

€ Universe

What is the
EUROzone?

Benefits of being in EU

EU values
What are they?
Do EU members
share the same values?



CONCEPT OF THE EUROLAND

The common currency area is not a brand new concept in the world economic sphere. Previously USSR had ruble in all of its republic states and economic benefits seemed very relevant for their times. Today the geographical zone of one of the most widespread and powerful currencies, the EURO, is known as Euroland, or more commonly the Eurozone. It consists of all the EU countries that have fully integrated the Euro as their national currency. Currently, in 2015 there are 19 countries that are active participants of Eurozone with exception of Denmark and the UK. All other EU member states will be obligated to join once they fulfill the necessary criteria.

The Euro convergence was set in 1992 Maastricht Treaty. It was a major step in completing the buildup of the European Monetary Union. The 4 main articles of the admission criteria are:

- 1) state's government budget deficit must not exceed 3 percent of total GDP;
- 2) debt to GDP ratio must not exceed 60 percent;
- 3) long term interest rates shall be no more than 2 percent higher than the average of 3 least debt depended countries of Europe;
- 4) Country must have 2 year experience in keeping the balance of exchange rate.

These criterias are mainly in place for the state to be prepared for the "economic shock" it will encounter when it changes its currency.



Although today the Eurozone is the biggest optimum currency area in the world, it still keeps encountering many problems on its way to complete regional integration.

According to many leading international economists, the Euroland can be considered the first serious step in transforming the state-based global relations environment toward the continent-to-continent interrelations. In a long run this could be the beginning of a completely new paradigm.



Did you know

There are several countries that are not part of the European Union, but still use the euro currency. These states are: Andorra, Monaco, San Marino, Vatican and their usage of euro is regulated by many multilateral agreements. Exceptions here are the two countries: Montenegro and Kosovo, as they use euro without any specific treaties.



BENEFITS OF BEING IN EU



The conveniences of having one's state being part of European Union vary from country to country, but at the same time there are

regional advantages that country can enjoy, purely on the fact that it's in the EU region. Big differences of benefits can be classified by the East and West. Main reason is because Western European countries had longer time to have economic development (Eastern Europe was "trapped" in the USSR zone) and thus are more advanced in the human development index and politico-economical standards than their Eastern neighbors.

The main benefit for any country's citizens is the deep respect for human rights that is very holy in the EU. The prevention of discrimination, democracy and the due process of law makes EU mostly appealing for poorer countries who have lower human development fundamentals and are economically less advanced overall.

Another big benefit is the common market area. This is especially appealing for big economical countries, such as Turkey who would be great addition to the EU purely on market-integration criteria. Both political actors (EU and Turkey) would greatly boost the European region's economic power in the world. Next big thing for most countries is the principle of free movement within the Union. With visa-free regime it often sounds perfect for countries like Turkey and Ukraine, because they have a lot of youth who are struggling with job and study opportunities in their own countries and would not take it for granted if

being in the EU would provide them this privilege.

One of the more 'neo' forms of benefits is the environmental protection criteria, that is forced onto the member states by the EU supranational organs.



These regulations protect the flora and fauna of all EU member states and help create the culture of nature preservation. This also helps with the innovative aspect, as most entrepreneurs of EU will (and already are) forced to take nature's needs into consideration when they are coming up with their business ideas. Such concepts and green and blue energy is very new and very nature friendly, but at the same time very strong upgrades to many outdated technologies.

All in all the benefits outweigh and heavily outnumber the negatives, in most cases, but still there are much more things to consider before EU accepts new members or new members accept the EU. Things like cultural clashes, 'value marriage' and identity acceptance can take some time to adjust before states will join and be accepted on purely beneficial philosophy.



EU values

Usually just thinking or saying “values” one can have a lot of interesting thoughts about it because as human beings we all have our own feelings, senses and national behavioral norms. Values are often interpreted and viewed differently by people of different origin and nationality. In this article the authors have conducted a qualitative research by collecting input from three interviewees who each represent different countries. In this way it can be easier to find some ideas about the common values and problems from three young international people from different countries that were interviewed to find out if they have any different senses and knowledge about common EU values.

1. Where are you from?

Afra: I am from Istanbul, Turkey.

Bianca: I am from Cluj, Romania

Mark: Tallinn, Estonia

Afra



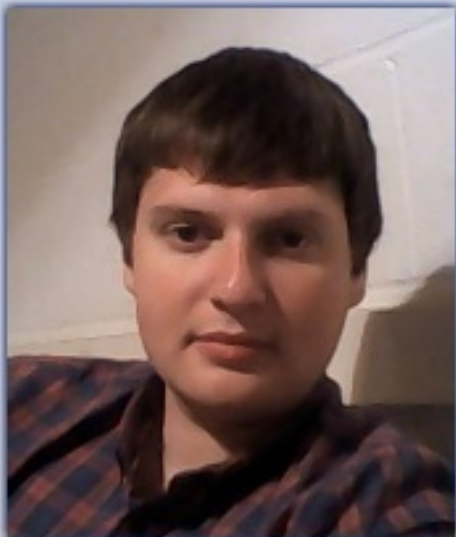
2. What do you think about EU values?

Afra: I think EU values based on to respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality for human rights. Moreover, they play an important role on people lives.

Bianca: I think that the EU values are a strong set of useful characteristics and ideas that all human beings, not only Europeans, should respect. Basically, it's all about respecting each other. It's a fact that there are still people in this world that need to improve from that point of view, so the EU, as a higher power, does well in enforcing them.

Mark: Just like every region has specific values based on identity of the people, countries and history, so does the EU. As a European person both, culturally and factually, I do feel comfortable with the values and norms that surround me here.





Mark

3. Can you give us some examples on EU values?

Afra: Actually I'm not familiar with EU values because my country is not a member of EU, it is a candidate country but I think non-discrimination, justice, equality between women and men and tolerance can be ordered under the title of EU values.

Bianca: Well, I'm not quite sure of the specific values, but I'm aware of what they imply, like acceptance of all cultures, no discrimination, freedom of speech, etc.

Mark: Gender equality, strong emphasis on international law and human rights.

4. Do you think EU members share the same values?

Afra: Yes, I think EU member states are sharing fundamental EU values but they also have their own too. However, my country Turkey is not a member of the EU therefore in Turkey not all values of EU exist.

Bianca: I think that yes, on a fundamental level, all EU member states share the same values, the differences coming from the order of importance, which they find more significant and which not.

Mark: I do think that the values themselves are the same, just based on the cultural borders we have here in Europe. States shared the same regional identities and historical realities of Europe for thousands of years. Of course certain norms and customs are different from country to country, but values are mostly seen as regional, and we do have them accepted as 'common' here in Europe. I am sure that if I travel to any country of EU and tune my etiquette in accordance to not violate any 'EU values' I will not offend anyone – and that is not the case with countries of other regions (Asia, Africa).



Bianca



The research showed that all of the replies from the nationals are similar in the part where they list their knowledge on EU values they themselves are comfortable with. Even the person from Turkey, who is from culturally more distant environment than what is classically attributed to the EU, voiced her desire to be integrated into the EU value system and seemed very content with its ideas. Most importantly none of the interviewees disagreed with the question of tolerance towards having totally different values in different EU countries.

