

AFET III

***Knocking on the door:** With 9 countries currently holding candidate status in their accession process to the EU, what should the outlook towards accepting new Member States be, considering the internal and external challenges these countries are facing?*



Candidate countries:

Albania
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Georgia
Moldova
Montenegro
North Macedonia
Serbia
Türkiye
Ukraine

The **Copenhagen criteria** (for accession)

- **Stability** of institutions guaranteeing democracy, human rights,...
- a functioning market **economy** and the ability to cope with competitive pressure
- the ability to take on the **obligations** of membership, and adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union



1. Country submits an **application** to the Council



2. Commission submits an **opinion** on the application



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



4. After conditions are met, the accession **negotiations** are opened with the agreement of all Member States



5. Commission proposes a **negotiating framework** as a basis for the talks



6. During negotiations, the country prepares to **implement** EU laws and standards. All Member States must agree that it met all the requirements



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



8. Member States decide unanimously to close the negotiation process. The European Parliament must also give its **consent**



9. All Member States and the candidate country sign and **ratify** an Accession Treaty.

"Enlargement of the European Union has always been seen as an instrument of expansion of **stability** and democratic world order. By accessing neighboring countries, the EU reinforces its aim of a prosperous and **united Europe**, with adherence to **human rights** and democratic principles, as it is a main criterion of accession to the EU. Expansion gives a lot of **economic benefits** to the EU and new Member States and promotes security and stability in regions. The larger the European Union is, the more **influential** it becomes on the world stage, and shows that **democracy uprisers**. "

Rostislav Lisovskyi (UA/PL) - Chair of AFET II