

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002305/26
to the Commission
Fabio De Masi (NI)
(4 June 2026)**

Subject: 'Associate membership' for Ukraine

In a letter to EU leaders dated 18 May 2026, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz pitched the idea of 'associate membership' for Ukraine. What does the Commission make of this bid?

Submitted: 4.6.2026

**Answer given by Ms Kos on behalf of the European Commission
(30 July 2026)**

The Commission has received the letter by the Federal Chancellor of Germany and welcomes the fact that Member States are actively reflecting on how to bring Ukraine closer to the EU, where Ukraine's future lies.

For the Commission, this discussion shows the strong commitment across the EU to make enlargement a reality. At the same time, any innovative ideas must be assessed carefully, including from a legal and institutional point of view, and they must remain anchored in the merit-based accession process. The objective is not to create a substitute for membership, or a second-class status, but to support Ukraine on its path towards full EU membership.

The Commission's immediate focus therefore remains clear: to advance Ukraine's accession negotiations, support reform implementation, and ensure that the enlargement process remains credible, fair and fit for purpose for Ukraine and for all candidate countries.

On 15 June 2026, following a unanimous decision by Member States, the EU formally opened accession negotiations on Cluster 1 (Fundamentals) with Ukraine and Moldova. This long-awaited step is a well-deserved recognition of Ukraine's commendable reform efforts, a powerful signal of support and a demonstration that the current enlargement methodology works. This was followed by the opening of Cluster 6 (External relations) on 14 July 2026.

Formalising decisions on the remaining clusters without further delay must remain a priority, as it will reaffirm the merit-based and credible character of the accession process, and clearly and transparently define milestones to be achieved.
