
EU TO OFFER SINGLE-MARKET ACCESS TO CANDIDATE COUNTRIES

- 30.09.2026

Politico (30 September 2026)

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Economic benefits would be conditional and can be taken away if non-members backslide on democracy or share sensitive tech with unfriendly governments, the plan says.

The European Union will open its vast economy to countries waiting to join its ranks, provided they agree to stand with the bloc against hostile states and industrial rivals, according to a draft European Commission proposal obtained by POLITICO.

Candidate countries – some of which have been waiting decades to become EU members – will be offered unprecedented "gradual integration" into the single market, including frictionless trade and access to research programs, while their applications are being worked on, according to the draft plan.

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