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Enlarging the European Union: The short-term success of incrementalism and de-politicisation

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Enlarging the European Union: The Short-Term Success of Incrementalism and De-Politicisation[1]

by Gerda Falkner and Michael Nentwich

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Abstract

This paper analyses the most important issues of the EU enlargement process. We first discuss an empirical paradox involved in enlargement: the obvious development of the original European Communities into a Union with important supranational features and ever more policy clout has by no means discouraged aspirant member states. Why is it that more and more states are willing to give up much of their otherwise cherished national sovereignty by joining this Union, knowing that even more sovereignty will be eroded over time? Then we address the major challenges the EU has to face before actually widening any further, in particular concerning financial and institutional issues as well as internal and external boundaries. The concluding section discusses implicit and explicit EU enlargement strategies of past and present times. We argue that there is a danger that the incrementalist and de-politicised character of the recent enlargement (non-)discussions are successful only in the short term while actually being rather dangerous in the longer run.

Kurzfassung

Dieser Artikel analysiert die wesentlichsten Themen des EU-Erweiterungsprozesses. Zunächst diskutieren wir das empirische Paradox der Erweiterung, nämlich daß sich zwar einerseits die ursprünglichen Europäischen Gemeinschaften in eine Union mit wichtigen supranationalen Befugnissen und immer mehr politischer Durchsetzungskraft entwickelt hat, dies aber die Erweiterungskandidaten keineswegs abgeschreckt hat. Warum sind immer mehr Staaten bereit, ihre ansonsten gehegte nationale Souveränität durch einen Beitritt zur Union aufzugeben, während sie sich sogar dessen bewusst sind, daß auch weiterhin noch mehr Souveränität abzugeben sein wird? Anschließend widmen wir uns den wichtigsten Herausforderungen, denen sich die EU vor der anstehenden Erweiterungsrunde stellen muß, nämlich den finanziellen und institutionellen Fragen wie auch der Festlegung ihrer internen und externen Grenzen. Der abschließende Teil diskutiert die früheren und aktuellen (sowohl impliziten wie auch expliziten) Erweiterungsstrategien der EU. Wir weisen darauf hin, daß der inkrementelle und entpolitisierte Charakter der jüngsten Beitrittsdiskussion zwar kurzfristig erfolgreich scheint, aber langfristig gefährlich sein könnte.

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1 Introduction

For a long time, the participation of ever more states in the process of European integration was of interest almost exclusively to a few 'widening experts'. Only during the 1990s, the process of widening and its implications for the European Union (EU) policy-making process became of central interest for most, if not all, scientific and political observers of the European Union. This corresponds to the acceleration of the enlargement process, since the 1950s and 1960s saw only the six original member states participating in the integration enterprise. The first doubling of participants occurred between 1973 and 1985, and this number did not increase until the inclusion of some of the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) countries (Austria, Finland, and Sweden) ten years later. Yet, within another ten years, from 1995, the EU could actually double again to include thirty member states.

Membership negotiations are now under way with twelve applicants: since March 1998 with the 'first wave' countries Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Estonia, Slovenia, Cyprus, and since mid-February 2000 with the 'second group' consisting of Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Latvia, Slovakia and Malta. With the former group, the 'final' chapters are expected to be opened by mid-2000 (with some other chapters already being 'provisionally closed'). With the latter one, negotiations start - as they usually do - with those parts of the *acquis* which are considered easiest. At the Helsinki European Council of December 1999, it was decided that members of the second group may, according to the 'regatta' approach, catch up with some of the first.

This will depend on the annual individual country reports which assess the progress the candidate countries have made in meeting the so-called Copenhagen criteria (European Council 1993). According to the latter, membership requires that the country has

- achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities,
- a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the Union, and
- the ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.

It is important to note that both political and economic criteria are included in this catalogue. The duality of financial and political interests is actually present on both sides of the EU-border. The respective weights differ from country to country (both among the members and among the applicants) and shift over time. Since the dismantling of economic borders is already well advanced by now (although there are sectors excluded under the Europe Agreements),[2] and since the economic models so far indicate that eastern enlargement seems to be a 'win-win' game for both sides (Breuss, 1999: 32[3]), it seems that issues of political stability and democracy gain in weight.[4]

The most pressing problems of each of the applicants according to the 1999 evaluation are assembled in Table 1 of the Annex. Comparing the issues listed there, one can see that some show up more frequently (e.g. administrative reform, justice and the protection of minorities) whereas others are rather specific (e.g. the political Copenhagen criteria). The Commission detects in all countries problems with the functioning of the market economy structure, at least in certain fields. Shortcomings thus identified are usually included in the annually updated 'Partnerships for Accession', which have as a goal to set out in detail and explain, for each of the

countries concerned, the fields and sectors in which, according to the EU, these countries must make priority efforts to prepare for membership.

At the time of writing, it is impossible to say if the applicants' target dates for joining the EU 'mystery train' will hold (see Table 2), although some seem rather unrealistic. There is still no EU decision on when to admit new members. There is, however, the goal set at Helsinki to do what is necessary at the IGC 2000 so as to be ready to take in new members by the end of 2002 (Europe 13.12.1999). The Commissioner for enlargement, Günter Verheugen, explained that this does not rule out an earlier decision, but that three conditions will need to be met: the necessary financial resources must be available (a condition which Verheugen considers satisfied with Agenda 2000; but see below), the results of the EU institutional reform must be operational (i.e. ratification completed), and the accession negotiations must be concluded with the applicants in question. Usually well-informed sources conclude that the ratification process for the first accession treaties could thus begin in 2003. 'Given the usual length of time needed for Member State ratification, the first accessions could take place in 2004 at the earliest' (Europe 11.12.1999).

Confronted with literally hundreds of publications on one or the other aspect of the process of EU enlargement, and with fast real-world developments while this text goes to press, this chapter can only address some basic issues and refer to the most central books and a few important articles. The first section will discuss an empirical paradox involved in EU enlargement: the obvious development of the original European Communities into a Union with important supranational features and ever more policy clout has by no means discouraged aspirant member states. Why is it that more and more states are willing to give up much of their otherwise cherished national sovereignty by joining this Union, knowing that even more sovereignty will be eroded over time? The second section addresses the major challenges the EU has to face before actually widening any further concerning financial and institutional issues as well as internal and external boundaries. The third section will discuss implicit and explicit EU enlargement strategies of past and present times. It will argue that there is a danger that the incrementalist and de-politicised character of the recent enlargement (non-)discussions are successful only in the short term while actually being rather dangerous in the longer run.

2 Join the Rolling Mystery Train!

Viewed from a distance and over time, the EU can be seen as the centre of a galaxy. For many years it seemed as if some of the surrounding groups of states moved quite independently and sometimes in the opposite direction. They belonged to the communist (Central and Eastern European Countries - CEEC), authoritarian (Spain, Portugal, Greece) or neutral 'third way' world (Austria, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland). In the event, their trajectories have converged, and further 're-positionings' are likely. However, significant developments have also occurred within the Union itself, making it a 'moving target' for the outside world. Thus, over time, not only does the nature of the aspirant states change, but also the EC/EU itself has evolved into a different kind of political system to which new member states need to be accommodated.

