Ahead of the European elections: 14 EU member states rank among the 20 most globalized countries worldwide

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The Netherlands is the most globalized country in the European Union, closely followed by Ireland and Luxembourg. Altogether, an impressive 14 EU members rank among the 20 most globalized countries worldwide, including Malta, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Cyprus, Hungary, Estonia, Finland, Czechia, and Slovenia (see ranking below).

These results are revealed in the latest DHL Global Connectedness Report, the most comprehensive available analysis of globalization's state and trajectory. The report was developed by a team of researchers at the renowned New York University Stern School of Business. The 2024 edition was released in March of this year. It tracks flows of trade, capital, information, and people around the world and measures the globalization of 181 countries and territories.

The 2024 report shows that global flows have proven surprisingly resilient through multiple waves of shocks, from the Covid-19 pandemic to the war in Ukraine. Out of the 27 EU member countries, 25 have actually increased their global connectedness since 2017, strongly rebutting the notion that we are in a period of deglobalization. The DHL Global Connectedness Report also highlights how international ties can accelerate economic growth, expand the variety of available goods and services, reduce costs,

enhance cultural exchange, and improve the spread of ideas and innovation.

EU membership boosts countries' links to the world

The research further demonstrates how countries' international ties tend to grow substantially when they join the EU. Malta, Slovenia, Cyprus, Lithuania, Slovakia, Estonia, and Poland are all among the 20 countries with the world's largest increases in global connectedness since 2001. These countries completed their EU accession in 2004.

Such developments are supported by the EU's core principles. The "four freedoms" - guaranteeing the free movement of goods, capital, services, and people among EU member states - play a pivotal role in boosting international exchange. In addition, the EU's Copenhagen Criteria encourage information flows by emphasizing press freedom.

Mike Parra, CEO of DHL Express Europe, comments, "The DHL Global Connectedness Report clearly shows the benefits of being part of the EU. The EU's commitment to free trade, open markets, and easy movement of talent fosters an excellent environment for companies and economies to thrive internationally. Also, it opens up opportunities for people to exchange, learn, and grow, fostering a culturally rich society. With a strong presence in all 27 EU countries and a unique global network, DHL is the ideal logistics partner to connect people and businesses in Europe and beyond."

Overall ranking of the EU's most globalized countries: Netherlands at the top

The Netherlands' top position in the ranking of the EU's most globalized countries below is based on a unique combination of factors. The country enjoys excellent sea, air, and land transport links, is located near other major economies, boasts an attractive domestic market, and has a long tradition of international openness. In the global ranking, which can be found in the report, the Netherlands is topped only by Singapore.

Source: DHL Group