



# PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY: REGIONAL COOPERATION THROUGH ENHANCED PARLIAMENTARY DIALOGUE

## MONITORING REPORT 2

*December 2023 - April 2024*

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The project “Parliamentary Diplomacy: Regional Cooperation Through Enhanced Parliamentary Dialogue” is led by the Institute for Democracy (IDSCS) with the partners from the Western Balkan region: Institute Alternativa (IA), Institute for Political Studies (ISP), CRTA - Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability, Kosova Democratic Institute (KDI), and the Network of Progressive Initiatives (NPI). You can find more about the project at the following link: <https://idscs.org.mk/en/2023/06/23/parliamentary-diplomacy-regional-cooperation-through-enhanced-parliamentary-dialogue/>



## PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY



<b>Responsible party</b>	Institute for Political Studies
<b>Project title</b>	Parliamentary Diplomacy: Regional Cooperation Through Enhanced Parliamentary Dialogue
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# PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY: REGIONAL COOPERATION THROUGH ENHANCED PARLIAMENTARY DIALOGUE

The project “Parliamentary Diplomacy: Regional Cooperation Through Enhanced Parliamentary Dialogue” is led by the Institute for Democracy (IDSCS) - North Macedonia with the partners from the Western Balkan region: Institute Alternativa (IA) - Montenegro, Institute for Political Studies (ISP) - Albania, CRTA - Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability - Serbia, Kosova Democratic Institute (KDI) - Kosovo, and the Network of Progressive Initiatives (NPI) - Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**The overall objective** of this project:

The aim of the project is to enhance multi-level regional cooperation to consolidate and maintain the dynamics of the EU integration process.

1. Strengthening regional cooperation at the parliamentary level;
2. Enhancing local ownership and implementation of the Berlin Process Commitments;
3. Enchanting oversight role of WB Parliaments on the executive.

## CONTEXT

In the Western Balkans, parliaments, despite being officially the highest institutions in political systems, frequently lack agency, as evidenced by the distortion of checks and balances in favor of the executive branch, raising concerns about democratic backsliding. Despite being recognized as important in initiatives such as the Berlin Process (BP), parliaments were largely excluded until recently, limiting their participation in regional cooperation efforts.

Strengthening parliamentary capacities, particularly in areas such as the Common Regional Market (CRM) and the Green Agenda, could increase their domestic and regional impact. Recent developments, such as the ratification of agreements related to EU principles and values, including the Agreement on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications, have highlighted the importance of parliamentary oversight and engagement, as evidenced by the European Affairs Committee’s scrutiny of legislative processes.

Yet, there is a notable lack of communication between the executive and legislative



branches on initiatives such as the Growth Plan, emphasizing the importance of parliamentary involvement in the implementation and oversight of such measures to ensure they directly benefit citizens.

### METHODOLOGY

The monitoring methodology for assessing the implementation of commitments under the Berlin Process, with a focus on the Common Regional Market (CRM) and Green Agenda for Albania cases, takes a systematic approach. The report, written for Members of Parliament (MPs) and their staff, focuses on milestones from the CRM Action Plans and the Green Agenda, as outlined by the Regional Cooperation Council.

Research entails a thorough analysis of implementation levels and the identification of responsible institutions in order to overcome bottlenecks. Data collection methods include desk research and ongoing communication (Requests for Information) with the responsible institutions: the Albanian Parliament, the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Tourism and Environment, and local governments.

Data analysis includes thematic analysis, content analysis of ministry responses, and basic descriptive statistics. The final report structure includes a monitoring template outlining activities and next steps, as well as an evaluation of implementation levels and recommendations for parliamentary oversight.

## I. SHORT DESCRIPTION ON THE AGREEMENTS, ALBANIAN CONTEXT

The Berlin Process is of a great importance for the Western Balkan Countries (WBC) as it helps to further cooperate on concrete fields between the countries and to fasten the European integration process. The WBC as, it is considered have to move in two directions: strengthen the internal institution, overcome the conflicts and continue steadily in more and more cooperation between them. In this regard, as it has been reflected in the previous report, WBC have ratified three agreements showing interest and good neighbourhood relations. In details, the agreements, referring also to the four free movements of the EU, of goods, capitals, persons and capitals, relates to different professions. The agreements are on:

1. Freedom of Movement with Identity Cards,
2. Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications,
3. Recognition of Professional Qualifications for Doctor of Medicine, Dentists and Architects.

