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TWINNING PROJECT

EU SUPPORT TO THE PARLIAMENTS OF BiH IN EU INTEGRATION TASKS



EU TWINNING FACTSHEETS / NEWS ON THE EU INTEGRATION PROCESS

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S NEW ENLARGEMENT METHODOLOGY FROM A PARLIAMENTARY PERSPECTIVE AND BEYOND THE ZAGREB SUMMIT

► WHY TO HAVE A NEW METHODOLOGY?

With the European Commission taking office in December 2019 a renewed approach on enlargement and neighbourhood policy gained ground. The new approach put the enlargement policy back into EU's focus which paved the way for increased support on behalf of the EU Member States to the future accession of countries of the Western Balkans. Reinvigorating the accession process was needed in order to retain the full support and the tangibility of the European integration process. This took the form of a Communication from the Commission published in February 2020, and gave a credible EU perspective for the region with:

- **more credibility** (needed elements from the two sides: from the Western Balkan leaders requiring more delivery on the rule of law, on the functioning of democratic institutions and public administration reform, and on economic reform programme, while on EU's side upon meeting the objectives by the partner country, moving forward to the next stage of the process, and speaking with one voice clearly and honestly on shortcomings);
- **stronger political steer** (high level political and policy dialogue through regular EU-Western Balkans summits and intensified ministerial contacts);
- **more dynamic process** (negotiating chapters will be organised in thematic clusters);
- **predictability, positive and negative conditionality** (this means greater clarity on what the Union expects of enlargement countries, while the merit-based accession process from now on includes conditionality, i.e. when objectives are met, the country should move on, while on the contrary, measures for sanctioning any serious or prolonged stagnation or even backsliding in reform implementation are part of the negotiating process).

The new methodology was endorsed by EU Member States Heads of State and Government on 26 March 2020.

The Project is implemented by the Consortium of the
Hungarian National Assembly, Austrian Parliament and Croatian Parliament



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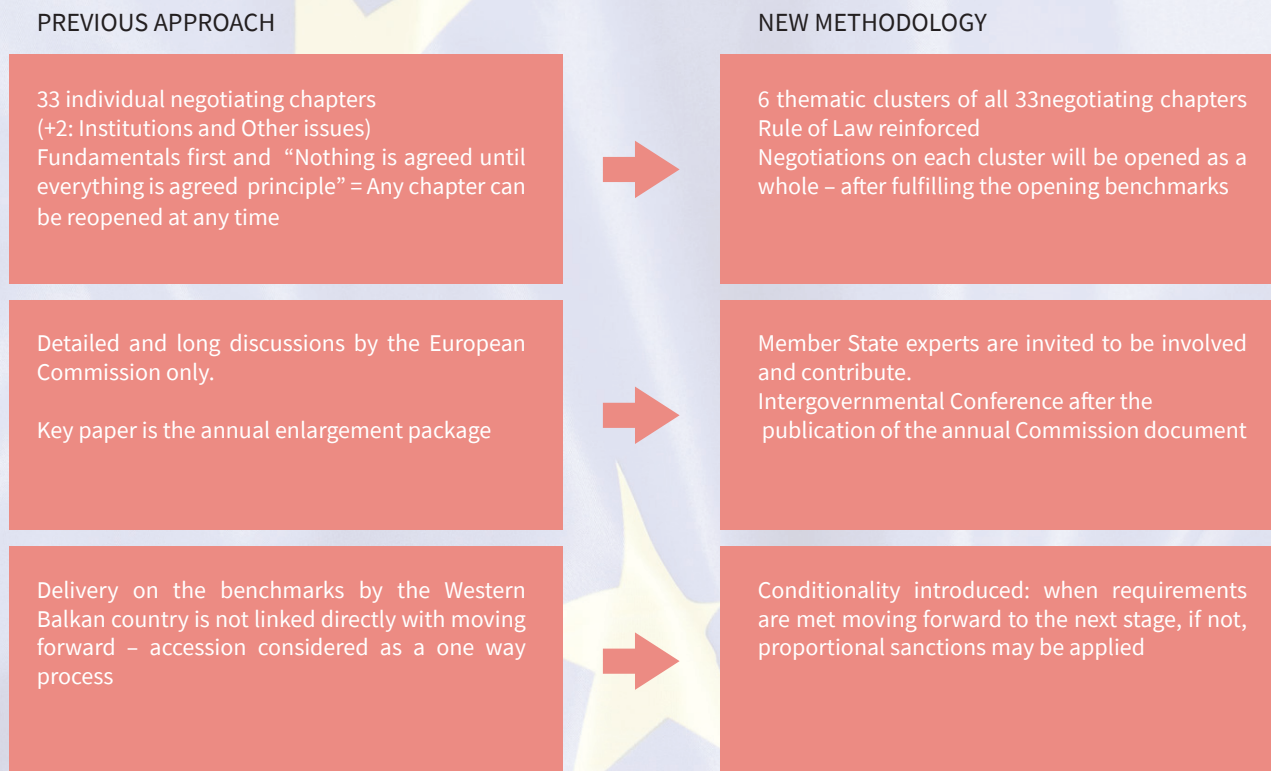


ORSZÁGGYŰLÉS



HRVATSKI SABOR

➤ WHAT ARE THE MAIN CHANGES?



➤ WHAT ARE THE DEVELOPMENTS FROM THE ZAGREB SUMMIT?

Despite of the troubled times because of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the European Union could move forward with the renewed enlargement strategy. The Zagreb Declaration of 6 May 2020 sent an important signal, confirming that the European Union had given priority to the Western Balkans. The Zagreb Declaration reiterated EU's strong solidarity with the region, reaffirmed its European perspective and sent a message of enhanced engagement on the EU side.

➤ WHAT'S NEXT?

The new enlargement procedure will be put into practice in the case of candidate and potential candidate countries (Serbia and Montenegro may choose to apply the new methodology since they started the negotiating process years ago). In addition, in October 2020 the European Commission came forward with the Economic and Investment Plan to support and bring the Western Balkans closer to the EU. The plan focuses on the Trans-European transport and energy links, the Green transition, and the Digital transformation in line with the capacities of the countries.

➤ HOW WILL THIS EFFECT BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PATH?

- Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to address the EU's 14 key priorities in the frame of the EU cooperation mechanism.
- The program for the adoption of the EU legal construction (the so called EU acquis) will have to be adopted.
- The parliamentary cooperation framework with EU set up in the Stabilization and Association Agreement, namely the EU-Bosnia-Herzegovina Stabilization and Association Parliamentary Committee (SAPC) will have to work on to support the implementation of the methodology.
- More political and professional engagement will handle the economic and legislative reforms that are the pre-conditions for stepping forward in the European integration process and having granted the candidate country status.