

## THE EU ACCESSION PROCESS

## Step-by-step

#EUEnlargement

October 2024

Every year, the Commission adopts an **Enlargement Communication**, which outlines its **recommendations** regarding the Enlargement process, and dedicated reports, which provide a **detailed assessment** of the state of play and the **progress made by the candidate countries and potential candidates** on their respective paths **towards the European Union**.

These assessments are accompanied by **recommendations** and **guidance** on the reform priorities.

## Main steps to EU accession



1 Country submits an application to the Council (EU Member States).



**2** The Commission submits an **Opinion** on the application.



**3** EU Member States decide unanimously to grant the country candidate status.



4 After conditions are met, Member States (unanimously) agree to open the accession negotiations.



**5** The Commission proposes a draft **negotiating framework** as a basis for the talks. Accession negotiations formally start once Member States agree on the negotiating framework.



6 During negotiations, which are structured according to clusters and chapters, .... the country prepares to implement EU laws and standards



**7** Once negotiations on all areas are finalised, the Commission gives its **Opinion on the readiness** of the country to become a Member State.



**8** Based on this Opinion, EU Member States decide unanimously to **close the accession negotiations**. The European Parliament must also give its consent.

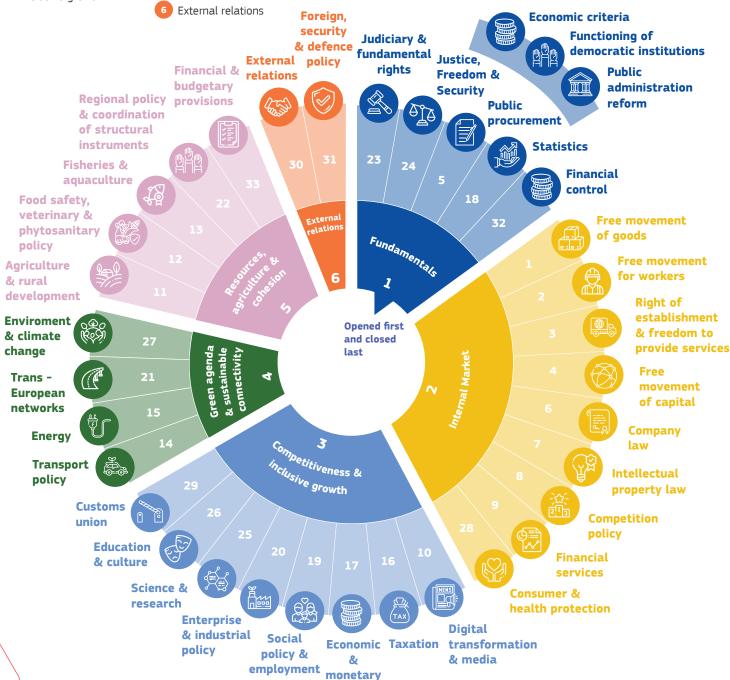


9 All EU Member States and the candidate country sign and ratify an Accession Treaty which enables the country to become an EU Member State.

Enlargement Negotiations

## Negotiating chapters are divided in **six thematic clusters**:

- 1 Fundamentals
- 2 Internal market
- Competitiveness & inclusive growth
- 4 Green agenda & sustainable connectivity
- 5 Resources, agriculture & cohesion



policy

Clusters of

negotiating chapters

Negotiations on each cluster **open as a whole**. Negotiations on the **Fundamentals' cluster open first and close last**; progress under the Fundamentals' cluster determines the overall pace of negotiations.