

# Alona Lebedieva: The EU Does Not Guarantee Change — It Only Provides Tools for Those Ready to Act

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- On June 23, 2025, Ukraine marked three years since it was granted candidate status for accession to the European Union — a milestone decision made in 2022 amid full-scale war. Since then, the country has implemented a substantial part of the European Commission's recommendations — the so-called "seven steps." These cover reforms in the judiciary, anti-corruption policy, anti-money laundering efforts, media legislation, and the protection of national minority rights. Work continues in areas such as de-oligarchization, where a systemic approach is still required.



Alona Lebedieva

Candidate status has opened access to EU support programs, intensified political dialogue, and deepened economic integration. However, the next phase of cooperation will depend on Ukraine's internal progress in combating corruption, strengthening institutions, and improving governance.

According to Alona Lebedieva, owner of the Ukrainian diversified industrial and investment group Aurum Group, full membership in the European Union will be a consequence of the country's successful internal transformation:

"The EU provides a system of rules and tools, but it is up to us to use them effectively. Reforms must be driven internally — no one else will implement them on our behalf."

The European Union itself is currently navigating significant challenges, including heightened security threats and difficulties maintaining unity and a common policy approach. In this context, experts emphasize the importance of a pragmatic and interest-based strategy on Ukraine's part.

“It’s crucial that we do not treat EU integration as a symbolic goal,” adds Lebedieva. “What matters is whether we are building institutions that function in line with EU standards — not just formally, but in practice.”

The path to EU accession remains open, but success will ultimately depend on Ukraine’s ability to address core institutional weaknesses and sustain reform momentum.

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