Following the last Berlin Process held in Tirana in 16 October 2023, there have been made different commitments for the advance of the integration of the Western Balkans economies, related to EU principles and values. In this regard they pointed out **the continuity of cooperation in connectivity, transport, trade, energy and**



**digital ties in the Western Balkans as well as between the region and the EU**<sup>1</sup>. One of the key issues discussed and agreed was the necessity to fill the gap between EU and Western Balkans economies, which could be helped by the growth plan and the Single payments area.

**During the Summit, a new agreement was signed, namely the Agreement on the recognition of professional qualifications of nurses, veterinary surgeons, pharmacists, and midwives in the central European free trade agreement context.** This agreement, has been sent to the Parliament and approved without delay, published on the official gazette on March 11<sup>th</sup> 2024<sup>2</sup> and it is now in force.

## II. INVOLVEMENT OF ALBANIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS IN BERLIN PROCESS

In Albania, the agreements: 1) Freedom of Movement with Identity Cards; 2) Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications; 3) Recognition of Professional Qualifications for Doctor of Medicine, Dentists and Architects, have been approved by Government decree, as it has been reported previously. Due to that decision of the Government, the European Affairs Committee held two

hearing sessions with the line ministries to understand the reasoning behind and for not being informed as the Constitution requires.

**The Agreement on the Recognition of professional qualifications of nurses, veterinary surgeons, pharmacists, and midwives in the central European free trade agreement context, differently to the three ones mentioned above, has been sent to the Parliament and approved without delay.**

The European Affairs Committee has scrutinized this law on April 13<sup>th</sup> 2024. During the discussions the Committee MPs have asked to the Ministry of Education two fundamental questions: why the government has changed the procedure with this draft law compared to the previous ones, as the other three agreements have been approved by Governmental decree and the latest has followed the parliamentary procedures. The second question was related to the possible feasibility study on concrete data, on the necessity of and the impact for the citizens of the agreement<sup>3</sup>. The Committee did not receive a proper answer to the questions posed and therefore requested to be sent in written form by the Ministry.

The draft law ratifying the agreement has been discussed also in 4 other committees: the Committee on Legal Affairs, Public Administration and Human Rights<sup>4</sup>, the Committee on Education, Media and

1 [https://www.berlinprocess.de/uploads/documents/chairs-conclusions-berlin-process-summit-2023\\_1697629712.pdf](https://www.berlinprocess.de/uploads/documents/chairs-conclusions-berlin-process-summit-2023_1697629712.pdf)

2 <https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2024/63/b996623b-c372-461f-a451-bc237bb961f6;q=%20njohja%20e%20kualifikimeve%20profesionale%20t%C3%AB%20infermier%C3%ABve,%20kirurg%C3%ABve%20veterinare,%20farmacist%C3%ABve%20dhe%20mamive>

3 <https://kuvendiwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/202404091444590910Procesverbal%2C%20dat%C3%AB%2018.03.2024.pdf>

4 <https://kuvendiwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/202403191306492576Raport-Ratifikimi%20mveshje%20per%20njohjen%20e%20kualifikime.pdf>

Public information<sup>5</sup>, the Committee on Labor, Social Issues and Health<sup>6</sup> and the Committee on Foreign Affairs<sup>7</sup>.

*According to the procedure, the draft law has been discussed and approved in the plenary session<sup>8</sup> on 21.03.2024.*

***In this point of view, the sensibilization of the impact of this agreement is far larger to the previous ones, considering the discussions in different parliamentary committees and in the plenary session which are lively broadcasted and the recordings can be found at the webpage of the Parliament.***

*However, following the summit in Tirana of the Berlin Process, the Parliament has not yet been informed on further discussion held and other possible engagement in the framework of this initiative.*

So far, important decisions have been taken in the framework of the Berlin Process in which the EU is fully committed to support the WBC to get closer to the EU standards. In one hand, EU has made clear in the Growth Plan document that there is a gap of 35% between WBC and EU. On the other hand, as one of the last decisions of the EU parliament, is the approval of the Growth Plan in support of reforms and actions to fill the gap and be competitiveness in the EU market.

