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Answer given by Ms Kos
on behalf of the European Commission
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The Commission's annual Enlargement package reports¹ cover the state of preparedness and progress made, including on all rule of law aspects, which are fundamental to the accession process. The reports cover all candidate countries and the potential candidate. They provide guidance to the enlargement countries on reform priorities for the year ahead.

The inclusion of some enlargement countries in the annual Rule of law report exercise alongside Member States strengthens the EU support for rule of law reforms, supports their accession process and helps maintain a sustainable pattern of high standards after accession. The two exercises are therefore complementary.

The Commission maintains a broader dialogue with the enlargement countries on all elements related to the fundamentals of the accession process. Preparation of the Rule of law reports for the enlargement countries is done in a coordinated manner with the services of the Commissioner for Enlargement who are also responsible for preparing the annual Enlargement package. Close coordination between the different services, together with cross-referencing assessments made in the Enlargement package reports, ensures consistency in messaging to partners.

The upcoming Rule of law report exercise for 2025 will cover the same set of countries as in 2024. The selection is based on their state of preparations as well as progress in the formal accession process. The methodology whereby recommendations for enlargement countries are included only in the Enlargement package will be maintained.

¹ https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/strategy-and-reports_en.