When the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, and Norway applied for membership in 1961, the European Economic Community (EEC) was still in the first of three transitory phases during the introduction of its common market. When the negotiations were completed in 1972,[5] the EEC had reached its final stage and achieved a customs union. Even if supranational features, explicitly provided for in the EEC Treaty (notably qualified majority voting), had hardly come into play in the aftermath of the 1965/66 'crisis of the empty chair' and the so-called Luxembourg Compromise, the European Court of Justice (ECJ) had meanwhile developed its doctrines of

direct effect and supremacy of EC law (ECJ judgements Van Gend 1963; Costa/ENEL 1964). They significantly contributed to the supranational quality of the EC's legal order - a factor not clearly envisaged by the founding fathers.

While the main ambitions of the first additional member states, Great Britain, Ireland, and Denmark,[6] had been economic (Laurent 1994: 126), the subsequent three southern applicants, Greece (1975), Spain and Portugal (1977), desired membership for more overtly political reasons. These (then) recently democratised states were included in the Communities, despite their comparatively less-developed capitalist economies, for the purpose of keeping them democratic and non-communist (Wallace 1989). Clearly, however, their specific economic interests subsequently influenced the further development of the Union; this mainly concerned the financing of new EC policies. Soon after joining the Union in 1981, Greece made the accession of Spain and Portugal (finally achieved on 1 January 1986) conditional upon the setting up of 'Integrated Mediterranean Programmes', whose task was to fight regional disparities within the EC (Nicholson and East 1987: 201). And when the first major reform package of the Rome Treaties, the Single European Act, was negotiated 1985-6, the less-developed EC economies achieved a significant transfer of money via the structural funds, in order to cover the expected costs to them of the Internal Market. Similarly, the Cohesion Fund was introduced by the Maastricht Treaty, which set up a timetable for Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) among the EC members in 1992.

The negotiations on this new 'constitution' for the EU (1991-2) were, even then, followed with lively interest by the majority of the EFTA member states[7], who had to wait for another repositioning of the 'moving target' EC before membership negotiations were started with them. On the eve of the various EFTA applications, the EC's decision had been to deepen significantly before widening subsequently. Because the Internal Market Programme proved to be attractive to non-members as well, Commission President Delors, in early 1989, offered to the EFTAs a new kind of structured partnership, based on wider market integration as well as on common decision-making and administrative institutions. Thus, the establishment of the 'European Economic Area' (EEA) might dampen the immediate membership ambitions although, in the event, it did not meet the EFTA members' expectations.[8]

Austria was first among the group to apply officially for membership in 1989 (Schneider 1994, Falkner 1995). When the end of the Soviet Union had significantly altered the broader international arena and also partly influenced their national economies, Sweden, Finland, Switzerland, and Norway applied in 1991-2. Eventually, the EC decided that negotiations with the EFTA applicants could begin after the signing, but before the actual implementation, of the Maastricht Treaty. The Union's internal difficulties - particularly economic recession, and the ratification problems of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) - seem to have made an externally-oriented initiative politically attractive and opportune. For some of the new members, the Union had again developed to a significant extent between their application and their final admittance to the club in January 1995. Again, deepening did not seem to make membership less attractive to aspirant member states.

One significant development was the increased stress on correct implementation of EC law. In its Francovich ruling 1991, the ECJ introduced liability of the member states for damage resulting from incorrect or non-implementation of Directives. Furthermore, the Maastricht Treaty provided for fines against governments which do not follow an ECJ ruling (now Article 228 TEC). Thus, the new members of 1995 had to accept not only more, but also more binding rules. The association that they joined had a much stricter set of club rules! The post-Maastricht Union had a strongly increased supranational character with features such as a Union citizenship, increased powers for the European Parliament (EP), and the independent European Central Bank

overseeing EMU.

To date, there is still little sign of the 'moving target' slowing down. The Amsterdam Treaty[9] (in force since 1 May 1999) once again brought significant policy innovations. In particular, it integrated the Schengen agreement, set up a common visa policy, made employment policy co-ordination a European competence, plus reinforced the foreign and defence policy structures and competencies. In short, it extended the Union's area of activity beyond anything known so far in economic integration. On the basis of the Amsterdam Treaty reforms, but mainly driven by external and national developments, the EU has recently developed into much more of a political union than before. In the words of German Chancellor Schröder, the EU is now even a 'community of values' (Europe 13.12.1999). While this must be understood partly as political rhetoric, it is not without foundation.

A development in this direction can be seen, *first*, in the relation between the EU and its member states. The sanctions of fourteen member states against Austria, after a centre-right government including the *Freiheitliche Partei Österreich (FPÖ)* (until spring 2000 chaired by Jörg Haider) came into office, indicate that the EU now wants to go much further in the direction of controlling national *politics* (even at the level of government formation) than ever before. At the level of *policies*, the EU increasingly touches even those realms which are (de jure or de facto) beyond its regulative activities under the present Treaties. This is often done via new governance mechanisms such as peer pressure, benchmarking and the like. Further 'soft steering' happens by formulating EU guidelines and having the member states report on an annual basis. The EU's recent break-in in additional policy areas which were hitherto managed at the national level only happens occasionally on the basis of an explicit and specific Treaty (see for example the Amsterdam employment chapter). Other examples come under the cover of economic policy goals. A prominent case in point are the annual economic policy guidelines. The Commission's report on the implementation of the 1999 guidelines, for example, urged Germany to take steps towards a far-reaching reform of its social security and pension systems. The Commission furthermore involved itself in the French debate, on whether to use additional funds from higher than expected growth rates to cut taxes or to lower the deficit, by pressing for the second option (Financial Times, 9.3.2000). In any case, EU involvement in formerly purely internal member state affairs nowadays goes far beyond what was practice when Austria, Finland and Sweden joined the EU in 1995!

The new quality of political union is, *second*, expressed in the relationship between the EU, on the one hand, and applicant as well as third countries, on the other. Earlier pre-accession processes and relationships so far based on association agreements only included multiple contacts but did not impose an EU model on the applicant countries, at least not before joining. Nowadays, adaptive pressure on national politics and state structures in those countries which want to become members in the future is enormous. The EU clearly wants to exert the largest possible influence and will not accept applicants before they, for example, abolish the death penalty, have free press and party systems, reform their administrations according to EU standards, promote social and civic dialogue, control their external borders regarding immigration, and protect minorities within their frontiers. The latter point is an obvious example where widening will lead to further deepening, since there are to date no common rules on minority protection among the EU-15 (on processes of 'internalisation', see Friis and Murphy 1999b)! In addition to the striking argument of potential membership, EU instruments employed with a view to influencing external political systems are diplomatic[10] and financial[11].