Growth Plan is based on four pillars<sup>9</sup>:

1. Enhancing economic integration with the European Union's single market;
2. Boosting economic integration within the Western Balkans through the Common Regional Market;
3. Accelerating fundamental reforms;
4. Increasing financial assistance to support the reforms through a Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans for the period 2024-2027.

***The functional approach of EU, especially giving priority to the economy and the market which goes in parallel to required reforms has to involve also the Parliament.***

In this regard, the Government should inform the Parliament at any stage of the implementation of the Growth Plan.

In addition, the Parliament, on its own initiative, should act proactively and incentive the Government to take actions in the view of the implementation of the Growth plan, together with other initiatives of the Berlin Process.

On the other hand, the Berlin Process should involve the parliamentary dimension as part of that process considering that the ultimate beneficiary is the single citizen.

5 <https://kuvendiwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/202403201332150224KEMIP%20-%20Raport%20-Marr%C3%ABveshja%20per%20%20kualifikimet.pdf>

6 <https://kuvendiwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/202403181452039988KP%C3%87SSH%20-%20Komision%20p%C3%ABr%20dh%C3%ABnie%20mendimi.pdf>

7 <https://kuvendiwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/202403210742392490Raport%20marrev%20njohj%20kualifik%20mami%2C%20infirm%2C%20veteriner%20ne%20kuader%20te%20CEFTA%20Komis%20Jasht%20dhen%20mend.pdf>

8 <https://kuvendiwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/202404080803579065Procesverbal%20dat%C3%AB%2021.3.2024.pdf>, pg. 90-98.

9 [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/8f5dbe63-e951-4180-9c32-298cae022d03\\_en?filename=COM\\_2023\\_691\\_New%20Growth%20Plan%20Western%20Balkans.pdf](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/8f5dbe63-e951-4180-9c32-298cae022d03_en?filename=COM_2023_691_New%20Growth%20Plan%20Western%20Balkans.pdf)



### **III. PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE COMMON REGIONAL MARKET PRIORITIES: REGIONAL DIGITAL AREA AND GREEN AGENDA**

Albania's Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure (MEI) and Ministry of Education and Sports are making significant progress toward implementing the Action Plan for the Common Regional Market - Regional Digital Area. Key advancements include increasing fixed broadband internet access, with penetration rising from 17 to 20 per 100 people, though rural areas continue to face challenges. Broadband Competence Offices (BCOs) are being established, with proposed legislation to support them. RASH in Albania enables academic and research network interconnection with GEANT.

The 5G roadmap includes simplified building permits for electronic communication networks. Efforts to reduce roaming charges and finalize roadmaps for lower charges between the EU and the Western Balkans are currently underway. To ensure equal access, strategies for digital upskilling are being developed, as are training program repositories and digital education action plans. Initiatives for regional toll service interoperability, metadata standard alignment, AI promotion, and facilitating Western Balkans participation in EU High-Performance Computing (HPC) are currently ongoing.

Although specific details regarding activities such as high-level meetings, smart city standards, and cybersecurity capability

enhancements are unavailable, legislative oversight ensures adherence to EU data protection standards, indicating progress in privacy protection. Efforts to improve cybersecurity through collaboration with ENISA and increased business community participation show a comprehensive approach to digital transformation in the Western Balkans.

Albania's Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, and Local Governments have made varying degrees of progress toward implementing the Action Plan for Green Agenda - Decarbonisation. Significant accomplishments include complying with EU Climate Law and establishing ambitious 2030 energy and climate targets, which resulted in lower greenhouse gas emissions and increased renewable energy integration. Integrated Energy and Climate Plans, as well as climate adaptation strategies, reflect a proactive approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

However, challenges remain, particularly in implementing carbon pricing mechanisms, assessing socioeconomic impacts, and promoting energy efficiency. Despite efforts to develop smart transportation infrastructure and rehabilitate rail systems, progress in sustainable urban mobility plans and alternative fuel infrastructure remains limited.

