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## **EU Commission: accession negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova. Progress for Bosnia and Herzegovina. First “yes” to Georgia**

(Brussels) Accelerating the enlargement process and keeping the doors open to Ukraine, Moldova and the Western Balkans, with a special focus on Bosnia and Herzegovina and on the new candidate - Georgia. This is the line emerging in Brussels today. Indeed, the European Commission has adopted the Enlargement Package 2023, providing a detailed assessment of the state of play and the progress made by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, and for the first time also Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia. In particular, the report focuses on the fundamental reforms required of these countries. “Accession is and will remain a merit-based process, fully dependent on the objective progress achieved by each country” according to what was adopted. And Ursula von der Leyen announced the next steps to be taken at a press conference. “In light of the results achieved by Ukraine and Moldova, and of the ongoing reform efforts, the Commission has recommended that the Council opens accession negotiations with both countries”. In the case of Georgia, “in light of the results achieved, the Commission recommends that the Council grants Georgia the status of a candidate country”. As for Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Commission recommends the opening of accession negotiations “once the necessary degree of compliance with the membership criteria is achieved”. Indeed, the country “needs to apply further efforts to fulfil the key priorities set out” for its EU membership application. The Council is to have the final word on the Commission’s proposals.

Valentina Bombelli