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Answer given by Ms Kos
on behalf of the European Commission
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The EU's accession process is merit based, and progress depends on each candidate country's reform progress, including Ukraine.

Enlargement will strengthen the EU by extending high Schengen standards to a larger number of countries, pushing strong external border control outwards, enabling more effective migration management, and wider cooperation on internal security. Enhanced and effective law enforcement cooperation in cross-border operations is indispensable to maintaining internal security. This means gradually integrating enlargement countries in the EU-wide law enforcement ecosystem and information exchange mechanisms.

Regions along the EU's eastern border stand to gain from accession of candidate neighbouring countries through increased trade, investment, infrastructure development and enhanced cooperation in security. Trade, institutional cooperation and people-to-people contacts between Ukrainian border regions and EU border regions are significant and expected to grow with Ukraine's potential accession. EU programs, including support to cross-border infrastructure and energy and transport networks, will further strengthen economic and social resilience. Under the Connecting Europe Facility, EUR 1.36 billion were allocated to facilitate traffic flows at the EU external borders. The investments take primarily place on the territory of the EU's Member States while strengthening cross-border connectivity with Ukraine.