

## **Council conclusions on the application of Bosnia and Herzegovina for membership of the EU**

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. On 15 February 2016, the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Dragan Čović, presented the application of Bosnia and Herzegovina for membership of the European Union. The Council decided to implement the procedure laid down in Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union. Accordingly, the Commission is invited to submit its opinion.
2. Recalling the renewed consensus on enlargement as expressed in the conclusions of the European Council of 14/15 December 2006, the Council reaffirms that the future of the Western Balkans lies in the European Union. It reiterates that each country's progress towards the European Union depends on its individual efforts to comply with the Copenhagen criteria and the conditionality of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
3. Reiterating previous Council conclusions, in particular those of 15 December 2015, and its unequivocal commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU perspective as a single, united and sovereign country, the Council welcomes the meaningful progress in the implementation of the Reform Agenda which has been agreed by the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities at all levels. The Council calls on Bosnia and Herzegovina to continue its efforts to ensure effective implementation of the Reform Agenda in line with the schedule of the action plan agreed by the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities, to the benefit of its citizens and in close cooperation with the European Union, international financial institutions and international partners, as well as civil society. This should continue to include, as well as socio-economic reforms, reforms in the area of rule of law and public administration. The Council invites the Commission to further report on the implementation of the Reform Agenda including the coordination mechanism. When preparing its opinion on the membership application of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council asks the Commission to pay particular attention to the implementation of the Sejdić-Finci ruling.
4. The Council welcomes the initialling of the Protocol on the adaptation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement to take account of Croatia's accession to the European Union. The full implementation of the SAA, including its adaptation, is an important element of the country's commitment to the EU integration process.
5. The Council further welcomes the agreement on establishing a coordination mechanism on EU matters. It calls on all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina to ensure its effective implementation, as an important step towards improving functionality and efficiency."