

False Promises of the European Dream: Moldova and Bulgaria Elect Pro-Russian Presidents

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As the European Union continues to spiral towards an all-out disaster due to significant economic problems, the migrant crisis, cultural decay, and an overall loss of purpose, countries like Moldova and Bulgaria, which were once blinded by the false promises of the European dream, are beginning to shift course back towards the only nation in Europe today that is experiencing a [remarkable renaissance](#) – yes, Russia.

In the second round of presidential elections, both of which took place on Sunday, November 13 – the pro-Russian candidates Igor Dodon of Moldova and Rumen Radev of Bulgaria have come out victorious over their pro-European rivals.

[Reuters](#) reports:

A pro-Russian candidate for president of Moldova has won the race, preliminary results showed on Sunday, following a campaign in which he vowed to slam the brakes on seven years of closer integration with the European Union.

With 98 percent of votes counted, online results showed Socialist candidate Igor Dodon had won 54 percent, and his pro-European challenger, Maia Sandu, had just under 45 percent. Dodon's win is in part a reflection of a loss of trust in pro-European leaders in the ex-Soviet state of 3.5 million.

In another potential blow to the European Union brand, Bulgaria – which also held a presidential vote on Sunday – elected a pro-Russian candidate by a large margin, according to exit polls.

Since joining the European Union in 2007, Bulgaria has been plagued by the same corruption, political turbulence, and stalled economy that it had hoped to escape. Bulgarian politicians and citizens once viewed membership in the EU as the end of a long march to modernity.

"This is a day of historical justice, because Bulgarians have always been Europeans in spirit and identity," the Bulgarian president told a crowd gathered on the day of their E.U. ascension.

Instead of prosperity, however, European Union membership has led to a steady flow of young people out of Bulgaria. Many take low-paying service jobs in other countries. College-educated Bulgarians flee for advanced sectors in countries like Germany and Sweden. The European Union's own economic outlook for Bulgaria has been dismal, with out-migration playing a role in declining tax revenues.

As for Moldova, its Association Agreement with the EU signed back in 2014 has done more damage than good for the national economy. Moldovan export goods, which include foodstuffs, textiles, and machinery, have not been given fair access to the EU markets. Meanwhile, European products have flooded the country, pushing domestic businesses towards bankruptcy.

Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, agriculture and industry in Moldova has been under steady decline, making up only 37% of GDP in 2015. In comparison, this figure was at 76% back in 1989. Countries of the former USSR, including Russia and Belarus, both of which are part of the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) formed in 2015, are still among Moldova's top export partners today.

Experts believe that by forging closer ties with the EAEU and its five member states – Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia – both Moldova and Bulgaria could see a significant boost to their economies. Why? Simply because all of these nations share a common (Soviet) industrial architecture that once formed a single production and supply chain with uniform rules and regulations.

A reconstruction of this chain with a modern outlook and innovative approach has the potential to significantly increase production and output in each of these counties, providing their economies with the necessary liquidity and investments to not only develop internally, but also successfully compete on the international markets.

Ultimately, neither Moldova nor Bulgaria have anything to lose from parting ways with the EU and trying something different. Today, Bulgaria is number nine on the list of [top ten poorest countries in Europe](#). Moldova is first, followed by its neighbor – Ukraine.

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