



REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
MINISTRY FOR EUROPE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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Alongside with commitment and hard work in the implementation of the reform processes in the country, as well as fully addressing 5 Key Priorities to open accession negotiations with the European Union, Albania continues to render its positive contribution for the security, stability, protection of human rights and democratic governance in our region and beyond. Implementation of this agenda serves to further enhance the credibility of Albania's foreign policy, as well as the proficiency and the reliability of the Albanian diplomacy.

For the first time, in 2020 Albania will take over the OSCE Chairmanship. In December 2018 Albania got the unanimous support of OSCE member states for its candidacy to chair this important Organization in 2020. This is an essential achievement of our foreign policy and the result of the constructive policies pursued by Albania over the years. Starting from January 1st, 2019 we are part of the Troika along with Slovakia and Italy.

Albania's candidacy as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the period 2022 – 2023 is another important goal of our foreign policy that will serve to maximize Albania's relations not only with UN, but also with EU and other regional organizations for the advancement of a just, peaceful, secure and more human international order.

Since January 2019 Albania is chairing the one year rotating Chairmanship of the Adriatic Charter (A-5). During 2019 Albania will maintain the rotating one year Chairmanship of the Adriatic Chart (A-5), a regional initiative dating from 2003 its principal goal being support for the Euro Atlantic integration (in particular the achievement of NATO membership) of Albania, Croatia and the Republic of North Macedonia.

Taking stock of contemporary emerging security threats and challenges, the focus of the Albanian Chairmanship will be the further strengthening, of the coordination and of the mutual support of the five A-5 countries of the efforts aimed at actively and effectively countering terrorism and violent radical extremism.

Though not yet a member of the European Union Albania has full alignment with the **EU foreign and security policy.**

During the period June 2018-February 2019 Albania has maintained the same level of engagement in NATO operations and missions such as the RSM Mission in Afghanistan, KFOR in Kosovo, NATO-s mission in the Aegean, and the Alliance Enhanced Forward

Presence in the Baltic Countries. Moreover, in support of the reinvigorated CSDP, our country is actually contributing two EU military missions, in Mali and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As the **host country of RYCO and WBF**, Albania is fully committed to their future success. These initiatives are already operational. They aim to promote development of closer cooperation between the Western Balkans, the mobility, regional youth exchanges and the gender equality among countries of the Region, thus helping to overall acceleration of the Enlargement process as well.

In October 2018, **Albania signed a co-operation agreement with the EU on justice and border management**, becoming the first country in the region, not a member of the EU, to sign an agreement with the European Agency for the Protection of the Border and Coastal Zone (**Frontex**) and the third country in Western Balkans to sign an agreement with **Eurojust** (European Union's Judicial Cooperation). The main goal is to contribute to joint efforts in addressing migration challenge, fight against organized crime, corruption and terrorism.

Economic performance of Albania

In the latest **European Commission report** on the economic performance of candidate and potentially EU candidate countries, Albania is reported to have the highest economic growth in the Western Balkans, including Turkey, in 2019-2020 and the lowest unemployment rate in the region.

According to the **Economic Freedom Index 2019** Albania's economic freedom score is 66.5, making its economy the 52nd freest in the 2019 Index. Its overall score has increased by 2.0 points, led by dramatic improvement for the second consecutive year in fiscal health and higher scores for judicial effectiveness, labor freedom, and government spending.

According to **Doing Business 2019** report, Albania ranked 63rd out of 190 global economies for the ease of doing business, - According to the Doing Business report 2019, as far as the investment climate is concerned, Albania ranks 63th in the world ranking, climbing with 45 positions since 2013.

According to the **European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)**, robust economic growth has continued into 2018. GDP growth accelerated in the first half of 2018 to 4.4 per cent year-on-year, driven primarily by private consumption.