**Follow-up to the European Parliament non-legislative resolution on
2021 Report on North Macedonia**

**1. Rapporteur:** Ilhan KYUCHYUK (Renew / BG)

**2. Reference number:** 2021/2248 (INI) / A9-0133/2022 / T9-0213/2022

**3. Date of adoption of the resolution:** 19 May 2022

**4. Competent Parliamentary Committee:** Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET)

**5. Brief analysis/assessment of the resolution and requests made in it:**

The resolution on North Macedonia on the 2021 Commission report on North Macedonia supports the official launch of accession negotiations with the country as soon as possible. It ‘*regrets the Council’s failure to officially open long overdue accession negotiations’*. The European Parliament considers that this poses a ‘*serious danger to enlargement policy as a whole’* and is ‘*damaging to the EU’s reputation as a reliable partner and serious geopolitical actor’*. The resolution ‘*urges the Council to demonstrate full political commitment to enlargement and to accelerate the pace and strengthen the credibility of EU integration by officially starting accession negotiations […], especially in the geostrategic context of relations with Russia and its aggression against Ukraine’*. Concerning EU related reforms, it compliments North Macedonia on its continuous efforts to strengthen the rule of law, judicial independence and minority rights, counter corruption and organised crime, reform its public administration and consolidate media freedom. It encourages the country to sustain and intensify these efforts. It commends the swift alignment of North Macedonia with the sanctions imposed in the context of the Russian aggression, thereby reaching 100% alignment with the Common foreign and security policy (CFSP).

The resolution welcomes the process of strengthening good neighbourly relations with neighbouring countries and enhancing regional cooperation.Concerning pending bilateral issues, the resolution ‘*encourages Bulgaria and North Macedonia to solve their cultural historical dispute separately from North Macedonia’s accession process’*. Paragraphs 79 and 80 refer to the pending bilateral issues, including references to textbooks and history. In its 2021 enlargement package[[1]](#footnote-1), the Commission encouraged both sides to find a mutually acceptable solution to the pending bilateral issues as a matter of priority. Existing bilateral agreements, including the Prespa agreement between North Macedonia and Greece as well as the Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourliness and Cooperation with Bulgaria, need to be implemented in good faith by all sides.

The resolution ‘*urges the Commission to implement the recommendations of the European Court of Auditors Special Report 01/2022 to ensure the effective rule-of-law impact of financial assistance in the Western Balkans, including in North Macedonia’* (paragraph 42*).* It encourages the Commission to offer full support to the country ‘*in drafting and implementing an action plan intended to reduce dependence on energy sources imported by Russia, with the aim of increasing resilience and energy security, as well as enabling it to meet EU aspirations for climate neutrality*’ (paragraph 65). Concerning pending bilateral issues between Bulgaria and North Macedonia, it calls also on the Commission ‘*to step up its efforts to facilitate dialogue, and thus pave the way for a viable and sustainable agreement’* (paragraph 74).

**6. Response to requests and overview of action taken, or intended to be taken, by the Commission:**

Concerning paragraph 42, the Commission welcomes the report of the European Court of Auditors on the EU support for the rule of law in the Western Balkans. The rule of law remains the cornerstone of the accession process. The Commission will continue to engage with Western Balkans’ authorities and other relevant actors to take this work forward. The Commission will also continue to monitor the developments on a regular basis, as part of the accession process, and provide recommendations on actions needed.

Concerning paragraph 65, the Commission will continue to support North Macedonia, through technical and financial assistance, to diversify the energy resources and reduce dependencies, including through the Economic and Investment Plan and the Green Agenda.

Concerning paragraph 74, the Commission will continue to support both Bulgaria and North Macedonia to find a mutually acceptable solution to the pending bilateral issues

1. COM(2021)644 final [↑](#footnote-ref-1)