
CROATIA AGAINST NEW RULES FOR EU ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS

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"The new, revised enlargement methodology suggested primarily by France will bring the negotiations being conducted by Serbia and Montenegro into a different position and also perhaps those conducted by North Macedonia and Albania, and we can only imagine what will happen with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. This should be discussed, but changing rules along the way isn't good," Plenković said ahead of an EU summit.

The meeting of heads of state or government will discuss a proposal to set a date for opening accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania. This is an unusual occurrence as enlargement is usually dealt with at lower levels, ambassadorial or possibly ministerial.

EU foreign ministers met on Tuesday but were unable to agree due to opposition from France, which is asking that the decision be postponed until a new accession methodology is agreed on.

Every member state but France supports opening entry talks with North Macedonia, while several have certain reservations concerning Albania. At Tuesday's meeting, a proposal to separate the two countries so that at least North Macedonia could get the green light was turned down. The consensus of all member states is required for every step in the enlargement process.

"The European Commission very clearly recommended opening the negotiations and that the time is right. We believe this is a question of the credibility of the whole process," Plenković said, reiterating that Croatia supports opening entry talks with both countries.

"Now one can see how good it is that Croatia joined the EU, given that everything is changing," he said, adding that "from what I know, I'm not too optimistic" that a positive decision would be made for the two countries.

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