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Answer given by Ms Kos
on behalf of the European Commission
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Following the decision to grant Ukraine EU candidate status in June 2022, Ukraine is currently in the screening phase of accession negotiations. The assessment to open cluster 1-fundamentals, is with the Council. In terms of reforms, Ukraine established a transparent pre-selection system for Constitutional Court judges and further reformed the judicial governance bodies. It has strengthened its institutional anti-corruption framework and its legislation on anti-money laundering, smuggling and financial investigations. It has adopted a law reforming the Economic Security Bureau, a new media law, and revised legislation on national minorities.

Further progress is needed, including on judicial and prosecutorial appointments, vetting and disciplinary procedures, safeguarding the independence of anti-corruption institutions and advancing the reform of law enforcement agencies. Following the revised enlargement methodology¹ which made the EU accession process more credible, predictable, and dynamic, there have been no changes to the requirements. EU accession negotiations remain based on merit and equal treatment, putting the rule of law at the core of the process. The Commission continues to support all enlargement partners towards EU accession.

Overall, enlargement is and will remain a priority for the Commission not least because of the geopolitical context, including Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The geopolitical context might have an impact on the path but does not exempt a candidate country from fulfilling all necessary obligations to join the EU. As in previous rounds of EU accession negotiations transitional arrangements will be exceptional and limited in time and scope.

¹ COM(2020) 57 final.