The absence of coal in the energy mix represents a positive step toward decarbonisation. Albania aims to achieve continuous improvement by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050, with a particular emphasis on developing a Long-Term Low Greenhouse Gas Emissions Strategy that is consistent with EU Climate Law and prioritizes co-benefits for air pollution reduction.



Efforts include implementing carbon pricing, conducting socioeconomic impact assessments, and updating air quality regulations. Priority areas include integrated planning for energy and transportation infrastructure, as well as sustainable mobility strategies. While progress has been made in some areas, continuous improvement is required to meet Albania's decarbonization objectives.

## IV. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**1. Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure and Ministry of Education and Sports in Albania have made significant progress in implementing the Action Plan for Regional Digital Area, including:**

- *Increasing fixed broadband internet access and initiating Broadband Competence Offices.*
- *Simplifying building permits for electronic communication networks as part of the 5G roadmap.*
- *Working on strategies for digital upskilling and equal access in education.*
- *Advancing initiatives for regional toll service interoperability and AI promotion.*

**2. Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, and Local Governments in Albania have achieved mixed results in implementing the Green Agenda - Decarbonisation Action Plan:**

- *Significant progress in aligning with EU Climate Law and setting ambitious energy and climate targets.*
- *Challenges remain in implementing carbon pricing and promoting energy efficiency.*
- *The absence of coal in the energy mix represents a positive step toward decarbonisation.*
- *Aim for continuous improvement towards carbon neutrality by 2050 through integrated planning and sustainable mobility strategies.*

**3. The government has to inform regularly the Parliament on the commitments taken on Berlin Process and Growth plan.**

**4. The Government should have a clear plan on the implementation of the Berlin Process and Growth plan.**

**5. The Parliament should have a concrete agenda on the oversight of the Government on the Berlin Process and Growth Plan.**

**6. The Parliamentary Committees should play an active role for a greater involvement in those processes.**





## MAPPING MATRIX OF RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

For both priorities: Common Regional Market – Regional Digital Area and Green Agenda, level of Implementation is Moderate.

### Priority 1: Common Regional Market – ALBANIA

#### General overview:

**The Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure (MEI)** and the **Ministry of Education and Sports in Albania** have made significant progress toward implementing the Action Plan for Common Regional Market - Regional Digital Area. Progress includes efforts to increase fixed broadband internet access, with penetration rising from 17 to 20 per 100 people, though rural areas continue to face challenges. The establishment of Broadband Competence Offices (BCOs) is underway, aided by proposed legislation. RASH in Albania facilitates academic and research network interconnection in collaboration with GEANT. Building permits for electronic communication networks will be simplified as part of the 5G roadmap. Efforts to reduce roaming charges and finalize roadmaps for lower charges between the EU and the Western Balkans are currently underway. Strategies for digital upskilling,

the establishment of training program repositories, and digital education action plans are all being developed with the goal of achieving equal access. In addition, initiatives for regional toll service interoperability, metadata standard alignment, AI promotion, and facilitating WB participation in EU High-Performance Computing (HPC) are underway. However, specific details about activities such as organizing high-level meetings, establishing smart city standards, and strengthening cybersecurity capabilities are currently unavailable. Nonetheless, legislative scrutiny ensures adherence to EU data protection standards, indicating progress in privacy protection. Efforts to improve cybersecurity through collaboration with ENISA and increased business community participation are also underway, demonstrating a comprehensive approach to digital transformation in the Western Balkans.

