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E-001695/2026

Answer given by Ms Kos
on behalf of the European Commission
(29.6.2026)

The legal basis for the accession of new Member States to the EU is Article 49 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU)¹. It provides that any European state which respects the values referred to in Article 2 of the TEU and is committed to promoting them may apply to become a member of the EU. Article 49 of the 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 accession of a new Member State to the EU and the adjustments of the EU Treaties which such accession entails are subject to an agreement between the Member States and the applicant state, and the Accession Treaty is then submitted for ratification by all Member States and the acceding state in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.

Preparing for enlargement and taking on the obligations of EU membership remains based on the merits principle for all candidate countries. The Commission supports Ukraine in this effort.

¹ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/treaty/teu_2016/art_49/oj/eng.