The IGC 2000 will probably not only agree on institutional reforms but also include some further steps towards political union. Whatever the result, however, no applicant state seems to be ready to fundamentally reconsider membership on the basis of the changes envisaged. Once again, the

increasingly supranational and constantly changing character of the European integration enterprise seems not to harm prospective new members' ambitions to jump on the moving train. Indeed, ever more European countries are interested in joining - leaving Norway, Switzerland, Iceland, and Liechtenstein as 'deviant' cases (see Table 2). Apart from the applications of Cyprus and Malta (both pending since 1990) and Turkey (the 1987 membership application had until 1999 been set aside following an unfavourable Commission opinion in 1989 (see Redmond 1993) but was revived late 1999), it is the former members of the Eastern bloc who now have an urgent wish to join the Union. It is worth noting that until 1988 the USSR and its eastern European allies did not even formally recognise the EC (Laursen 1993: 222). Yet several 'reform states' decided very quickly after their transition to pluralist democracy that they are ready to relinquish much of their newly-gained political sovereignty in order to become Union members (see Table 2). Even the Ukraine[12], Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia (Wolter 1999: 33) have expressed the wish to join at least in the long run. All this is despite the fact that the east Europeans are seeking to enter a substantially more integrated Union from a lower economic base than has been the case in previous enlargements (Preston 1995: 459).

Clearly, the fact that so many additional candidates want to take over such far-reaching duties is partly the result of much-debated economic and security considerations (for the detailed specification of which there is no space here). However, there are also political aspects to be taken into account. Contradicting the suggestion that European integration is a zero-sum game (i.e. if the Union gains in political influence the member governments necessarily lose an equivalent amount), researchers have focused increasingly on European integration as a reaction to general economic and political trends, providing rather beneficial effects for national polities. This is particularly true for governments and their administrations as opposed to other actors (which is *one* reason why EU-membership is not an unchallenged option anywhere). The west European welfare states have reached a new stage of development, in which they can no longer independently meet increased welfare provision due to increased internationalisation of economies. Thus, joint management of regional and global interdependence becomes increasingly attractive (see for example Wessels' 'fusion thesis' [1992]).

Also, the EU has been seen as providing the governments with a tactical advantage vis-à-vis other national actors. The Union can be viewed as an additional arena for action, allowing them to strategically employ both the European and the national environments in order to increase their action capacity in a 'two-level-game' (Putnam 1988) or 'nested game' (Tsebelis 1990). Thus, powerful interest groups at the national level can sometimes be circumvented via the EU channel (Grande 1996). One well-known example of this phenomenon was that the Austrian membership application in part reflected the leading politicians' impression that only with the EC internal market as a 'whip in the window' (Schneider 1990: 102, Falkner 2000), could the existing structure of economic protectionism be dissolved in the face of a variety of vested interests embedded in Austrian politics. Also, the 'mantle of the EC adds legitimacy and credibility to Member State initiatives' (Moravcsik 1993: 515). This is probably even more relevant in most of the reform countries, whose governments still have to establish both trust in the newly created pluralist political systems and respect of their rule of law. If the belief in political traditions and a country's own political elite is weak, being embedded in a larger political system may add significantly to the stability of the national political system by providing legitimacy (Rupp 1995: 7). What appears as a benefit to many, if not all, EU governments might, therefore, be a special membership incentive for the Central and Eastern European Countries' (CEEC) political leaders.

However, before more members are admitted, the EU and the applicants still have to find agreement on a number of delicate issues, among them notably financial and institutional ones.

3 Open Questions and Major Challenges

A) Financial Issues

Even given that Eastern enlargement appears to be a 'win-win' game in economic terms (see above), the financial issue nevertheless touches the fundament of European integration: 'At the economic core of the integration model is a balance between attaining economic efficiency through competition and free trade on the one hand and mitigating the effects of rapid adjustment to economic change on the other' (Smith and Wallace 1994: 433). While the EFTA widening not only increased the potential gains from the enlarged common market, but even improved the Union's budgetary performance, any of the likely further widenings would have had adverse effects in the second respect, at least, under status quo conditions. This is why a reform of the EU budget was considered indispensable (for a background analysis of the 'budget and enlargement' issue, see Nicolaides 1999).

To this effect, the 'Agenda 2000' was adopted at the Berlin European Council in March 1999. This shorthand label describes the reform of the EU's major spending policies and of the financial means to fund them, effected in the most complex of all EU package deals so far. It included a financial framework fixing the medium-term financial limits within which the annual budgets for the Union will be drawn up for the period 2000-06, six draft regulations reforming the EU Structural and Cohesion Funds, eight draft regulations reforming the arable crops, beef, veal and milk production sectors including modifications to Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) financing, direct support schemes and rural development regulations, amendments to the financing of trans-European networks, and three regulations on co-ordinating the pre-accession strategy and establishing two new pre-accession instruments on agriculture and structural policies (for details see Galloway 1999).

This hypercomplex task had to be fulfilled under the conditions of stable budgetary thresholds (the net contributors were very clear on this) and of reluctance of those member states mainly benefitting from the agricultural and structural funds that their share of the cake be diminished. To satisfy the demands of the first group, the Commission suggested in Agenda 2000 accommodating new member states^[13] within the existing budget ceiling of 1.27 per cent of the EU's GNP.^[14] To obtain the agreement of those member states who mainly benefit from the EU structural funds, a separation between expenditure for EU-15, on the one hand, and the amount earmarked for enlargement, on the other hand, was approved in the financial perspectives 2000 to 2006. 'In order to underline the fact that enlargement posed no risk for current spending in EU-15, the Berlin European Council conclusions expressly provided that in the event of any development of actual expenditure as a consequence of enlargement proving likely to exceed the ceiling on payment appropriations, the financial commitments for EU-15 agreed in the financial perspective will have to be respected.' (Galloway 1999: 19).

Considering that Agenda 2000 managed very significant reforms of the structural funds policy (geographical concentration of means, more efficient administration, only three basic goals instead of seven; Wulf-Mathies 1999) and CAP (lower intervention prices, partly compensated by direct transfers, Jessen 1999), one might think that budgetary issues are no longer on the list of major challenges related to EU enlargement. However, it seems that both reforms did not go far enough to preempt serious conflict in forthcoming membership and budgetary negotiations. For the Cohesion and Structural Funds, concentration of assistance could have gone further, and it is still an open question if current beneficiaries will accept the lower GDP thresholds, which seem necessary if new and much poorer countries join and if the budget is not increased significantly. CAP reform was less ambitious a reform than initially proposed. While forthcoming World Trade Organisation negotiations will create further pressures to cut intervention prices, including the CEECs (as they demand) in the scheme of direct compensation payments granted to current EU

farmers seems overly costly to some Council delegations.

While these important issues still need to be tackled in the frame of further reform of the EU's agricultural and structural policies, fundamental reform has only just begun in the institutional field where the EU, in the Amsterdam Intergovernmental Conference, postponed major decisions.

B) Institutional Challenges of Enlargement

Given the size of the US, there can be little doubt that a political system of between twenty and thirty members is workable. It is more realistic to suggest, therefore, that the specific working conditions of a Union of fifteen-plus member states, rather than the size per se, will be decisive in terms of the success of an enlarged EU. Regardless of the striking imbalances in size and population of the single states, the US manages the accommodation of diversity via a bicameral system, with equal representation in the Senate (two members per state irrespective of unequal sizes) and proportional representation within the Congress. Within the EU, a comparable political system should be able to handle any foreseeable increase in membership without drastically reducing efficiency and policy innovation. If one were to include the existing and the probably soon associated countries, the Union would still have only about half as many states as the US. Yet, there is so far no federal commitment comparable to the American approach.

