

# Press release

22-06-2022 - 19:20  
20220616IPR33217



## MEPs say EU leaders must grab the opportunity to expand and reform the EU

- Ukraine and Moldova should become EU candidate countries as soon as possible, Georgia is also part of the European family but more reforms needed
- Treat Western Balkan countries fairly and unblock their accession process
- EU institutional reform also necessary
- Decisive action needed to deal with inflation, energy costs and food shortages



MEPs spoke of a historic moment to enlarge and reform the EU, and protect Europeans © European Union, 2022 - Source: EP

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On Wednesday, MEPs outlined their expectations for the 23-24 June European Council in a plenary debate with the French Presidency and Commission President von der Leyen.

## Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia

In light of Putin's aggression and the commitment shown by the Ukrainian, Moldovan, and Georgian peoples towards their European future, an overwhelming majority of MEPs called on the EU's leaders to open the path to accession for all three countries. Almost all speakers supported the granting of candidate status to them. But many said that reforms remain necessary -especially in Georgia-, with some stating that the path will not be a short one and referencing the [Copenhagen criteria](#) for EU accession. Nevertheless, many MEPs said that protecting people from aggression and encouraging their European aspirations should be a priority for a strong and credible EU that protects its values, with a few MEPs calling for more military and economic support for Ukraine. MEPs will vote on a [resolution](#) on the candidate status of the three countries on Thursday.

## Western Balkans

Most speakers in the debate also backed the launching of accession negotiations with Western Balkans countries, which despite of their efforts have been left waiting, MEPs noted, for too long. [North Macedonia and Albania](#) in particular need to be treated fairly, they said, while others referred to Bosnia and Herzegovina's prospects and some called for a clear accession path for all countries in the region.

## The Future of Europe

The Union's prospects do not rely only on its enlargement, argued MEPs representing a majority in Parliament. Pointing to the multitude of recent, ongoing, and expected future crises, they demanded EU leaders vote in favour of a revision of the EU Treaties [as Parliament has asked](#). This would, they said, take advantage of a historic moment for the EU - especially in relation to reforming unanimity voting in the Council.

## Tackle the explosive situation in the economy

Many speakers demanded the protection of European citizens and businesses from the triple threat of soaring inflation, skyrocketing energy prices, and expected food shortages. Some called for a ceiling on gas prices and other measures to alleviate energy poverty, while others focused on the need to diversify the Union's energy sources and strengthening independence, with many highlighting investments in renewable energy.

You can catch up with the recorded debate [here](#).

## Further information

[Statement by EP groups' leaders in view of 23-24 June European Council \(9.06.2022\)](#)  
[Conference on the Future of Europe](#)

[Stand with Ukraine](#)

[How the EU is supporting Ukraine](#)  
[EP Multimedia Centre \(European Council, 23-24 June 2022\)](#)

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