



# THE EU AND ALBANIA

Membership status: candidate country

#WesternBalkans

#EUEnlargement



November 2023

The EU acknowledged the European perspective for all Western Balkan partners at the Thessaloniki European Council in June 2003. The Republic of Albania (hereinafter 'Albania') applied for EU membership in April 2009. In June 2014, it was granted candidate status by the European Council. The first Political Intergovernmental Conference on accession negotiations was held in July 2022. The Commission immediately after launched the analytical examination of Albania's alignment to EU acquis (screening), which is progressing smoothly.



## EU FUNDING

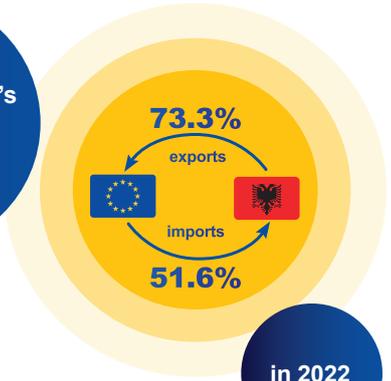
The EU is the largest provider of financial assistance to Albania. The EU is supporting the socioeconomic development and fundamental reforms in Albania with financial and technical assistance through the **Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)**.

For **2021-2023**, the IPA III funding for national programmes amounts to close to **€250 million for Albania**. This includes the dedicated **€80 million** from the 2023 **Energy Support Package** immediate measures, 90% of which have already been disbursed to support vulnerable families and SMEs facing the rising energy prices. The actions are also aimed at supporting policy measures to accelerate the energy transition.

Following the 2019 earthquake, the EU provided **€115 million** in grants for rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Since 1999, the EU has provided **€569 million** in loans to Albania through the European Investment Bank.

The EU is Albania's biggest trading partner



in 2022



## TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Source: Eurostat

Total EU Foreign Direct Investment in Albania amounted to over €11 billion in 2022.

Total volume of trade in goods with the EU was €7.1 billion in 2022.

## KEY MILESTONES





## HUMAN CAPITAL

The EU pays special attention to youth, education, and innovation. It helps the Western Balkans in implementing Youth Guarantee schemes to support youth employment.

11,500+ participants took part in exchanges between the EU and Albania in the areas of education, training, youth, and sport under ERASMUS+ (2014-2020).

The EU has provided close to €33 million in support to civil society (2014-2023).

The EU is supporting the establishment of the new College of Europe campus in Tirana.



## ECONOMIC AND INVESTMENT PLAN

Launched in 2020, the Economic and Investment Plan (EIP) for the Western Balkans aims to mobilise up to €30 billion in cooperation with international financial institutions until 2027. Under the EIP for Albania, the EU has already mobilised **€1.4 billion** in investments, out of which €470 million in grants.

The EIP flagship projects in public sector for Albania, endorsed between 2020 and 2023, support **sustainable transport, renewable energy, and digital infrastructure**.

For instance, the investments help:

- rehabilitate the railway section Vorë-Hani i Hotit, including its train stations, signaling system and other safety improvements
- install the floating solar photovoltaic power plant at Vau i Dejës
- establish computer labs in schools

### Expected results up to 2030



**713 MW** renewable energy generation capacity installed



**185 km** of railway lines rehabilitated



Improved water and sanitation services for over **975,000 people**



**627 schools** equipped with smart labs for **198,000 students/year**

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