

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003004/25
to the Commission**

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(18 July 2025)

Subject: Rule of law in Albania

The Commission's 2024 report on Albania and multiple independent assessments confirm that political interference in the country's judiciary remains widespread, undermining the sustainability of reforms that are central to Cluster 1 EU accession benchmarks. While the vetting process has removed unfit judges and prosecutors, it has also created severe staff shortages, risking delays and backlogs that weaken trust in the justice system.

Meanwhile, repeated failures to implement Constitutional Court rulings and protect fundamental rights threaten the credibility of Albania's commitment to EU values.

1. How will the Commission ensure that Albania's justice reform delivers a genuinely independent judiciary and is insulated effectively from informal political influence?
2. Does the Commission consider the current vetting process sustainable given the resulting capacity gaps, and what measures are planned to address this shortfall?
3. What concrete measures will the Commission take to hold the Albanian authorities accountable for failing to enforce Constitutional Court rulings and for persistent gaps in access to justice for vulnerable groups?

Submitted: 18.7.2025

Answer given by Ms Kos on behalf of the European Commission

(8 September 2025)

The Commission has consistently supported Albania's efforts to consolidate an independent, accountable, impartial, and professional judiciary. It monitors progress of relevant reforms, providing also technical assistance and capacity-building programs.

The Commission has ensured thorough monitoring of the vetting process through the deployment of senior magistrates from Member States in the context of the international monitoring operation.

The vetting has been crucial to strengthen integrity across the judiciary, overall having a positive impact on eradicating corruption. The Commission noted that the process has also resulted in capacity gaps.

In its 2024 report on Albania ⁽¹⁾, the Commission stressed the need to accelerate vetting appeal procedures and encouraged Albania to fill vacant positions with qualified magistrates, at all levels of the judiciary, through transparent and merit-based processes.

The Commission closely monitors the implementation of the Constitutional Court's decisions and assesses the progress made in addressing the shortcomings in access to justice.

It encourages the publication of court rulings and providing access to information for citizens. The Commission also continues to support civil society organisations and independent institutions, such as the Peoples' Advocate and the Commissioner against Discrimination in their efforts to promote access to justice and hold the authorities accountable.

⁽¹⁾ SWD(2024) 690 final.