Therefore, the forthcoming EU enlargement presents a major challenge from the institutional perspective - in addition to being a special case and, in some respects, a qualitative leap. First, unlike previous enlargement rounds, the EU is not negotiating with up to three (or four) candidates any more, but with twelve (or thirteen). Setting aside the view that not all of the prospective members will join the Union at the same time, the number of EU member states is about to almost double in a very short period of time (from 15 to 27). Second, for the first time in its history, the EU is about to change from a mainly Western European enterprise to a truly pan-European institution. Similar to the US, the EU will cover a large proportion of 'its' continent. Third, and again in contrast to previous enlargements, the EU is not a purely, or very predominantly, economic entity any more, but a highly integrated political actor (see above).

In 2000, another intergovernmental conference (IGC) has been convened in order to deal with the so-called 'left-overs' from Amsterdam (cf. for example Neunreither and Wiener 2000, Griller et al. 2000, European Council 1999, ICRI 1999) and to negotiate on the institutional adaptations needed to prepare for this much wider membership. These are the most important institutional and procedural issues (in the wider sense) that the EU is currently addressing:

(1) *The number of members in the various institutions:*

Obviously, near-doubling again the number of member states to 27 means a considerable strain on the institutions, originally designed for only six members. While it seemed practical in the past to simply apply the original rules more or less mechanically when searching for new figures, this strategy when applied to the forthcoming Eastern enlargement would arguably lead to a complete deadlock of the institutions. On the basis of twelve new member states and without changing the rules, we would have, for example, a Commission with 32 members and a Parliament with over 850 members (MEPs). The negotiators of the Amsterdam Treaty already addressed the issue in Protocol no. 11, by envisaging the IGC 2000 settling the issue of the size of the college of Commissioners, amended Article 189 TEC through the insertion of a new second paragraph fixing the maximum number of MEPs at 700, and stipulated 'appropriate representation of the peoples of the States brought together in the Community' whenever a change in the number of MEPs might be required in the future, i.e. in case of enlargement (Article 190 para. 2 TEC). Several options exist for both respecting the upper limit and ensuring 'appropriate representation' (note that the Treaty does not require 'strict proportionality' and thus

provides some room for the smallest countries to have a larger number of MEPs than otherwise computed). In any event, all options would lead to a sharp increase in the number of German MEPs, while the middle range countries would loose up to ten seats each (cf. Griller et al. 2000, 285 ff.).

In the case of the size of the Commission, too, several strategies are being debated (European Commission 2000a, 13 ff.). One option would be to surrender the principle that each member state should have at least one national in the college and to set up a system of rotation which would treat all member states strictly equally on the basis of a pre-set order; another would only take away the right of the five largest countries to nominate two nationals, but would restructure the relationships between the various members of the Commission in order to ensure efficient decision-making in such a large body. In the latter respect, the following proposals are on the table: increasing the President's powers to allocate portfolios (see Article 219 TEC and the second subparagraph of Declaration no. 32 to the Final Act of the Amsterdam Treaty qualifying the leading role of the President); a hierarchy of Commissioners in the sense of making the simple Commissioners answerable to Vice-Presidents; a casting vote of the President, and his/her power to oppose any initiative as well as the power to remove Commission members from office. Also under scrutiny are the size of and relationship between the two European Courts given the expected increase in work load in an enlarged Union (see European Commission 2000b, Groupe de Réflexion 2000) as well as the numbers of the Economic and Social Committee, of the Committee of the Regions and the Court of Auditors.

(2) *The effectiveness of the decision-making procedures:*

While the IGC 2000 also addresses the further extension of the codecision procedure and other measures to make the Treaty framework more coherent in terms of the legislative procedures, the main issue to be tackled with respect to enlargement is the danger of frequent and persistent stalemate in those still numerous areas of Union policy where there is a requirement of unanimity in the Council of Ministers. At the time of writing, it seems that there is growing consensus that, first, unanimity needs to be limited in an enlarged Union and, second, there will be some categories of decisions 'for which serious and lasting reasons warrant making an exception to the general rule of qualified-majority voting' (European Commission 2000a, 22 ff.). These are essentially those of a 'constitutional' type (for example, uniform electoral procedure, Statute of the European Central Bank), though decisions in the fields of tax and social security, not related to the proper functioning of the internal market, are frequently mentioned.

The other hotly debated issue with regard to the Council's decision-making procedures in the wake of enlargement is how to adapt the weighting of the votes. Extrapolation of the current system would lead to a regular decline in the representativeness of a qualified majority decision in population terms with - in an extreme case - the theoretical possibility of a 'qualified majority' decision taken by a 'minority' in terms of population (for a detailed analysis see Kerremans 1998, and European Parliament, Committee on Institutional Affairs [1999]). The options considered are, on the one hand, increasing the relative weight of the votes of the most populous member states (this is commonly referred to as 're-weighting') and redefining altogether what is meant by 'qualified majority'. The latter option could lead to defining a new 'double' majority: a decision would be taken by the simple majority of member states if these states would represent a majority of the total population of the Union.

(3) *The internal organisation of the institutions:*

Resizing the institutions and streamlining the formal decision-making procedures is only one important step towards making the EU institutions capable of coping with enlargement. The other aspect is the internal organisation of the institutions. We have already dealt with the Commission above (1) since preserving a high number of Commissioners ultimately needs internal reform. The Commission has already presented a comprehensive programme of administrative reforms,

in particular with regard to financial and personnel management (European Commission 2000c). Also the Council is preparing major reforms, based on a special report by its Secretary-General in March 1999, which may include, among other things, a separation between the Foreign Affairs Council and a new co-ordinating General Affairs Council, as well as a reduction of all other Council formations in order to improve coherence (European Council 1999, Annex III).

(4) *The future of closer co-operation within the EU framework:*

It would be even more difficult to deepen integration in an enlarged, less homogenous Union that consists both of late-comers having a hard time digesting economic reform and of well-advanced and long-standing members heading for integrationist benefits beyond economics. Reconciling 'deepening' and 'widening' therefore was one rationale of the Amsterdam Treaty framework for enabling a coalition of member states to go ahead and co-operate more closely, thereby realising what has been discussed widely under the heading 'multi-speed Europe' (Articles 43 and 45 TEU and Article 11 TEC). In essence, the Amsterdam Treaty asks for a unanimous decision to allow a group of states to go work together more closely, for a majority of member states joining the group and for strict respect for the *acquis communautaire*. The new provisions had only been in force for a couple of months when the IGC 2000 started and there was no single attempt to make closer co-operation work (which may be a sign in itself). To date, there seems to be a consensus that the conditions to be met would not be workable in a Union of 27. In particular, decreasing the threshold of participating member states from a half to one third has been discussed as a possible option.

(5) *The diversity of working languages:*

So far, the number of official languages of the Union has increased with each enlargement according to the number of additional official languages of the new member states. It now stands at 11 while, over the course of time, English and French (and, partly, German) have turned out to be the working languages in most institutions. In an EU of 27, another 10 languages would have to be *added*. Already at this stage, translating official documents into all 11 official languages and providing simultaneous translation services, at least for the major meetings, accounts for a considerable proportion of the EU budget. Owing to the non-linear increase of possible one-to-one relations between languages (with 21 languages there are 210 language pairs) and the restricted possibility of translating via intermediary languages, this is a serious problem. It could be tackled either by restricting the number of official languages or by introducing a sort of language hierarchy. The latter could mean that not all documents would be translated into all languages, and an official status would be given to the present (or a slightly increased number of) working languages for all meetings.

