

NATIONAL PARLIAMENT AND THE REFORM AGENDA 2024-2027

By Krisela Hackaj and Erisa Proko

Albania has approved in 2024 its [Roadmap for the Functioning of Democratic Institutions](#). Their functioning is assessed through the: (i) the functioning of the Albanian Parliament; (ii) elections (including political party financing), and; (iii) legal, regulatory and policy frameworks for civil society.

The EU's 2022 enlargement methodology has placed particular emphasis on the fundamentals and on democratic institutions. In that regard, the functioning of Parliament conditions EU Commission's assessment as it directly impacts rule of law, fundamental rights, democratic governance, public administration and economic convergence of Candidate country.

Over the next three years, sustained efforts from both the executive and legislative branches, alongside civil society, will condition reforms' progress in Albania.

Lessons from EU Member States: Parliamentary Oversight of the Recovery and Resilience Facility

In EU Member States (MS), national parliaments play a crucial role in ensuring transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in the implementation phase of similar EU instruments. The MS parliaments engagement in overseeing the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) has demonstrated the contribution of legislative bodies in strengthening governance of economic recovery efforts. Their involvement typically spans along four key dimensions: i) design and scrutiny, ii) monitoring and accountability, iii) legislative adaptation, and iv) public transparency.

In many EU member states, parliaments have reviewed and/or approved National Recovery and Resilience Plans prior to their submission to the European Commission, ensuring alignment with national priorities and exercising democratic oversight. Further on, the national parliaments have played a critical role in overseeing RRF fund allocation, evaluating respective Government performance, and verifying that expenditures align with the digital transformation, green transition, and economic recovery objectives.

Additionally, as legislative adjustments have been often required to align domestic laws with RRF goals, MS parliaments have dutifully enacted such changes. Finally, national parliaments have been serving as a conduit for public transparency, ensuring that information about fund utilization and policy outcomes is available and accessible to citizens.

Parliamentary engagement varies across EU member states. While some parliaments have established dedicated committees for monitoring the recovery and resilience funds, others have integrated these responsibilities into existing finance or budget parliamentary committees. According to the [European Parliament 's survey on the role of the national parliaments](#) in the implementation of the RRF, 92% of the national parliaments reported that their government have informed them on coordination between national actions taken under the RRF and other EU budgetary programmes (e.g. structural funds). Thirteen national parliaments utilise practices which allow their governments to present progress reports (including risks) on the implementation of the National Plans. 58% of EU MS parliaments have been informed by their governments on the risks of not achieving milestones and targets. Finally, 12 national parliaments had plans to consult stakeholders during the scrutiny of the RRF implementation.

At the EU level, the European Parliament (EP) has reinforced oversight functions through dedicated structures such as the RRF Working Group, which monitors implementation across member states. The EP also conducts Recovery and Resilience Dialogues with the European Commission, providing a structured mechanism dedicated to oversight and information exchange.

Albanian's Parliament role in the Enlargement Process

In accordance with current legislation, the Albanian Parliament is tasked to oversee EU integration reforms, ensure alignment of legislation with EU standards, and hold the government accountable for fulfilling its commitments. This includes monitoring the implementation of EU-funded programs and reforms, ensuring that objectives, milestones, and financial resources are effectively managed.

Additionally, the Albanian Parliament can also exercise constitutional oversight powers, conducting inquiries, requesting reports, and holding hearings with stakeholders to assess reform progress and challenges. Its oversight role also includes organizing consultations with interest groups and civil society on negotiation chapters, providing advisory opinions on progress, and fostering stakeholder engagement in the reform process.

The parliamentary Committee on European Affairs (CEA) and the National Council for European Integration (NCEI) are tasked to play a crucial role in ensuring transparent and comprehensive public communication throughout the accession process. While recent legal reforms have enhanced the representation of civil society and independent justice institutions within the NCEI, Albania's negotiating positions are not discussed in this body. With the Government opting for confidentiality of its negotiating positions, their assessment and approval lie now only in CEA closed door sessions.

Reform and Growth Facility and Albania's Path to EU Membership by 2030: opportunities to strengthen inclusive governance

Through the adoption of the [Reform and Growth Facility \(RGF\) for the Western Balkans](#), the EU's enlargement policy has tied financial assistance to reform progress. On October 10, 2024, the Albanian government approved its [Reform Agenda](#) under the Facility. Modeled after the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), this new performance-based instrument aims to support economic transformation, resilience, and integration by funding key reforms and investments that accelerate Albania's convergence with the EU.

The RGF Regulation enables the engagement of national parliaments, alongside local and regional authorities, social partners, and civil society in shaping reform priorities, monitoring progress, and evaluating outcomes. This puts RGF implementation within a governance framework aligned with existing EU recovery instruments, and where parliamentary engagement plays a crucial role.

The experiences of EU Member States in managing the RRF underscore the critical role of parliaments. As Albania embarks on the implementation of the RGF, the Parliament must actively engage in its oversight duties; on related legislative activity, and in ensuring public transparency. Effective parliamentary involvement is crucial in maximizing reform impact and supervising EU funding spending.

The Albanian Parliament should ensure that the reforms align with Albania's commitments to the European Union; ensure that earmarked financial resources are used efficiently and in line with the objectives of the RGF; and that inclusive parliamentary-based platforms such as the National Council for European Integration facilitate public debate and outreach.

Since the EU approved Albania's Reform Agenda in October 2024, various parliamentary committees, such as Committees on Foreign Policy, European Integration, Legal Issues, Public Administration, and Human Rights, have engaged with RGF also during the review of the Loan and Grant Agreements prior to their adoption in March 2025 by the Parliament.

Recognizing the importance of promoting a public debate on the Reform Agenda, the National Council for European Integration will dedicate¹ at least two monitoring sessions to the assessment of reforms' progress, including challenges and achievements in the RGF governance during its [work calendar for 2025](#).

¹The November NCEI session was officially requested by CDI, a member of NCEI since 2016.

With the 2030 EU target in sight, the Parliamentary structures shall set up clear monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the progress of selected reforms; evaluate whether expected goals are being met; and pinpoint areas that require improvement. Additionally, institutionalizing regular hearings, consultations and reporting mechanisms will further strengthen transparency and accountability. Engaging with civil society and independent institutions will also ensure that parliamentary scrutiny reflects a broad spectrum of interests and expertise during the accession period. Finally, enhancing the analytical and technical capacities of parliamentary bodies that support the CEA and NCEI will reinforce reform oversight and alignment with EU standards.

This strategic investment in parliamentary competencies will not only support Albania's current reform efforts but also strengthen its preparedness for future membership obligations and access to EU instruments and programs.

This article follows the debate in the framework of the workshop "[Enhancing the Role of Civil Society in the Reform and Growth Facility: Insights from the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility Implementation](#)" organized under the initiative "Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement and Ownership in the Implementation of the Reform and Growth Facility", implemented by Cooperation and Development Institute with the support of the Embassy of Switzerland in Albania.

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