



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 14 February 2024
(OR. en)

6561/24

LIMITE

PE-QE 17

REPLY TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

From: Working Party on General Affairs
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject: DRAFT REPLY TO QUESTION FOR WRITTEN ANSWER
E-002580/2023 - Jean-Paul Garraud (ID)
'European Council putting limits on EU enlargement'

1. Delegations will find attached:
 - the text of the above question for written answer;
 - a draft reply prepared by the Working Party on General Affairs at its meeting on 13 February 2024.
2. This draft reply is submitted to the Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1) and to the Council for approval.

**Question for written answer E-002580/2023/rev.1
to the Council**
Rule 138
Jean-Paul Garraud (ID)

Subject: European Council putting limits on EU enlargement

During his visit to Slovenia on 28 August 2023, the President of the European Council called on the EU to speed up the enlargement process. With five official candidates, the Balkan region is particularly affected. In June 2022, Ukraine and Moldova were also granted candidate country status, while Georgia is awaiting validation by the EU. Türkiye, which has been a candidate since 1987, had its status officially recognised by the EU in 1999.

All of these membership procedures demonstrate that the EU institutions are keen to forever enlarge this European 'empire', even when it means expanding the process to include countries like Kosovo and Türkiye, which have little in common with the millennia-old civilisation that has made Europe strong.

When a powerful organisation like UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) includes countries from outside Europe such as Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Türkiye and Israel, there is cause for concern.

1. Will the European Council put limits on EU enlargement?
2. Can it guarantee that countries which have not historically or geographically been part of Europe will not be admitted into the EU?

Submitted: 6.9.2023

In its conclusions on enlargement of 12 December 2023, and in line with the renewed consensus on enlargement approved by the European Council in December 2006 and subsequent Council and European Council conclusions, the Council reaffirmed its commitment to enlargement. Furthermore, in the framework of the Copenhagen political criteria, the Council reaffirmed the need for fair and rigorous conditionality, the principle of own merits and reversibility. Enlargement is a geo-strategic investment in peace, security, stability and prosperity. It is a driver for improving the economic and social conditions of European citizens, reducing disparities between countries, and must foster the values on which the Union is founded. The Council further confirmed its full and unequivocal commitment to the EU membership perspective of the Western Balkans, Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, reiterating that their future lay within the European Union. Türkiye remains a candidate country and a key partner in many areas of joint interest.

At the same time, the Council stressed that respecting and committing to promote the values on which the EU is founded, and meet the obligations required for EU membership, are essential for all partners who aspire to join. The Council also reiterated that the rule of law is a fundamental value on which the EU is founded, and remains an indispensable requisite for progress towards EU membership. Furthermore, the Council reiterated that full alignment with the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy is a key aspect of the EU integration process and a strong expression of a partner's strategic choice and place within a community of values.

The Council's conclusions of 12 December 2023 were endorsed by the European Council at its meeting of 14-15 December 2023.