C) Which Boundaries?

Apart from institutional issues, the EU will need to tackle some questions of fundamental principle in the near future, most notably on its external and internal boundaries.

First, should the Union be enlarged until it finally covers all of geographic Europe, which is usually considered to stretch from the Atlantic to the Ural Mountains? More specifically, should all countries become members which are at least in part 'European' in the geographical sense - considering that Turkey has already been accorded official applicant status since December 1999? If so, an EU with 15 plus 27 members is looming. This includes for example the Ukraine and the states succeeding former Yugoslavia. Russia is admittedly a qualitative leap in quantitative terms, due to its sheer size and population, but if Europe ends at the Ural Mountains and if Turkey is acceptable in principle, it is difficult to see why Russia should be discriminated against if, one day, it were to apply for EU membership. The Commission has rightly stressed that the 'EU's relationship with Russia, as with the Ukraine, is fundamental, and will shape the

destiny of the European continent.' (European Commission 1999: V.2)[15] Even if the basic decision is in favour of remaining open to widest possible membership (and even more so, if not!), tailor-made models of closer co-operation with all European states (and their neighbours) need to be developed if the EU wants to promote peace, human rights, political and, finally, economic development in this region without delay.

Since the EU's explicit basic goals and principles, such as bringing down economic borders, progressively harmonising and improving living and working conditions, and respecting the principles of democracy and human rights, are thought to be of general validity, it is hard to argue that some states should be excluded (at least, as long as they are 'European'), in particular since such an attitude is likely to strengthen those endogenous political forces which are out of step with 'European' values (militaristic, fundamentalistic, and the like).

Not closing the door to membership furthermore has the benefit of allowing the EU to exert an influence on (pre-)applicant states and hence to export its above-mentioned model of politics and economy. As the Commission formulates in the case of former Yugoslavia and Albania, 'the EU can best contribute to stability in the region by drawing it closer to the perspective of full integration into its structures' (European Commission 1999: V.2). To this effect, the Commission suggests further developing accession criteria to include notably mutual recognition of each other's borders, proper treatment of national minorities and participation in a regional organisation of free trade and economic co-operation.

While giving countries in political and economic transition the chance to perceive themselves as 'pre-ins' instead of as outsiders of the European 'family' and support for the spread of democracy, human rights and economic prosperity is a strong argument in favour of not putting any stop to further (conditional) EU enlargement, many fear that the development of an 'ever closer Union' would be impeded if too many and too diverse members have to agree. The *second* major issue will therefore be internal 'frontiers', in the wider sense of a differentiation between groups of member states in an EU27+. This could be tackled by a fundamental reform of the Treaty's flexibility provisions in the IGC 2000 (see II.B.(4) on closer co-operation *within* the EU), although many think that adequate solutions need to go further. Most prominently, Jacques Delors recently re-launched the idea of a 'confederation of European countries' (Europe 3.1.2000: 4). In his view, an avant-garde (always open for the rest to join in later) should even 'have their own institutions, to avoid any confusion' (Europe 10.1.2000: 3). A 'union within the Union' (and hence still *outside* the EU framework in the proper sense) is thus on the horizon, at least at the level of rhetoric. However, those who want to go much further than what the EU now represents are in a minority. Therefore, it seems realistic to expect that the EU will rather pursue its incremental path, albeit with a different practical enlargement strategy than in former times.

4 Handling the Tide: Past and Present Union Strategy

Since the 1951 Paris Treaty on the European Coal and Steel Community (see Article 98), the EC had been open to an expanded membership. Initially, this was subject only to the condition that applicants be 'European'. It was the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty (see Art. 49 TEU) which added as further membership conditions the criteria mentioned in Article 6.1 TEU, i.e. the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law ('principles which are common to the Member States').

Past experiences show that widening has not been a politically easy task. This applies as much to the Union's handling of negotiations for membership as to the adaptation needed by the new member states. In all cases, enlargement, 'defined as joining and truly adhering to the integrated

conditions of the member states, has been a painfully slow and internally combative process' (Laurent 1994: 128, and see Toviás 1995, on Spain). This is true despite the fact that since the first Mediterranean widening, the new entrants have regularly had prior bilateral trade agreements with the Union. Thus, the Greek Association Agreement with the EC was signed in 1961, with a provision for incorporation into the EC when the progress of its economy allowed Greece to fully assume the obligations involved. During the military regime of 1967-74, however, the Association Agreement was virtually suspended. Immediately after having been elected, civilian Prime Minister Karamanlis stated that Greece wanted to become an EC member, and in June 1975 the formal application was submitted. The European Commission opinion on Greek membership emphasised the economic problems that an accession might imply for Greece as well as for the EC, and suggested a pre-accession period of unspecified duration. However, the Council unanimously rejected this document and opened negotiations on Greek accession in July 1976 (for details of this widening, see Seers and Vaitos 1986, Tsoukalis 1981).

In addition, Portugal and Spain had concluded bilateral trade agreements with the EC long before their accession, but the application of those agreements was again hampered by the authoritarian political circumstances in the two states. Their membership negotiations, officially started by October 1978 and February 1979 respectively, were the longest conducted by the EC until the late 1990s. The major stumbling blocks were internal EC problems with the financing of new EC policies ('Integrated Mediterranean Programmes') and the long-term budget crisis. The United Kingdom insisted on rebates to offset its still disproportionate contributions, as well as on increased budgetary discipline. Curtailment of agricultural spending seemed indispensable - and a general relaunch of the Communities desirable. Those issues could not be resolved until the 1984 Fontainebleau meeting of the European Council, when the official date was also set for Spanish and Portuguese accession.

Before the recent EFTA widening, the EC had, for the first time, made the conclusion of an intergovernmental conference reforming the Union a necessary condition for further enlargement. It wanted to fully implement the Internal Market Programme and set the pace for EMU before accommodating new entrants. The negotiations on this third EC widening round were significantly eased by the fact that the EEA agreement had already transferred sizeable parts of the EC's economic *acquis* to the EFTA states. Furthermore, there was a strong political will to include those wealthy and stable democracies, and thus an innovative negotiation tactic was chosen: for the first time, only the General Affairs Council (and not the more specialised Councils) negotiated with each of the four applicants (Granelli 1994). Despite the fact that the 1993-4 enlargement negotiations involved a large number of applicants, they were the least problematic and most rapid, and the agreed transition periods are shorter than previously (Cameron 1995: 33). It seems that what the Council had rejected in the Greek case, i.e. longer pre-accession periods and an early rapprochement to the *acquis communautaire*, has since shown beneficial effects in the EFTA enlargement round (EFTA-EC free trade since the 1970s; EEA since 1994) - and will thus be applied systematically in the future.[16]

Confronted with the changing geopolitical situation and increased interest in membership during the late 1980s, the Union initially reacted by concluding trade and co-operation agreements, and by organising programmes for economic assistance (and increasingly also for political reform), such as PHARE for the CEECs, TACIS for the ex-Soviet republics and MEDEA for the Mediterranean countries. In August 1990, the Commission proposed moving to associated status with the so-called 'Europe Agreements' (on association agreements generally, see Phinnemore 1999). By early 2000, ten such treaties exist with Hungary, Poland, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia. The Europe Agreements aim at gradually establishing free trade by asymmetric[17] abolition of tariffs within ten years. Parallel to further economic aspects, such as restricted free movement of services and common

competition rules, some political and cultural co-operation has also been established through common institutions. However, since the 'Europe association' formula provided *de facto* only very limited new opportunities both economically (it seems to have favoured EU interests overproportionally) and politically,[18] and since it fell short of concise ideas on a sound European architecture, a certain 'EEA effect' (Smith and Wallace 1994: 431) has been produced: disappointed associates head towards full membership even faster.

