

Three stages of accession

Stage 1: when certain conditions met, country becomes an official **candidate for membership**.

Stage 2: formal negotiations: adoptions of EU Law & implementation of judicial, administrative, economic & other reforms necessary to meet the conditions for joining, known as **accession criteria**.

Stage 3: completion of negotiations & accompanying reforms to the satisfaction of both sides.

Membership negotiations

Unanimous decision by the EU council on a framework for negotiations with the candidate country – before negotiations can start

Intergovernmental conference. Ministers and ambassadors of EU governments and the candidate country.

Screening of potential candidate

Screening

Commission & candidate country examine & determine how well the country is prepared

Screening report

Commission presents its findings for each chapter to the member states in the form of a screening report

Negotiation

Prior to Negotiations

Candidate country must submit its position & must adopt a common position with benchmarks which must be reached

Conditionally

Ensure states prepared for membership, while reassuring existing member states that new states will not undermine EU.

Concluding Negotiations

Unanimity

No negotiations on any chapter closed until **every EU government agrees**.

Closure

Negotiations process is only concluded definitively once every chapter has been closed.