Level of implementation			
None	Minor	Moderate	Transformative
MODERATE			

**COMMON REGIONAL MARKET – REGIONAL DIGITAL AREA – ALBANIA**

Activity	Dead-line	Progress (policies, activities)	Responsible institution(s)	Next step(s)
1. Provide fixed broadband internet access for the vast majority of households	2024	According to the EU Com Report for Albania 2023, Fixed broadband penetration increased from 17 to 20 per 100 inhabitants in 2021 and remains an issue, particularly in rural areas. These have 40% of the population but only a quarter of the fixed broadband subscribers. Investment in digital infrastructure is also needed in schools. Many schools lack computers - there are about 0.2 computers per pupil - and have poor internet connections, which remains an obstacle to using digital technologies in schools. Households with access to the internet increased from 88.3% in 2021 to 96.5% in 2022, with an increasing share also accessing the internet via a fixed broadband connection.	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Upgraded digital infrastructure, including through increased uptake in WBIF funds and other potential instruments. Fixed broadband internet access for at least 95% of households in each economy provided. Fixed broadband internet access for at least 90% of households with the speed of at least 30Mbps in each economy provided. Fixed broadband internet access for at least 75% of households with the speed of at least 100Mbps upgradable to 1Gbps in each economy provided.
2. Establish Broadband Competence Offices (BCOs) in WB (where they do not exist) and strengthen their capacities to support broadband deployment	2021	In progress. The MEI has drafted and the Parliament has included in the procedures the draft law on electronic communication	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, Directorate of Policies and Development Strategies for Telecommunications and Posts.	Strengthened capacities of WB BCOs including through setting up one-to-one cooperation with EU BCO, their mutual cooperation and greater integration in EU BCO network.
3. Interconnection of academic and research networks in WB6, with the support and cooperation of GEANT	2022	RASH the Academic Network of ALBANIA is the National Research and Education Network (NREN) RASH build and manage the Academic Network Backbone and Campus Networks for universities and research institutions. RASH e-infrastructure is connected with GEANT Network infrastructure the fundamental element of Europe's e-infrastructure, delivering network for scientific excellence, research, education and innovation through interconnections with its 38 NREN partners	Ministry of Education and Sports	Interconnectivity of academic and research networks in WB6 achieved. Regional collaboration and innovations encouraged.

4. Develop 5G roadmap for Western Balkans and ensure effective implementation in line with the timeline defined therein	2023	According to the EU COM 2023 for Albania the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE), along with the Electronic and Postal Communications Authority, made an assessment on the building permit for electronic communication networks. Amendments to the Decision of the Council of Ministers on building permits for electronic communications networks were adopted, aiming to simplify the process to grant permits for the deployment of the 5G network In progress.	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	5G strategy(ies)/Action Plan(s) developed in each economy; Agreed regional actions (example: aligned time and steps in harmonisation and assignment of European 5G pioneer bands, coordinated approach on selected aspects of 5G awarding, i.e. minimum licence duration, use of harmonised spectrum, etc.). Cover at least one main regional corridor with 5G by the end of 2025. Cover key industrial cities with 5G in each WB6 by the end of 2023.
5. Reduce roaming charges intra-WB6 and EU-WB through implementation of WB Roaming Agreement and the Roadmap for lowering the roaming charges between EU and WB	No deadline in the AP	According to the official statements of the Mobile companies the tariffs have been reduced consistently for Travellers to the Balkan Regions	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	In progress
6. Finalise the Roadmap for lowering the roaming charges between EU and WB and effective implementation in line with the timeline defined therein	2022	In progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	In progress
7. Develop digital skills strategies and agree on short and mid-term regional actions for digital upskilling	Annually	In progress	Ministry of Education and Sports	In progress
8. Establish a repository of courses and other training programmes developed by different organisations, including MOOCs with established universities based on WB gap analysis and digital skills needs for targeted groups	2023	In progress	Ministry of Education and Sports	In progress

9. Develop Digital Education Action Plans and promote equality in access, in particular for disadvantaged groups and minorities, particularly Roma	2022 - 2024	In progress	Ministry of Education and sports	In progress
10. Organise regular high-level meetings, including Annual Digital Summit, to ensure digital agenda stands at the forefront of regional transformation	2023	No information from the ministry	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	
11. Align standards for metadata for open data at regional level based on EU standards to be implemented throughout the region and foster open data principle	2024	In progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	In progress
12. Reach an agreement on regional interoperability of toll services in WB	2023 - 2024	In progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	In progress
13. Agree on principles and standards used for smart cities, based on EU standards, with a view to ensure data and services interoperability	2022	No information from the ministry	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	
14. Undertake regional actions to promote Artificial Intelligence (AI) in selected aspects and based on EU practices	Annually	In progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	In progress
15. Undertake regional activities to facilitate participation of WB in EU HPC	2021 Pilots 2022 - 2023	No information from the ministry	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	

