative capacity.

In view of all the above considerations, the EU will, if necessary, return to this chapter at an appropriate moment.

Furthermore, the EU recalls that there may be new *acquis* between 1 May 2026 and the conclusion of the negotiations.

