

## Gauri Singh

### Speed Versus Scrutiny: The EU's Dilemma in Integrating Eastern Europe



Gauri Singh @gaurisingh · Feb 27, 2024

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In December 2023, the EU opened negotiations with war-torn Ukraine for potential membership. This historic decision comes amid the ongoing conflict with Russia. #EU #Ukraine #EUexpansion 🇪🇺 🇺🇦



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While nine other countries are already EU aspirants, the last member, Croatia, joined in 2013! This raises the question: why the slow pace? #EU #Ukraine #Expansion 🇪🇺

#### Potential enlargement of EU

Status	
	Turkey candidate with frozen negotiation
	North Macedonia accession negotiations opened 2022
	Montenegro accession negotiations started 2012
	Moldova negotiations opened 2023
	Serbia accession negotiations 2014
	Albania Negotiations opened 2023
	Bosnia & Herzegovina candidate status 2022
	Ukraine negotiations started with 2023
	Georgia candidate status 2023
	Kosovo submitted application 2022



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The EU, a sui generis entity, traces its origin from the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 with the Treaty of Rome. From these humble origins it evolved into its current form under the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. #EU 🇪🇺

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Economically, integrating Eastern Europe might seem beneficial, as has been the experience with the 2004 'big bang' expansion and the 2013 one. This phase really went pushed the bloc to countries that enjoyed soviet clout.

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Its success, what EU calls a 'positive-sum' explains EU's interest in expansion. Strategically also expansion seems prudent, considering a revisionist Russia....then why the debates?

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EU approach to expansion follows a roadmap, rooted in its core values—that cannot be compromised.. #EU #EasternEurope





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Joining the prestigious union requires a formal application, followed by in-depth negotiations and, crucially, the implementation of significant reforms to align with EU standards. #EU #Membership

Ukraine's position in international ranking

Indices	
Corruption Perceptions Index 2021	122/180
Index of Economic Freedom 2022	130/177
Human Freedom Index 2021	98/165



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The lengthy process in Ukraine's case is further compounded by several factors. Let's see. ...




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Democratic Backsliding Concerns: Worries have emerged regarding the erosion of democratic principles in some existing member states, especially the newer 21st century members. #EU #Democracy



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East-West Divides: The historical East-West divide in Europe extends far beyond the Cold War politics to as far as antiquity, presenting unique challenges in terms of integration. From language, extending to religion moving to a future which has different ideals. #EU #History



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Cultural Integration: Aligning the cultural fabric of new members with the EU's core values requires careful consideration and a gradual approach. The fear of the aspirant societies not being similar in cultural ethos is a concern in some member states, especially among the western side of continent. #EU #Culture



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Coming back to Ukraine. It's situation presents a unique case. President Zelensky proposed a special procedure for expedited membership, though such a mechanism doesn't currently exist within the EU framework. [#EU](#) [#Ukraine](#).



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Historically, Ukraine acted as a buffer zone between East and West. Its potential shift towards the West presents a novel geopolitical dynamic, necessitating cautious deliberation from all parties involved. As all the integration can have deleterious effects on economy. [#EU](#) [#Ukraine](#) [#Geopolitics](#)



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Additionally, integrating a nation as vast and populous as Ukraine will trigger a power shift within the EU itself from west who are the original builders of the union to the east—the later additions....



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Furthermore, addressing ongoing challenges in Ukraine – from agricultural issues to the suspension of elections and economic instability due to war – is crucial before considering full membership. [#EU](#) [#Ukraine](#) [#Challenges](#)



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But, this is not to say that Ukraine will never become a member! While a proposed 2030 expansion target exists, others advocate for merit-based integration without a fixed timeline. [#EU](#) [#Ukraine](#) [#Expansion](#)





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The path to EU expansion is paved with complex considerations. What does the future hold? Only time, and the ongoing debates, will tell. Share your thoughts! Should the EU prioritize speed or thoroughness in its expansion? [#EU](#) [#Debate](#) [#Discussion](#)