16. Undertake regional activities to improve availability, analysis and monitoring of high-quality digital economy statistics, building on EU's DESI and ITU's ICT Development Index	2023	No information from the ministry	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	
17. Regional cooperation in regard to exchange of good practice in the field of digital transformation, in particular e-government	2023	No information from the ministry	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	
18. Agree on minimum technical standards and specifications to allow an exchange of data and documents, and conduct pilot activities	2021 - 2024	In progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	In progress
19. Align regional actions to ensure the protection of personal data and privacy in Western Balkans, based on EU standards	2022 - 2023	The draft law on electronic communication in being scrutinised in the Parliament and it is in conformity with EU standards and in conformity with data protection EU standards	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	The approval of the la
20. Develop mentoring programmes for WB CSIRTs and other institutions as longer-term cooperation with advanced CSIRTs and other partners and other partners		No information from the ministry	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	
21. Strengthen cybersecurity capacities in the WB region through cooperation with ENISA	2023	No information from the ministry	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	
22. Enhance resilience of cyberspace in the WB through increased participation of business community in strengthening cybersecurity capacities in WB		In progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	In progress

## Priority 2: Green Agenda – ALBANIA

### General overview:

**The Ministry of Tourism and Environment-Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure,** and **Local Governments in Albania** have achieved mixed results toward implementing the Action Plan for Green Agenda - Decarbonisation. Significant progress has been made, such as aligning with EU Climate Law and establishing ambitious 2030 energy and climate targets, including a notable reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and increased integration of renewable energy. Efforts to develop integrated Energy and Climate Plans, as well as climate adaptation strategies, demonstrate a proactive approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation. However, challenges remain, particularly in implementing carbon pricing instruments, assessing socioeconomic impacts, and promoting energy efficiency. Despite ongoing efforts to develop smart transportation infrastructure and rehabilitate rail systems, progress in areas such as sustainable urban mobility plans and alternative fuel infrastructure is limited. Notably, the absence of coal in the energy mix represents a positive step toward Decarbonisation. Nonetheless, there

is a clear need for ongoing efforts and increased collaboration to achieve comprehensive Decarbonisation goals and foster a sustainable future for Albania.

Albania aims for continuous improvement by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050. Plans include creating a Long-Term Low Greenhouse Gas Emissions Strategy that is in line with EU Climate Law while concentrating on co-benefits for air pollution reduction based on various studies and strategies. Efforts include implementing carbon pricing, conducting socioeconomic impact assessments, and updating regulations to make provision for air quality impacts.

Priorities include integrated planning for energy and transportation infrastructure, as well as sustainable mobility strategies. While some areas have seen progress, such as revisions to rail freight corridors and the development of a Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy for the Western Balkans, others continue to face challenges, such as a lack of progress in certain initiatives and strategies. Continuous improvement efforts are critical for Albania's decarbonization objectives.

### Level of implementation

None

Minor

Moderate

Transformative

MODERATE

## GREEN AGENDA – DECARBONISATION – ALBANIA

Activity	Deadline	Progress (policies, activities)	Responsible institution(s)	Next step(s)
1. Align with the EU Climate Law with a vision of achieving climate neutrality by 2050.	2025	<p>The law 155/2020 “On Climatic Changes has been approved in 2020 and being implemented. It is Approximated with the EU legislation: Directive 2003/87/EC and Regulation (EU). 525/2013. In accordance with the EU’s climate change efforts and our respective obligations in the EU membership process, the following legal acts have been approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- law no. 155/2020 on “Climate Change”</li> <li>- Defined National Contribution</li> <li>- National Energy and Climate Plan</li> <li>- Approximation of the “Governance Regulation”</li> <li>- Law no. 2/2023 “For fluorinated greenhouse gases”</li> </ul>	Ministry of Tourism and Environment	<p>Continuous improvement by 2030</p> <p>In order to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, Albania will develop and adopt the Long-Term Low Greenhouse Gas Emissions Strategy when revising the current National Climate Change Strategy, in accordance with the provisions of the EU Climate Law</p>
2. Set forward-looking 2030 energy and climate targets.	2022 (Ongoing)	<p>The set targets in Albania’s NECP by 2030 encompass an 18.7% decrease in greenhouse gas emissions, an 8.4% reduction in final energy consumption, and a substantial portion of renewable energy integration into the final energy consumption, reaching 54.4%</p>	Ministry of Tourism and Environment Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Based on the EC study, NDC, LCDS and NECP; co-benefits for air pollution reduction.
3. Develop and implement integrated Energy and Climate Plans	2022 (Ongoing)	<p>The Government of Albania launched its national adaptation plan (NAP) process in February 2015, with the support of GIZ and UNDP.</p> <p>Albania is one of the countries in the Balkan region to have developed a NAP document. The NAP and its financing strategy became an integral part of the National Strategy on Climate Change, and related action plans on mitigation and adaptation, which was approved by the government on July 2, 2019.</p> <p>Albania’s governmental approval of the initial version of the National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) in December 29, 2021,</p> <p>Albania needs to update and implement the national energy and climate plan (NECP) adopted in 2021, in line with the 2030 energy and climate targets.</p>	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Based on the EC study; Implementation by 2030.

