Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 2645 (2026)[1]

Post-monitoring dialogue with North Macedonia

Parliamentary Assembly

1. North Macedonia joined the Council of Europe in 1995. Until 2000, it was subject to the full monitoring procedure. By means of Resolution 1213 (2000) "Honouring of obligations and commitments by 'the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia'",[2] the Parliamentary Assembly decided to close the full monitoring procedure and engage in a post-monitoring dialogue on "the issues referred to in paragraph 13 [of Resolution 1213 (2000)] or any other issue arising from the obligations of Macedonia as a member State of the Council of Europe". Since 2000, progress in addressing these outstanding concerns has been systematically assessed by the Assembly and its Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee), in particular in Assembly Resolutions 1949 (2013) "Post-monitoring dialogue with 'the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia'" and 2304 (2019) "Post-monitoring dialogue with North Macedonia".

2. The Assembly refers to Resolution 2304 (2019), in which it had acknowledged the progress made by North Macedonia in the fields of democracy, the rule of law, human rights protection and relations with neighbouring countries. However, it resolved not to close the post-monitoring dialogue and to assess, in its next report, the progress made particularly in the following areas: the further consolidation of the sustainability and functioning of democratic institutions, the independence of the judiciary, the fight against corruption, the consolidation of the electoral framework and the pursuit of inclusive policies aimed at securing the rights of minorities (including the Roma community).

3. The last parliamentary elections took place on 8 May 2024. They were won by the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE) party, after seven years in opposition. On the same day, following a second round of elections, the VMRO-DPMNE candidate, Ms Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova, was elected as the first female Head of State of North Macedonia. On 23 June 2024, the parliament approved a new government led by Prime Minister Hristijan Mickoski, backed by a coalition of the VMRO-DPMNE party, the Albanian VLEN Coalition and the ZNAM (For Our Macedonia) party. Local elections took place in two rounds, on 19 October and 2 November 2025. VMRO-DPMNE candidates won in the majority of municipalities, including Skopje.

4. The Assembly welcomes the swift establishment of the coalition government and its demonstrated political will and commitment to fully honour the commitments and obligations reflected in Resolution 2304 (2019), as confirmed by its continued co-operation with Council of Europe bodies, including the Monitoring Committee and the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission).

5. The 2024 presidential and parliamentary elections were observed by ad hoc committees of the Assembly for the observation of elections, which concluded that the elections had been competitive and well run and that fundamental freedoms, including media freedom, had been respected. The local elections of 19 October 2025 were observed by a mission of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, which concluded that the elections had been well organised.

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1. *Assembly debate* on 29 January 2026 (8th sitting) (see Doc. 16317, report of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee), co-rapporteurs: Ms Sibel Arslan and Mr Joseph O'Reilly). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 29 January 2026 (8th sitting).
2. At the time of the adoption of the resolution, the official denomination at the Council of Europe was "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

6. Nevertheless, the Assembly notes that several key recommendations from the Venice Commission and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR) remain unimplemented, particularly with regard to campaign rules, access to the media and the allocation of State funding. It reiterates that, in a democratic State, it is crucial that the legal framework remains conducive to the holding of democratic elections. Therefore, the Assembly urges the authorities to reform, as a matter of priority, the Electoral Code and other relevant electoral laws, by implementing the outstanding recommendations of the Venice Commission and the OSCE/ODIHR.

7. The Assembly welcomes the measures taken and envisaged by the authorities to reform the judiciary and prosecution services. In particular, it welcomes the steps taken to increase transparency in the work of the Judicial Council, the recruitment of new judges and prosecutors and the introduction of the Automated Court Case Management Information System (ACCMIS) and other digital case management tools. However, the Assembly remains concerned about the low level of perceived judicial independence and the numerous allegations of the politicisation of the judiciary. It is also concerned about the judiciary's outdated infrastructure and its insufficient human and financial resources. It stresses that reforming the judiciary and prosecution services should be a priority and that more financial and human resources are needed to make them fully operational. It urges the authorities to address these issues without delay.

8. The Assembly welcomes the government's work on the draft laws on the Judicial Council, the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Council of Public Prosecutors, as well as its co-operation with the Venice Commission on these matters. It calls on the authorities to adopt the draft legislation as soon as possible, taking into account the recommendations included in the Venice Commission's Opinions Nos. 1242/2025 (CDL-AD(2025)026) and 1259/2025 (CDL-AD(2025)036). In particular, the Assembly urges the authorities to implement the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO)'s long-standing recommendation to remove the minister of justice from the Judicial Council.