This very phenomenon was to present a problem to the EU, since accepting prospective CEEC membership represented a major political decision which the Union was neither fit (consider, for instance, that incremental decision-making corresponds to the EU's 6-monthly summitry) nor willing (consider the different national positions on when and whom to admit) to take in haste. In fact, it only managed to take this decision at all by, first, breaking it down into minor bits and pieces (1), and, second, depoliticising it (2).

(1) *Deconstructing the major decision* on whether and when former members were to be accepted into a lot of minor decisions fits, in principle, very well with the EU's structure. According to Friis and Murphy (1999a), 'the process of governance through negotiations creates an inbuilt tendency to postpone decisions until the very last minute or until crisis occurs.'[19] One can indeed follow the half-yearly summitry and trace developments in the regular European Council Presidency Conclusions. A nice example of the piece-meal process of allowing the applicant states, albeit subject to various condition, to become members after all is the way in which this was first indicated in an indirect form only. The Edinburgh December 1992 summit mentioned a Commission report 'in order to prepare the associate countries for accession' (EC Bulletin 12/1992). The following June 1993 the Copenhagen European Council formally accepted membership of all applicants, but (implicitly) in the distant future only. Therefore, the piecemeal decision process of widening by no means stopped at Copenhagen (and it still continues, in fact). Further bits and pieces of the fundamental decision centred on the identity of the applicants and the commencement date for negotiations, whether a small or a larger group should be involved, and if their entry should be pursued according to a 'regatta' - i.e. individual entry dates - or a 'group' approach (for details, see Friis and Murphy 1999a, Friis 1998b, Friis 1998a, Mayhew 1998).

The prime *advantage* of the step-by-step approach[20] was to make the overall decision on what the EU of the next millennium should look like more easily digestible for the governments. The downside was, however, that delaying clear answers as to the conditions and, most importantly, the date of possible inclusion of the applicants frustrated the latter. It somewhat weakened the stance of those politicians and public opinion leaders who promoted adaptation to the 'EU model' at the expense of nationalist, militarist and populist patterns. Finally, it contributed to a rise of EU-scepticism in CEEC public opinion polls (for most recent data, see Table 3).

(2) *Evading political debates* has occurred at two levels, between the governments and within the member states. At the EU level, where the members of national governments come together, the enlargement issue clearly had to be not just addressed but negotiated. The specific evasion modus was therefore - after agreeing on some basic political and economic conditions in Copenhagen 1993 - framing the terms of the partial debates (see above) in non-political terms. Initially, the CEEC were treated as part of the EU's foreign relations. The EU offered traditional trade and co-operation agreements instead of developing innovative measures (Friis and Murphy 1999a: 218 f). After these early agreements had proved 'inadequate and transitory', the focus shifted to financial assistance (PHARE and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), see Sedelmeier and Wallace 1996: 362 ff). The negotiations on the later Europe Agreements still addressed the CEEC as an 'external' problem, plus they were conducted by the EC in 'a typical political economy mode of trade negotiations' (Sedelmeier and Wallace 1996:

371). Finally, during recent years, the Commission framed the issue with whom to open negotiations as 'an objective, apolitical exercise'. What was on the table was not a political decision. All the Commission and the member states had to do was to embark on a 'natural differentiation among the applicants for a variety of historical, political and economic reasons' - letting the facts do the hard work, so to speak (Hans van den Broek, *Financial Times* 18.7.1997) (Friis 1998b).

At the national levels, the strategy was to keep further EU enlargement out of the public debate. This was, most importantly, the case during recent electoral campaigns. The potential danger of this strategy was and is great: the topic of whether and how Eastern enlargement should be approached was left to opposition parties. In some member states, populists (such as Jörg Haider and his FPÖ in Austria) made ready use of this 'opportunity' to gain votes by raising fears of immigration and potential job losses. Concerns about the impact of competition from low-wage economies and about the possible influx of cheap labour are now widespread, although rarely articulated officially, in most EU member states. There are some good counterarguments, but they are so far mainly expressed in the Commission[21] and expert reports[22] and are waiting not simply to be communicated but actually discussed with the wider public (for an academic discussion of costs and benefits of enlargement, see for example Mayhew 1998, chapter 7). In the longer run, eliminating major decisions such as this one from the agenda of public debate may not only endanger enlargement (which has ultimately to be approved by all member states) but furthermore destabilise the political systems of individual member states, and consequently the EU and the continent of Europe as a whole.

In short: incrementalism and evasion of political debates on one of the most pressing geopolitical issues of the 21st century actually appear as the most prominent features of the contemporary (implicit) strategy on EU widening. While the former already has a clearly visible downside, the latter might, in the long run, lead to a rebuilding of frontiers and even destabilise the current EU members.

Footnotes

1 Forthcoming in: *European Union - Power and Policy-Making*, edited by J.J. Richardson, second edition, Routledge, London/New York. We would like to thank Myriam Nauerz for her excellent research assistance.

2 The opening of the Iron Curtain, the GATT Uruguay Round and the Europe Agreements between the applicants and the EU (see below) already led to considerable advances in trade liberalisation. Joining the Customs Union will not alter much since differences in external duties and tariffs will have been adapted by the time of accession. Recent economic studies came to the conclusion that the trade potential of East-West trade is already exhausted (Breuss 1999: 11). It may however be that EU membership will have further trade creation effects (ibid.). In contrast to trade liberalisation, enlargement would presumably have considerable impact on the flow of foreign direct investment into the new members and of migrants into the old members. Furthermore, as discussed below (II.A), participation of the CEECs in the structural policies will have a major economic impact for both groups of countries.

3 It is interesting to note that the same author, based on a comprehensive comparison of the existing model simulations, points at a number of shortcomings of these models, such as the non-incorporation of factor movements or the both theoretically and politically complex question of finding out which EU incumbent will be a winner and which one a loser (Ibid.: 35).

4 In the wider context of recent developments, it is of interest to note a recent publication which argues that the role of economics in European integration (as opposed to political goals) has actually been much smaller from the start than is usually assumed (Kamppeter 2000).

5 This delay was due to the French veto of the British application in 1961, which brought all

four membership applications to a temporary halt.

6 After a negative referendum, Norway did not become a member but stayed within the 'nonsupranational' European Free Trade Area (EFTA).

7 On the EFTA applications and negotiations, see Wallace 1991, Michalski and Wallace 1992, Luif 1994; *Journal of Common Market Studies* 1995/3.