4. Prepare and implement climate adaptation strategies.	2028	Albania has developed and implemented a large number of policies, strategies, plans, programs, projects and measures related to adaptation, as listed below: - National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015-2020; - Third National Communication; - National Policy on Climate Change and the NSCC; - Its National Adaptation Plan; Adaptation Plan for Tirana; - National Strategy for Tourism 2019-2023; - National Policy on Forests 2019-2030; - Integrated Cross-sectoral Plan for Tirana-Durres area; - The National Program for (GCF) Green Climate Fund, which was drafted based on Participatory method and previous documents.	Ministry of Tourism and Environment	Based on the NAP processes.
5. Align with the EU Emissions Trading System and/or introduce other carbon pricing instruments	2024	Air quality monitoring still not in line with EU standards Carbon pricing instruments still in process	Ministry of Tourism and Environment	Based on the decision on introducing carbon pricing – policy discussion is ongoing.
6. Increase opportunities for the deployment of nature-based solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change	2025	With adaptation of NAP, Albanian in under progress on identifying and addressing the country's vulnerabilities to climate change and developing strategies and actions to adapt to its impacts. International assistance projects and programs have been implemented, with the support of UNDP, GIZ, GEF, UNEP, FAO etc.	Ministry of Tourism and Environment	Continuous improvement by 2030; Link with Action 54
7. Ensure participation of WB economies in the European Climate Pact or consider the development of a similar mechanism.	2022	Albania committed to an unconditional emissions reduction target of 20.9% by 2030 compared to business as usual.	Ministry of Tourism and Environment	Continuous improvement by 2030.
8. Review and revise, where necessary, all relevant legislation to support progressive decarbonisation of the energy sector	2023	Needs to continue drafting and adopting implementing legislation, including establishing the energy-efficiency obligation scheme, and adopting the labelling regulations. Proceed with the comprehensive assessment of the potential of high efficiency cogeneration and district heating, in line with its obligations under the Energy Efficiency Directive	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Continuous improvement by 2030.



9. Prepare an assessment of the socio-economic impact of decarbonisation at the individual economy and regional level.	2022	no progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	prepare an assessment of the socio-economic impact of decarbonisation at the individual economy and regional level
10. Prioritise energy efficiency and improve it in all sectors	(Ongoing)	Albania still needs to adopt all the missing implementing legislation on energy efficiency. No new energy-efficiency funding mechanisms have been put in place. The energy-efficiency agency's role, capacities and operations need to be further strengthened	Ministry of Tourism and Environment Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Continuous improvement by 2030
11. Transposition and full enforcement of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive.	2023	Needs continue drafting and adopting implementing legislation, including establishing the energy-efficiency obligation scheme, and adopting the labelling regulations	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Continuous improvement by 2030.
12. Support private and public buildings renovation schemes and secure appropriate financing.	(Ongoing)	No progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure Local Governments	Development of the concept by the EC is ongoing; Continuous improvement by 2030.
13. Increase the share of renewable energy sources and provide the necessary investment conditions	(Ongoing)	No progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Updating the acquis is in progress; N.B: any increase of biomass combustion must be done with due consideration to air pollution impacts; Continuous improvement by 2030.
14. Decrease and gradually phase out coal subsidies, strictly respecting state aid rules.	(Ongoing)	Albania has is no coal in electricity mix	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	To be indicated in NECPs; Clean air co-benefits.
15. Ensure participation in the Coal Regions in Transition initiative for the Western Balkans.	(Ongoing)	No progress. Albania has is no coal in electricity mix	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Clean air co-benefits from reduced coal combustion
16. Develop programmes for addressing energy poverty and financing schemes for household renovation and providing basic standards of living.	(Ongoing) 2024	There are no relevant strategic documents that address the issue of energy poverty	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Continuous improvement by 2030.

