

EN
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Answer given by Ms Kos
on behalf of the European Commission
(21.5.2026)

The Commission recalls that the legal basis for the accession of new Member States to the EU is Article 49 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU).

Article 49 TEU provides that any European state which respects the values set out in Article 2 TEU and is committed to promoting them may apply to become a member of the EU. Article 49 TEU also states that ‘the conditions of eligibility for accession agreed upon by the European Council shall be taken into account’. Upon the Commission’s opinion and the European Parliament’s consent, the Council adopts a decision on the country’s accession. The conditions of admission to the EU and the adjustments of the EU Treaties which such admission entails are subject of an agreement between the Member States and the applicant State. The Accession Treaty is then to be submitted for ratification by all Member States and the acceding State in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.

The negotiating frameworks, including the one for Ukraine, already stipulate that if sufficient progress is made on reform priorities agreed in the negotiations and the alignment with the relevant *acquis* has taken place, this should lead to gradual integration into the EU single market. Such gradual integration is possible via international agreements that provide for the necessary safeguards to ensure a level playing field for economic operators, protect the integrity of the internal market and ensure the uniform interpretation of EU law.

Ukraine, as some of the other candidates, has set ambitious target dates for its accession path and the Commission is intensely working with them to support these ambitious objectives.