8 This was mainly because the EC, contrary to initial expectations, did not give up its decision-making autonomy. This meant that only EC law, decided upon by the Union members exclusively, could (by unanimous decision) develop into EEA law. Furthermore, the judicial system initially agreed upon was declared incompatible with the Treaty of Rome by the EC Court of Justice, so that the proposed common EEA Court had to be dropped. In short, the final say on the interpretation of EC (and, as the two are normally identical, *de facto* also EEA) law lies with the EC court. The Union is thus clearly a somewhat hegemonic actor within the EEA. In economic terms, the EEA constitutes an improved free trade area (with exemptions such as agricultural goods), but no customs union (Schwok 1991).

9 On details of the Amsterdam reforms, see for example Dinan 1999, Griller, et al. 2000; for explanatory approaches on this Intergovernmental Conference (IGC), see for example Christiansen and Jørgensen 1999, Moravcsik and Nicolaïdis 1999, Pollack 1999, Sverdrup 1999.

10 For example visiting not only the Turkish government but also representatives of the social partners there, human rights organisations and Kurds, Europe 11/3/2000; EU-Commissioner Patten even visited the Yugoslav subrepublic Montenegro, which strives for greater independence from Milosevic in Belgrade (FTD 3.3.2000).

11 The EU supports democratisation and economic reforms not only in the pre-accession countries (see below), but even in places such as Russia (the TACIS programme was even refocused on democratic objectives in early 2000, Europe 26.1.2000) and Montenegro (by 65 million Euro 1998-2000, Europe 11.3.2000). Another example of promoting compatible political and societal structures is the 'Action Plan to promote social and civil dialogue in southeastern Europe', elaborated by the European Training Foundation, within the framework of preparing the region for accession (600,000 Euro for one year; Europe 25. and 27.1.2000).

12 The co-operation agreements signed with Russia and the Ukraine in June 1994 do not - in contrast to the Europe agreements with the candidate states - contain any provisions mentioning possible future membership.

13 The working assumption used by the Commission in its proposals was that six new members would join the Union in 2002.

14 'The financial perspective has been drawn up to accommodate the full cost of enlargement until 2006, along with a significant increase in the pre-accession strategy, while also substantially increasing the margins for unforeseen expenditure under the own resources ceiling fixed at 1.27 per cent of the EU's GNP' (Galloway 1999).

15 To date, the EU co-operates with Russia and the Ukraine on the basis of Partnership and Co-operation Agreements (which exist with almost all Newly Independent Republics) and of 'Common Strategies' (a new CSFP instrument introduced in the Amsterdam Treaty).

16 The German Democratic Republic was treated as a special case when it entered the FRG on 3 October 1990. (For the course of events and an analysis of the background to the East German EC entry, see Kohler-Koch 1991.)

17 The Union proceeds somewhat faster than its associates; for more detail, see Jaks 1993, Randzio-Plath and Friedmann 1994.

18 For criticism on the Europe agreements, see for example Phinnemore 1999, Grabbe and Hughes 1998, Smith 1998, Senior Nello 1998.

19 Adrienne Héritier describes making a decision small and sneaking it on to the policy agenda as another 'mode of "innovation by stealth" against the resistance of important actors ... The responsibility for a large-scale decision is split up over a period of time into a number of small, innocuous decisions, each of which has a lock-in effect and which, in consequence, weakens the opposition to the former' (Héritier 1999).

20 Sedelmeier and Wallace (1996: 365) mention there being differences over an appropriate strategy not only among the governments (see also e.g. Friis and Murphy 1999a) but also within the Commission.

21 'The enlargement process is vital to securing political stability, democracy and respect for human rights on the European continent as a whole. It creates opportunities for growth, investment and prosperity which will benefit not only current and future Member States of the EU but also the wider international community. (...) Enlargement will also enhance the international community's ability to manage trans-national issues such as environmental pollution, the fight against organised crime and corruption and illegal trafficking.' (European Commission 1999)

22 'Enlargement, on the right terms, could provide a major boost to the EU's global competitiveness; in many respects, the reforms required to adjust to enlargement complement those demanded in response to global pressures. The costs of enlarging slowly, or imposing heavy regulatory burdens on the developing economies of new entrants, are likely to be higher: their growth will be held back, pressures to emigrate westwards will be intensified, and political tensions will rise, placing strains on new democracies. Political courage and leadership is required to explain to EU publics both the unavoidable costs of change, and the benefits to be gained from enlargement for the future prosperity, stability and security of Europe as a whole.' (Amato and Batt 1999)

ANNEX

Table 1: Major problems as underlined by the Commission in the regular report 1999 on progress towards accession by each of the candidate countries[a]

Bulgaria	justice (judicial procedures, pre-trial detention, training of judges); corruption; protection of minorities (Roma); trafficking of human beings; conditions in prisons; functioning market economy; capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union
Cyprus	overall problem of the status of Cyprus as a divided island; economic structural reforms in certain fields
Czech Republic	parliament (rights of opposition, legislative procedures); reform of administration; justice (training of judges, overload of the courts, independence of the judiciary, no supreme administrative court, fight against organised crime and economic crime); corruption; protection of minorities (Roma); economic structural reforms in certain fields
Estonia	reform of administration; justice (adjustment on EU law, training of judges, overload of the courts, co-operation between police, prosecutors and judges); corruption; conditions in prisons; protection of minorities (language law); economic structural reforms in certain fields
Hungary	parliament (representation of minorities); justice (judicial procedures); corruption; protection of minorities (Roma); conditions in prisons; economic structural reforms in certain fields

Latvia	reform of administration; justice (overload of the courts, pre-trial detention); corruption; protection of minorities (language law); economic structural reforms in certain fields
Lithuania	justice (judicial procedures); corruption; functioning of market economy; capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union
Malta	reform of administration; justice (judicial procedures, execution of rulings); economic structural reforms in certain fields
Poland	justice (administrative capacity, judicial procedures, provisions of access to the courts, training of judges); corruption; economic structural reforms in certain fields
Romania	legislative procedures; reform of administration; justice (training of judges, adjustment on EU-law); corruption; child care; protection of minorities (Roma); functioning market economy; capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union
Slovakia	reform of administration; justice (independence of the judiciary); corruption; trafficking of human beings; asylum legislation; protection of minorities (Roma); functioning of market economy
Slovenia	legislative procedures; reform of administration; justice (judicial procedures); economic structural reforms in certain fields
Turkey	political Copenhagen criteria (stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the protection of minorities); justice (emergency courts system, training of judges, witness protection, creation of a Penal Code, abolishment of the death penalty); the military has important influence through the National Security Council; human rights, political rights; protection of minorities (Kurds); functioning of market economy; economic structural reforms in certain fields

[a] European Commission 1999. Owing to discrepancies between the individual reports and the highly specific situation in each of the applicant states, it is not possible to offer a more direct comparison in brief.

