

**Question for written answer E-002321/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Friedrich Pürner (NI)

Subject: State of play of the EU accession negotiations with Ukraine versus the Western Balkans

Ukraine was granted EU candidate country status in 2022 and is among the ten countries hoping to accede to the Union. The Western Balkans embarked upon their journey to EU membership in 2003. Since then, only Croatia has joined the Union (in 2013), while the other countries are still working towards the Copenhagen criteria. By contrast, although Ukraine is at war, its accession process is advancing at a much faster pace.

1. What progress has Ukraine made in ticking off the Copenhagen criteria and the individual chapters of the EU *acquis* since being conferred candidate status in June 2022, and what specific challenges remain, particularly in the areas of the rule of law, fighting corruption, and judicial reform?
2. Are there discussions within the Commission about adapting or loosening the accession requirements for Ukraine in certain areas – for example, as regards the full implementation of the EU *acquis* or economic convergence – in order to speed up the accession process, and if so, how is a balance being struck between expedition and compliance with the accession criteria?
3. To what extent is the Commission taking the current geopolitical situation and the ongoing war in Ukraine into account when setting timelines and priorities for the accession negotiations, and are there any plans to introduce transitional arrangements or special agreements in order to facilitate the accession process in these extraordinary circumstances?

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