

## Macedonia 'better prepared' for EU accession than some member states

Like 4 Tweet 5 0

By Desmond Hinton-Beales - 12th April 2012

**Macedonia's foreign minister Nikola Poposki has said that Skopje is "better prepared" to start the accession process than some countries that already enjoy EU member status.**

Poposki told TheParliament.com that the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which was afforded EU candidate status at the same time as Croatia in 2005, is "eager" to move negotiations forward.

He added that it is "one of the most Europhilic countries in Europe". "We really want to see all of the candidate and potential candidate countries making steps towards EU accession," he said.

"Our objective is to see the rest of the Balkans in the European family and the fact that Croatia has succeeded is a strong signal that everyone else can do it."

Poposki said that, while the Macedonian people have recently displayed a drop in their confidence in the EU institutions, public support for EU membership has always been around 85-90 per cent.

The Macedonian minister put the wavering public trust down to the "unjustifiable period in the waiting room" the Balkan state has experienced as a candidate country, which he attributes to a lack of consensus in the European council due to Greek opposition.

The European commission has recently launched a high level accession dialogue with Skopje, described by Poposki as a "useful tool" to allow Macedonia to continue with the adoption of the EU acquis, but one which could not act as a "substitute" for the accession negotiation process.

Macedonia has been engaged in a long-running dispute with Greece over the country's name, which Athens feels infringes on Greek national identity and led to Greece blocking attempts by Skopje to begin accession procedures and achieve Nato membership.

Poposki, however, said that, despite high frustration, the Macedonian public are not interested in a condemnation of Greece's actions, but merely want to be given the chance to be an "active contributor to the European family".

An International Court of Justice ruling in December 2011 deemed Greece's blockages as illegal under international law and called on Athens not to repeat this kind of behaviour.

European enlargement commissioner Stefan Füle recently visited Skopje as part of the high level dialogue, and raised concerns over inter-ethnic friction following the shooting of two ethnic-Albanians in the north-western town of Gostivar at the beginning of March.

The land-locked Balkan state avoided civil war in 2001, following armed conflicts between the Albanian national liberation army militant group and Macedonian security forces.

Negotiations between the two parties resulted in the Ohrid agreement which established a ceasefire and offered greater ethnic rights for Albanians in exchange for disarmament.

" We really want to see all of the candidate and potential candidate countries making steps towards EU accession" Nikola Poposki

### Related News

**Agreement reached on terms for Scottish referendum**

**Top UK peer questions 'desire' for more EU expansion**

**More work to be done if Kosovo is to join the EU, says Van Rompuy**

**Protesters march on EU institutions against 'isolation' of northern Cyprus**

**MEP welcomes start of EU accession talks with Montenegro**

### Latest news

**Air crew set to take strike action in protest at 'air safety concerns'**

Aircraft pilots and cabin crew will hold parallel walkouts and rallies across Europe next month

**Schulz in guarded welcome to draft EU 2013 budget**

European parliament president Martin Schulz has given a guarded welcome to a draft deal for the EU budget for next year

**UK MEP in appeal to Pakistan over missing toddler**

UK MEP Sajjad Karim is urging the Pakistani authorities to locate a six year-old British girl who was illegally taken to Pakistan three years ago

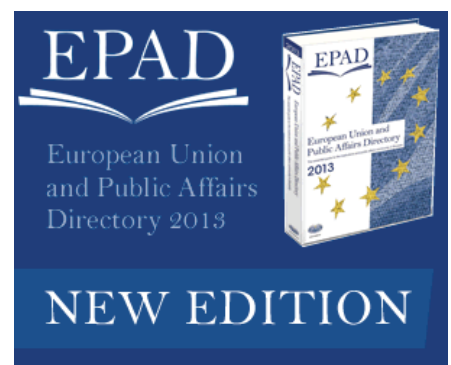
**ECR member calls for 'legal clarity' on EU chemicals legislation**

**EU urged to intervene to resolve latest impasse in Cyprus problem**

**EU political groups agree draft budget for 2013**

**Pakistan's foreign minister defends country's human rights record**

**Member states accused of 'failing to get a grip' of EU fraud**



Poposki stressed that "a separation should be made between those who respect the rule of law and those who break the law".

He added that if Macedonia's institutions react in an appropriate matter then there will be no room for an ethnic or religious argument to dominate the agenda.

"This has been the case with latest incident and the commission representative definitely left Skopje more reassured in the capacity of our institutions to deal with all sorts of challenges," he said.

[Like](#) 4
 [Tweet](#) 5
 [0](#)



**More from TheParliament.com**

**RSS feeds**

[News](#)  
[Parliament Magazine](#)  
[Regional Review](#)  
[Research Review](#)  
[Blog posts](#)

**The Parliament Magazine**

[Archive](#)  
[About](#)  
[Contact](#)  
[Advertising](#)  
[Subscribing](#)  
[Purchase online](#)

**Regional Review**

[Archive](#)  
[About](#)  
[Contact](#)  
[Advertising](#)  
[Subscribing](#)  
[Purchase online](#)

**Research Review**

[Archive](#)  
[About](#)  
[Contact](#)  
[Advertising](#)  
[Subscribing](#)  
[Purchase online](#)

**TheParliament.com**

- [Contact us](#)
- [About us](#)
- [Terms and conditions](#)
- [Advertising opportunities](#)

**More from Dods**

[Dods.co.uk](#)  
[Dods Shop](#)  
[Dods People](#)  
[Dods Legislation](#)

[Public Affairs News](#)  
[ePolitix.com](#)  
[Civil Service Live Network](#)  
[Dods Monitoring EU](#)

[Training Journal](#)  
[Westminster Explained](#)  
[Westminster Briefing](#)  
[Electus](#)