Table 2: Associations and applications[a]

	Association agreement signed	Association agreement enters into force	Membership application	Start of negotiations[b]	Accession[c]	Desired date of accession
Denmark	-	-	11.05.1967[d]	30.06.1970	01.01.1973	-
Great Britain	-	-	10.05.1967[e]	30.06.1970	01.01.1973	-
Ireland	-	-	10.05.1967[f]	30.06.1970	01.01.1973	-
Greece	09.07.1961	01.11.1962	12.06.1975	27.07.1976	01.01.1981	-
Portugal	-	-	28.03.1977	17.10.1978	01.01.1986	-
Spain	-	-	28.07.1977	05.02.1979	01.01.1986	-
Former GDR	-	-	-	-	03.10.1990	-
Austria	02.05.1992	01.01.1994	17.07.1989	01.02.1993	01.01.1995	-
Finland	02.05.1992	01.01.1994	18.03.1992	01.02.1993	01.01.1995	-
Sweden	02.05.1992	01.01.1994	01.07.1991[g]	01.02.1993	01.01.1995	-
Cyprus	19.12.1972	01.06.1973	04.07.1990	30.03.1998	-	2003[h]
Czech Republic	04.10.1993	01.02.1995	17.01.1996	30.03.1998	-	2003[h]
Estonia	12.06.1995	01.02.1998	24.11.1995	30.03.1998	-	2003[h]
Hungary	16.12.1991	01.02.1994	31.03.1994	30.03.1998	-	2003[h]
Poland	16.12.1991	01.02.1994	05.04.1994	30.03.1998	-	2003[h]
Slovenia	10.06.1996	01.02.1999	10.06.1996	30.03.1998	-	2003[h]
Bulgaria	08.03.1993	01.02.1995	14.12.1995	15.02.2000	-	2006[i]
Latvia	12.06.1995	01.02.1998	13.10.1995	15.02.2000	-	2004[i]
Lithuania	12.06.1995	01.02.1998	08.12.1995	15.02.2000	-	2004[j]
Malta	05.12.1970	01.04.1971	16.07.1990[k]	15.02.2000	-	2003[i]
Romania	01.02.1993	01.02.1995	22.06.1995	15.02.2000	-	2007[l]
Slovakia	04.10.1993	01.02.1995	27.06.1995	15.02.2000	-	2004[m]
Turkey	12.09.1963	01.12.1964	14.04.1987	-	-	2010/15[n]
Norway	02.05.1992	01.01.1994	25.11.1992[o]	05.04.1993	-	-
Switzerland	02.05.1992	-	26.05.1992	-	-	-
Iceland	02.05.1992	01.01.1994	-	-	-	-
Liechtenstein	02.05.1992	01.05.1995	-	-	-	-
Croatia	-	-	-	-	-	2005[p]
Georgia	-	-	-	-	-	2039[q]
Moldova	-	-	-	-	-	long-term goal[r]

[a] Data from Phinnemore 1999.

[b] Data for the start of the negotiations on accession of the actual candidate countries from Handelsblatt, 16.02.2000; data for the actual member states from Spiesberger 1998.

[c] Data from Matern and Schultz 1997, as is data of membership application of Denmark, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, and Slovakia.

[d] Denmark had already applied on 10.08.1961.

- [e] Great Britain had already applied on 09.08.1961.
[f] Ireland had already applied on 31.07.1961.
[g] Sweden had already applied on 28.07.1967.
[h] Financial Times, 15.02.2000.
[i] Handelsblatt, 16.02.2000.
[j] Financial Times, 14.03.2000.
[k] Malta reactivated the application on 10.08.1998 after having frozen it in October 1996.
[l] Handelsblatt, 08.02.2000.
[m] Handelsblatt, 21.01.2000.
[n] Agence Europe No. 7668, 03.03.2000.
[o] Norway had already applied on two previous occasions (30.04.1962 and 21.07.1967) Phinnemore 1999; on 25.09.1972 and 27./28.11.1994 it held negative referendums (Matern and Schultz 1997).
[p] Financial Times, 18.02.2000.
[q] Wolter 1999.
[r] Agence Europe No. 7642, 27.01.2000.

Table 3: Public opinion and enlargement[a]

	Internal support for membership[b] (in %)	Support for enlargement (EU 15) (in %)	Highest support 1998 (in %)	Lowest support 1998 (in %)
Bulgaria	57	39	GR, S: 56	A: 17
Cyprus	n.a.[c]	45	GR: 89	B: 34
Czech Republic	49	45	S: 69	B: 30
Estonia	35	39	SCAND: > 70	A, B: < 30
Hungary	56	50	DK: 69	B: 30
Latvia	40	39	DK: 77	B: 26
Lithuania	40	38	DK: 77	B: 23
Malta	n.a.	52	GR: 72	B: 39
Poland	63	47	DK: 76	A: 24
Romania	71	37	GR: 58	A: 15
Slovakia	62	40	n.a.	n.a.
Slovenia	57	36	S: 54	B: 23
The 12	53[d]	42	n.a.	n.a.
Turkey	n.a.	29	E: 45	GR: 13

[a] Data for all states except Turkey from European Commission 1998; data for Turkey from European Commission 1999. The countries mentioned are Austria (A), Belgium (B), Denmark (DK), Greece (GR), Spain (E), Sweden (S), and the Scandinavian countries (SCAND).

[b] Data on internal support from European Commission 1998.

[c] No data available.

[d] The 12 without Cyprus and Malta.

Table 4: Key data 1998 on EU15 (potential) candidate countries[a]

	Surface area[b]	Population[c]	GDP per capita[d]	Public deficit/surplus[e]	Economic growth rate[f]	Inflation rate[g]
EU 15	3,191	374,888	100	-1.5	3.3	1.3
Bulgaria	111	8,230	23	-0.3	-12.7	22.3
Cyprus	9.2	663	78	-0.9	2.8	2.2
Czech Republic	79	10,290	60	-2.2	1.6	10.7
Estonia	45	1,446	36	2.6	1.8	10.5
Hungary	93	10,092	49	-5.4	12.6	14.3
Latvia	65	2,439	27	1.8	3.1	4.7
Lithuania	65	3,701	31	-0.7	7.0	5.1
Malta	0.3	378	n.a.[h]	-7.7	0.7	2.4
Poland	313	38,667	39	-2.6	4.8	11.8
Romania	238	22,489	27	-3.5	-17.0	59.1
Slovakia	49	5,393	46	-4.4	3.6	6.7
Slovenia	20	1,978	68	-1.5	3.7	7.9
Turkey	775	63,451	37	-7.2	1.3	84.6
Albania	29	3,324	n.a.[h]			
Belarus	208	10,267				
Bosnia-Herzegovina	51	2,346				
Croatia	57	4,768				
Georgia	70	5,427				
Iceland	103	271				
Liechtenstein	0.16	31				
Macedonia	26	1,997				
Moldova	34	4,312				
Norway	324	4,404				
Russian Federation	17,075	147,307				
Switzerland	41	7,088				
Ukraine	604	50,698				
Yugoslavia	102	10,614				

[a] Data from Eurostat 1999; data for Albania, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Macedonia, Moldova, Norway, Russian Federation, Switzerland, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia from Baratta, M., ed. (2000), *Der Fischer Weltalmanach 2000*, Frankfurt/M.: Fischer.

[b] Total area in 1,000 km².

[c] Total population in 1,000s.

[d] GDP per capita in PPS (purchasing power standards), EU=100.

[e] General government deficit/surplus compared to GDP in %, data for Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia from 1997, data for Malta, and Romania from 1996, and data for Cyprus from 1995.

[f] Growth rate of industrial production in %.

[g] Inflation rate in %.

[h] No data available.

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