<p>17. Support the development of smart transport infrastructure, promote fostering of innovative technologies (such as paperless transport, artificial intelligence, multimodal passengers ticketing, mobility as a service, border/boundary crossing applications, 5G corridors, etc.).</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>In process The approval of the law on electronic communication allows the proceeding in all what is requested to support the development of the smart transport infrastructure, and more</p>	<p>Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure</p>	<p>Important for integrated planning of energy and transport/charging infrastructure; Continuous improvement by 2030.</p>
<p>18. Implement the Regional Action Plan for Rail Reforms.</p>	<p>2023</p>	<p>Currently, there is ongoing technical assistance for the restructuring of the whole rail system Rehabilitation of railway Durrësi – Tirana and construction of the new railway branch to Mother Teresa (Rinas) International Airport (total cost is 90.45 million euro). Tendering for the construction works is in its final phase. Rehabilitation of the railway line Vora – Hani i Hotit. The preparation of the detailed design has started and is financed by WBIF through a 4.5-million-euro grant. o Rehabilitation of Durrësi – Pogradeci – Lin railway and the construction of a new railway link Lin – border to North Macedonia (part of rail Corridor VIII). The feasibility study for this project was finished in January 2018 and the preliminary design of the Durrësi – Rrogozhina railway line, 34 km, (part of this project) is completed. WBIF Grant is received for the preparation of the Detailed Design for Durres – Rrogozhine railway segment; With a grant of 1.75 million euro from EIB will start in March 2020 the preparation of the Preliminary Design for the Reconstruction of the Rrogozhina- Pogradec Railway. o CB RAIL Initiative for improving cross border transport through rail connection between Krystallopigi and Pogradec (a joint application between the Greek Railways and the Albanian Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy, under the INTERREG Program regional cooperation Albania – Greece, estimated to cost 900,000 euro). The Albanian Railways have identified the most critical LCs and will consider their further improvement with state budget or donations/grants</p>	<p>Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure</p>	<p>Excepted infrastructure improvement.</p>

19. Define rail freight and inland waterway transport corridors.	2027	In progress Durrës – Rogozhina – Elbasan – Pogradec – Lina railway Pogradec – Korça – border to Greece Vora – Hani Hotit frontier to Montenegro railway lines Durrës – Tirana Public Transport Terminal and the new railway missing connection to Tirana Rinas International Airport TIA	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	The network of rail freight corridors is under revision by the EC.
20. Define an overall strategy to shift traffic from road to more environmentally friendly modes.	2021	In progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy for WB has been prepared by the TCPS and presented to the TCT Ministerial Council.
21. Identify the EU technical standards and ensure their implementation and digitalisation of all transport modes.	2030	No progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Continuous improvement by 2030
22. Implement the Regional Transport Facilitation Action Plan.	2023	No progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	No progress
23. Implement the Regional Road Safety Action Plan.	2022	In progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Continuous improvement by 2030
24. Implement the Road Action Plan.	2024	In progress There are several projects in place that are being implemented the list of which can be found at the website of the Ministry of Energy and infrastructure <sup>10</sup>	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Continuous improvement by 2030
25. Develop and implement climate resilience plans for Western Balkan economies' transport networks.	2022	No progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Link with Climate Action.
26. Promote preparation and implementation of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans for urban areas in the Western Balkans.	2025	No progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	Clean air benefits; Strong promotion by 2025, Implementation to follow
27. Define sustainable mobility solutions at the regional level including plans for deployment of alternative fuels.	2024	No progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	No progress

28. Define a plan for deployment and building of charging stations for electric vehicles.	2022	No progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	No progress
29. Increase regional cooperation in the area of alternative fuels infrastructure development	2023	No progress	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure	No progress

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