

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.

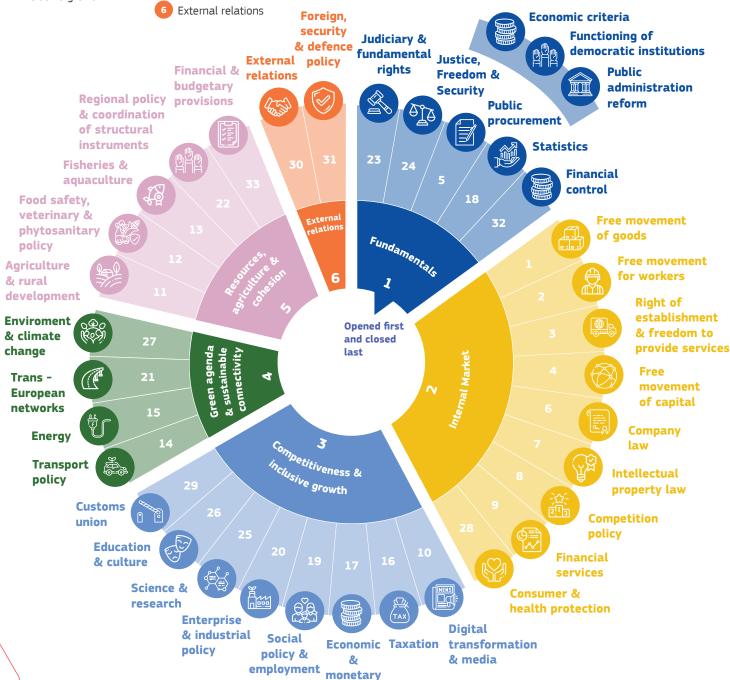


9 All EU Member States and the candidate country sign and ratify an Accession Treaty which enables the country to become an EU Member State.

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.