

Press-release

31 October 2025 p.

**ANNUAL CONGRESS OF THE UKRAINIAN EUROPEAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION 2025:
EU ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS IN FOCUS
(23-24 October 2025, hybrid format, Lviv)**

On October 23-24, 2025, the UESA Congress 2025 titled “Political, Economic and Legal Challenges for the EU Accession Negotiations of Ukraine” was held in the hybrid format at the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (Ukraine) in the hybrid format.

The 2025 Congress of the Ukrainian European Studies Association (UESA) brought together leading scholars, practitioners, and policymakers to discuss the *political, economic, and legal dimensions of Ukraine’s EU accession process*. Held at the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, the two-day event gathered national and international experts from Ukraine, the EU, and beyond, emphasizing the role of academia, civil society, and European partners in supporting Ukraine’s integration path amid ongoing war and reform challenges.

Opening remarks were delivered by Khrystyna Miliyanchuk (Vice-Rector, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine), Markiyan Malskyy (Dean, Faculty of International Relations, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine), Victoria Davydova (EU Delegation to Ukraine), Svitlana Shytikova (Head, National Erasmus Office, Ukraine), and Oksana Holovko-Havrysheva (UESA President, Ukraine). Speakers highlighted the need for sustained cooperation between Ukrainian and European academic institutions in advancing the country’s EU accession agenda.

The UESA Congress 2025 hosted 2 plenary sessions addressing the state of arts in the negotiations between the EU and Ukraine on accession and political and security aspects of the enlargement. In the first plenary session “En Route to the EU Membership of Ukraine: State of Arts” Prof. Stefan Lorenzmeier (University of Bonn) and Prof. Adam Lazowski (University of Westminster; College of Europe, Natolin) discussed the progress of Ukraine’s EU accession negotiations, the evolution of the EU legal order, and the implications of war for enlargement policy. Experts agreed that Ukraine’s European integration has accelerated under crisis conditions, though sustainable reform and rule of law implementation remain key challenges, as well as the EU’s adsorption capacity and political will in the EU Member States will shape also advancement of the negotiations. The second plenary session explored the geopolitical and security context of enlargement. Speakers examined topics such as sustainability in European integration, democratization through EU engagement, the transformation of the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy, and the impact of AI on EU security. Presentations by Rostyslav Romaniuk (Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine), Khrystyna Bidonko (researcher under the RE-ENGAGE project, UESA, Ukraine), Bohdan Hryshetskyy (National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine), Olena Lesyk-Laikari (University of Helsinki, Finland) and Yegor Brailian (Taras Shevchenko National University of Luhansk (Ukraine), emphasized that *Russia’s aggression has reshaped the EU’s security architecture*, with Ukraine emerging as a key driver of the Union’s evolving defense and resilience strategies.

The afternoon sessions addressed such topics as the Europeanisation of the legal education in Ukraine, the role of universities in developing social innovations across Europe and sharing experience of implementing international projects in Ukraine. The session “Reforming Legal Education and European Integration” addressed how Ukrainian universities can adapt legal

education to support EU integration goals. Speakers - Liliana Tymchenko (European Humanities University), Mykhailo Mykivych (Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, and Olga Sheredko (Ivan Franko National University of Lviv)-shared their ideas regarding decolonization of legal education, the experiences from EU-funded initiatives such as *EU4UA*, stressing the importance of aligning curricula with European standards, promoting human rights education, and modernizing the teaching of EU law for post-war reconstruction and reform. The roundtable “Round Table: The Third Mission of Universities and Social Innovations in Europe” explored universities’ social roles in promoting innovation and community resilience. Scholars from across Ukraine and the EU discussed digital education (Iryna Zbyr, project *DigiUni*), service-oriented learning (Dmytro Sherenhovskyy, Ukrainian Catholic University) sustainable development (Maryna Lytvyn, Centre for Sustainable Development, Dnipro Polytechnic National Technical University, UESA, Ukraine), community engagement (Diana Spulber, University of Genoa, project *UNICOM*), and wartime adaptation of education (Tetiana Konovalenko, Melitopol State Pedagogical University named after Bohdan Khmelnytsky and Svitlana Batsyukova, Kyiv International School). The discussions underscored how universities are evolving into agents of social transformation, bridging academic expertise with civic needs.

The final session of the first day highlighted successful experiences of implementing EU-funded projects in Ukraine. Presentations by Ella Derkach, Dmytro Mykolenko, and Oksana Holovko-Havrysheva showcased the achievements of *Jean Monnet* and *Erasmus+* initiatives, which enhance academic mobility, promote EU studies, and strengthen institutional capacity within Ukrainian universities.

The second day focused on *economic, social, and educational perspectives* of Ukraine’s European integration. The morning session featured presentations on Ukraine–EU cooperation, labor and migration challenges, and the integration of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into EU accession processes. Speakers such as Serhiy Kasyan (Dnipro Polytechnic National Technical University, Ukraine), Oksana Krayevska (Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine), and Anna Slavko (Sumy State University, Ukraine) Oleksandra Fedun (Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine), discussed the economic rationale and societal impacts of Ukraine’s EU membership path.

The Young Researchers’ School on Contemporary Trends in European Studies, with contributions of Dr. Oksana Krayevska (Ivan Franko National University of Lviv) and Prof. Roman Petrov (National University “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy”) moderated by Dr. Oksana Holovko-Havrysheva, provided a platform for emerging scholars to present innovative approaches to studying European integration, governance, and EU law.

The Congress concluded with the UESA General Assembly, which reviewed annual activities, discussed membership updates, and conducted the *UESA presidential elections*. Participants reaffirmed the association’s commitment to advancing European studies and supporting Ukraine’s transformative journey toward EU accession.

The Congress confirmed that Ukraine’s path to the EU is not just about meeting criteria — it’s about transformation. Universities, civil society, and local communities are all part of this process, helping to build a more democratic, resilient, and European Ukraine.

Ukrainian European Studies Association is grateful to the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, and particularly to the Faculty of International Relations for hosting the UESA Congress 2025.

Sincerely,

Oksana Holovko-Havrysheva, UESA President.

