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**THE PROBLEM OF UKRAINE’S ACCESSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION. A VIEW FROM POLAND**

Just 4 days after Russia launched a full-scale invasion, Ukraine submitted a formal application for membership in the European Union (February 28, 2022). Four months later, in June 2022, the European Council granted Ukraine a candidate status for joining the European Union. Therefore, events on Ukraine’s path to the EU have accelerated significantly – usually several years pass from submitting an application for membership to obtaining a candidate status. Does this mean that Ukraine can become an EU member just as quickly? Not, of course. The decision of the European Council to grant a candidate status to Ukraine was strictly political in nature and was intended to provide political support to a state defending itself against aggression and to show whose side the European Union is on in this war.

Accession negotiations and obtaining EU membership are a much more difficult challenge – both for Ukraine and for the EU itself. The accession process will take much longer and the political will to accept Ukraine by the EU and its member states will be a necessary but not sufficient condition. The main goal of the paper is to identify and briefly analyze the conditions (factors) that will be most important for the success of the accession process. This includes, among others, answers to questions such as: What preliminary conditions must Ukraine meet in order to join the EU? How should the EU prepare to accession a state like Ukraine? What are the most difficult political and economic problems that will have to be solved during accession negotiations? What are the greatest risks and threats in Ukraine’s accession process to the EU? How will enlargement to Ukraine affect the European Union and its member states?