9. The Assembly welcomes the measures undertaken by the authorities with a view to preventing and combating corruption. It takes note of GRECO's decision of 1 December 2023 to close the Fourth Evaluation Round on the prevention of corruption in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (Second Addendum to the Second Compliance Report) and notes that, out of 19 recommendations, North Macedonia has satisfactorily implemented 14, while 4 remaining recommendations have been partly implemented and one recommendation – concerning the minister of justice's *ex officio* membership in the Judicial Council – has not been implemented. In March 2025, GRECO also closed its Fifth Evaluation Round on preventing corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law-enforcement agencies, in which it formulated 23 recommendations. GRECO concluded that 17 recommendations had been satisfactorily implemented and that 6 had been partly implemented (Addendum to the Second Compliance Report).

10. Despite this progress, the Assembly is concerned about numerous allegations of widespread corruption throughout the public sector, as well as the lack of effective measures to combat this phenomenon. It calls on the authorities to address these concerns as a matter of priority, in particular by:

10.1. fully implementing GRECO's outstanding recommendations;

10.2. taking concrete steps to investigate and prosecute corruption offences;

10.3. amending the Criminal Code in order to remove the 2023 amendments that reduced criminal responsibility for certain corruption offences;

10.4. providing effective and dissuasive sanctions for corruption offences and in cases of conflicts of interest;

10.5. reinforcing the resources of the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption and of the Public Prosecutor's Office for Prosecuting Organised Crime and Corruption;

10.6. adopting comprehensive legislation to protect whistle-blowers, in line with European standards.

11. The Assembly acknowledges that North Macedonia is a country with a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multiconfessional character, which fosters and implements a culture and mentality of "living together". In particular, it welcomes the country's long-standing commitment to addressing the human rights issues faced by the Roma community. This commitment is evident in the adoption of the national Strategy for Inclusion of Roma (2022-2030), as well as in the progress made in improving civil registration and access to education for the Roma community.

12. Nevertheless, some issues still need to be resolved, such as reforming the "balancer" mechanism concerning access to employment in the public sector, applying the Law on the Use of Languages and respecting the rights of people belonging to the Bulgarian ethnic minority. There are also outstanding concerns affecting the Roma community, including environmental risks such as air and waste pollution, and inadequate housing conditions due to lack of access to clean water, sanitation and waste removal. Therefore, the Assembly invites the authorities to address these concerns without delay.

13. The Assembly regrets that, thus far, the parliament has been unable to reach a compromise on the "French proposal", which would involve including a reference to the Bulgarian ethnic minority in the preamble to the constitution. This is a prerequisite for progress in the negotiation process for accession to the European Union. The Assembly invites all political forces to reach an agreement on this matter.

14. The Assembly notes that over 30 judgments of the European Court of Human Rights concerning North Macedonia are still to be implemented and calls on the authorities to implement them fully and swiftly. Priority should be given to the *X v. the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* judgment, which concerns the lack of legislation on the conditions and procedures for transgender people to change their sex on birth certificates, and the *Elmazova and Others v. North Macedonia* judgment, which concerns discrimination against Roma pupils due to their segregation in State-run schools.

15. The Assembly is concerned about the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)'s findings regarding the numerous allegations of ill-treatment of people deprived of their liberty by the police, as well as the worrying situation in North Macedonia's prisons. This situation is characterised by physical ill-treatment of prisoners by prison staff, prolonged isolation of challenging prisoners, high levels of interprisoner violence, unhygienic and unsafe conditions, pervasive staff corruption and favouritism, and inadequate healthcare provision. The Assembly welcomes the authorities' commitment to resolving these problems, as well as the measures recently taken to reform the prison system and improve the material conditions in Idrizovo Prison. It urges the authorities to implement the CPT's recommendations without delay, in co-operation with the Council of Europe Development Bank and other stakeholders.

16. Against this background, the Assembly resolves to close the post-monitoring dialogue with North Macedonia and to follow developments in the country with regard to pluralist democracy, the rule of law and human rights in the framework of its periodic reviews. It invites the Monitoring Committee to devote one of its future periodic reviews to North Macedonia in order to evaluate progress with regard to the unresolved issues such as the reform of the electoral framework, the judiciary and the prosecution services, combating corruption, the pursuit of inclusive policies aimed at securing the rights of minorities and poor conditions in detention centres.