

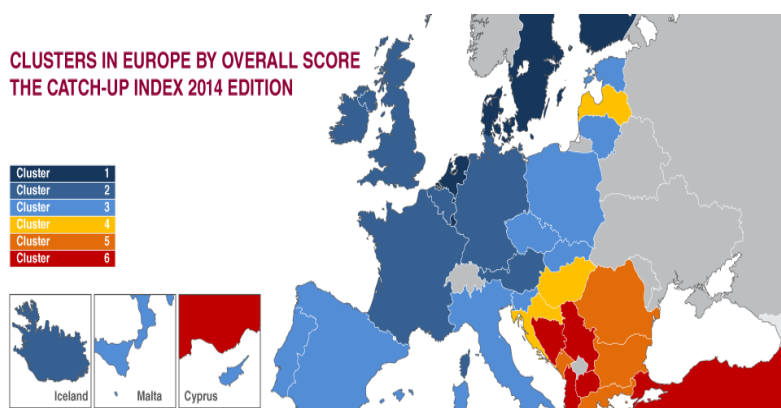
The European Catch-Up Index 2014

The index re-examines the condition of Europe on the 10th anniversary of enlargement and the 25th anniversary of the fall of Berlin Wall

BRUSSELS/SOFIA, DECEMBER 2014 - The catch-up process is producing the desired results as EU member-states in CEE are getting closer to their counterparts to the west in the areas of economy, democracy, governance and quality of life. These findings are indicated by the four year positive trends registered in the new Catch-Up Index 2014 of the Open Society Institute – Sofia.

This is a positive message in the year of the 10th anniversary of the fifth enlargement and 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, substantiating the expectations that EU membership makes a difference.

The report “The Gravity Effect: Findings of the European Catch-Up Index 2014” is based on the fourth edition of the index, which measures and ranks the performance of 35 countries –EU member states, candidate and potential candidate countries across four categories: Economy, Quality of Life, Democracy and Governance, using 47 indicators, with scores from 100-0 (highest to lowest) and rankings from 1-35 (highest to lowest).



The “map of Europe” has been changing as the index identified geographic patterns in the convergence and divergence processes in Europe. This is illustrated by the clusters based on similarities of performance. The findings confirm that the North-South divide in Europe continues to replace the East-West divide, but there are sub-regional patterns emerging too, e.g. some countries in geographic proximity showing similar trends of development.

The catching-up of the CEE counties (EU10+1) shows that Baltics and Poland form the group of the most dynamic performers with Estonia emerging as the leader of the EU10+1. By contrast, there are countries, which are regressing or not moving in the rankings of the index. The Index 2014 reports decline for Slovenia, Hungary and the novice Croatia, despite that they had good starting positions. The countries in the Southeast of Europe continue to occupy the bottom positions of the index ranked as the least dynamic part of Europe. Nevertheless, the impact of EU membership matters as the “newer” EU members as a group are better off than their counterparts outside of the club.

Index 2014 registers that governance, quality of life, democracy categories prove to be still challenging areas in the catching-up process and in the economy category the catching-up seems to be faster.

There should be a word of caution as though many of the EU10+1 are showing progress, only few can compare to the best-performing countries in the EU in select indicators.

The online platform at <http://www.TheCatchUpIndex.eu> allows users to view and work interactively with the data, creating their own “catching up” models and comparisons across countries and indicators.

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The European Catch-Up Index 2014 Ranking by Overall Score

| | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| increase in rank or score | no change in rank or score | decrease in rank or score |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|

| Trends by OVERALL Scores and Rankings | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|------------|-----------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Group | Country | Score 2014 | Rank 2014 | Score change vs 2013 | Score change vs 2012 | Score change vs 2011 | Rank change vs 2013 | Rank change vs 2012 | Rank change vs 2011 |
| EU15+2 | Austria | 66 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| EU15+2 | Belgium | 63 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| EU15+2 | Cyprus | 49 | 19 | -3 | -6 | -7 | -1 | -5 | -5 |
| EU15+2 | Denmark | 71 | 3 | -1 | -1 | 0 | -1 | 0 | -1 |
| EU15+2 | Finland | 70 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| EU15+2 | France | 60 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| EU15+2 | Germany | 66 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| EU15+2 | Greece | 37 | 27 | -1 | -4 | -7 | 0 | -2 | -2 |
| EU15+2 | Ireland | 63 | 11 | 0 | 1 | -2 | -1 | 0 | -3 |
| EU15+2 | Italy | 47 | 23 | 1 | -1 | -1 | 0 | -1 | -3 |
| EU15+2 | Luxembourg | 72 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | -1 | -1 |
| EU15+2 | Malta | 55 | 13 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| EU15+2 | Netherlands | 70 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | -1 | 0 | -1 |
| EU15+2 | Portugal | 48 | 20 | 0 | -1 | -3 | 1 | -1 | -1 |
| EU15+2 | Spain | 51 | 17 | -1 | -2 | -4 | 0 | 0 | -2 |
| EU15+2 | Sweden | 72 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| EU15+2 | UK | 63 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 1 | -1 | 0 | 1 |
| EU10+1 | Bulgaria | 34 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | -1 | 0 | -1 |
| EU10+1 | Croatia | 40 | 26 | -1 | 0 | -1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| EU10+1 | Czech Republic | 54 | 15 | -1 | -1 | 1 | -2 | 0 | 2 |
| EU10+1 | Estonia | 55 | 14 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| EU10+1 | Hungary | 44 | 25 | -1 | -2 | -3 | -1 | -2 | -2 |
| EU10+1 | Latvia | 44 | 24 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| EU10+1 | Lithuania | 48 | 22 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| EU10+1 | Poland | 50 | 18 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| EU10+1 | Romania | 34 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 2 | -1 | -2 | -1 |
| EU10+1 | Slovakia | 48 | 21 | -1 | 0 | 2 | -2 | 0 | 0 |
| EU10+1 | Slovenia | 53 | 16 | -1 | -2 | -3 | -2 | -3 | -3 |
| CC | Albania | 21 | 35 | -2 | 1 | 1 | -1 | 0 | 0 |
| CC | Iceland | 65 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | -2 |
| CC | Macedonia | 25 | 33 | -1 | -2 | -2 | -1 | -1 | -1 |
| CC | Montenegro | 34 | 28 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| CC | Serbia | 27 | 31 | -1 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| CC | Turkey | 26 | 32 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| PCC | BiH | 23 | 34 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

The European Catch-Up Index is a project of the European Policy Initiative (EuPI) of the Open Society Institute – Sofia. More information and previous reports can be found at <http://www.eupi.eu> and <http://www.TheCatchUpIndex.eu> :

“It’s a Process: Findings of the European Catch-Up Index”, 2013

“Aftershocks: What Did the Crisis Do to Europe?”, 2012

“State of the Union: A Big Bang Theory of Europe”, 2011