

Workshop

## EU Accession Negotiations: Methodology and Skills

Sarajevo, 24-25 September 2026

organised for the Directorate of European Integration (DEI)



Luxembourg Technical Assistance Programme for Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Meeting the Stabilisation and Association Process Obligations

This training is implemented with the support of the Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Defence, Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade

**Venue:** Zgrada prijateljstva između Grčke i Bosne i Hercegovine (Greece–Bosnia and Herzegovina Friendship Building), Trg Bosne i Hercegovine 1, 9th floor, Room 2

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## Programme

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### Target group:

The workshop is intended for officials of the Directorate for European Integration (DEI) and representatives of institutions at all levels of government that are expected to play a role in the future EU accession negotiations of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This includes officials from the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska, Brčko District and, where relevant, cantonal administrations whose responsibilities are affected by the EU acquis. The programme is particularly relevant for civil servants involved in EU coordination, legal approximation, reform planning, relations with the European Commission and preparatory work for the forthcoming accession negotiation process.

### Method:

The workshop combines expert presentations, facilitated discussions and practical exercise. While the first part of the programme focuses on understanding the EU's enlargement machinery and the procedures governing accession negotiations, the second part develops the practical communication, advocacy and negotiation skills required to operate effectively in accession-related interactions with the European Commission, EU Member States and other stakeholders. Participants will be encouraged to exchange experiences and reflect on challenges specific to Bosnia and Herzegovina's accession process.

### Objectives:

The workshop aims to:

- Strengthen participants' understanding of the European Union's enlargement policy, accession process and negotiation framework;
- Strengthen participants' understanding of the EU accession negotiation framework and enlargement methodology;
- Enhance knowledge of the European Commission's role in managing accession negotiations and monitoring candidate countries' progress;
- Familiarise participants with screening procedures, negotiation clusters, benchmarks and reporting mechanisms;
- Improve participants' understanding of written interactions with EU institutions during the accession process;
- Develop skills in advocacy, persuasion and interest representation in accession-related settings;

**Dragan Tilev**, Adviser to the President of North Macedonia on EU Affairs and Accession strategy. (To be confirmed)

### **EIPA Luxembourg – European Centre for Judges and Lawyers**

**Juan Diego Ramírez-Cárdenas Díaz**, Senior Legal Expert, [d.ramirez\\_cardenas@eipa.eu](mailto:d.ramirez_cardenas@eipa.eu)

**Christiane Lamesch**, Senior Project Management Officer, Manager of Luxembourg Programme Organisation Department, [c.lamesch@eipa.eu](mailto:c.lamesch@eipa.eu)

### **THURSDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2026**

- 08.45      Registration of participants
- 09.00      **Opening remarks**  
*Representative of Directorate for European Integration, Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina (tbc)*
- 09.15      **Mutual introduction and objectives of the seminar/workshop**  
*Juan Diego Ramírez-Cárdenas Díaz*
- 09.30      **The European Union and the Enlargement Process: Why Countries Join and How Membership Is Achieved**  
This introductory session provides participants with a broad overview of the European Union and the rationale behind successive rounds of enlargement. It examines the political, economic and strategic motivations that lead European countries to seek EU membership, the benefits and responsibilities associated with accession, and the evolution of EU enlargement policy from previous enlargements to the current candidate countries.
- 10.15      **Q/A session**
- 10.30      Coffee Break
- 11.00      **The EU accession process and enlargement methodology: understanding the framework for future accession negotiations**  
This session provides an overview of the EU enlargement policy and the legal and institutional framework for EU accession. It focuses on the roles of the European Commission, the Council and the Member States in accession negotiations, the revised enlargement methodology, and the key procedural steps towards a possible Accession Treaty between the EU and Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- 11.45      **Q/A session**
- 12.00      **Screening of the acquis: purpose, organisation and role within accession negotiations**  
Screening constitutes the first substantive stage of accession negotiations and serves as the analytical examination of a candidate country's alignment with the EU acquis. This session explains how the European Commission organises screening exercises, the distinction between explanatory and bilateral screening meetings, and the role of screening reports in the negotiation process. Drawing on the experience of previous enlargement rounds and current candidate countries, participants will gain an understanding of how screening contributes to the preparation, sequencing and management of accession negotiations
- 12.45      **Q/A session**
- 13.00      Lunch

- 14.00     **Clusters, benchmarks and monitoring mechanisms in accession negotiations**  
This session examines the principal instruments used by the European Union to manage accession negotiations, including thematic clusters, opening and closing benchmarks, roadmaps and annual assessment reports. It explains how these mechanisms operate within the enlargement methodology, how the European Commission evaluates progress and formulates recommendations, and how Member States use these assessments when taking decisions on the advancement of negotiations. Particular attention will be devoted to the central role of the Fundamentals Cluster in the current enlargement approach.
- 14.45     **Q/A session**
- 15.00     Coffee Break
- 15.30     **The Content and Outcomes of Accession Negotiations: Transitional Arrangements, Membership Commitments and the Accession Treaty**  
Accession negotiations determine the conditions under which a candidate country joins the European Union and the obligations it undertakes as a future Member State. This session examines the principal elements negotiated during the accession process, including transitional arrangements, implementation commitments, safeguard measures, institutional adaptation, financial and budgetary provisions, and participation in EU policies and programmes. The session also explains the structure and legal significance of the Accession Treaty and the Act of Accession, which formally establish the terms and conditions of membership and enable the candidate country to become a Member State of the European Union
- 16.15     **Q/A session**
- 16.30     **End of the first day**

## **FRIDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2026**

- 08.45     Registration of participants
- 09.00     **Communicating, Advocating and Negotiating in the EU Accession Process**  
This session explores effective communication and interest representation in the context of EU accession. Participants will discuss how to engage with the European Commission, Member States and other stakeholders, present information clearly, advocate national positions, respond to objections and contribute constructively to accession-related negotiations and decision-making processes.
- 09.45     **Q/A session**
- 10.00     Coffee Break
- 10.30     **Practical exercise on accession negotiations**  
Building on the concepts discussed throughout the workshop, participants will participate in a practical exercise reproducing an accession-related negotiation scenario. The exercise will provide an opportunity to apply both the procedural knowledge and interpersonal skills developed during the training and will conclude with a collective debriefing and feedback session.  
*Participants supervised by experts*
- 11.30     **Practical Exercise: Debriefing and Lessons Learned**
- 12.30     **Final conclusions and Evaluation**
- 13.00     **END OF WORKSHOP**