



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



Commission submits an Opinion on the application.



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



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



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



During negotiations, which are structured according to clusters and chapters, the country prepares to implement EU laws and standards. All EU Member States must agree that all requirements are met in each case.



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



Based on this Opinion, EU Member States decide unanimously to close the negotiation process. The European Parliament must also give its consent.



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