
EUROPEAN UNION ENLARGEMENT - CONSEQUENCES AND PROBLEMS

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Abstract

The consequences of the fifth enlargement will be multiple. The capacity of the EU as an actor in international relations will increase whereas the coherence within the community will decrease. New forms of coalition will form in an enlarged EU. The EU will have direct neighbors like Russia, Turkey and Ukraine and Belarus. This means the EU is connected to crisis areas. The more the EU approaches to these crisis areas the more the EU has to develop a strategy how to answer such challenges. Another problem of the enlargement process is the limited public enthusiasm in some EU countries.

1. Introduction

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the socialist countries some months later and the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a vacuum in Central and Eastern Europe concerning their role in international relations. But the most immediate political challenge at that time was the German unification. Nevertheless, there was a situation in which the old bipolar world did not exist any longer, but a new order was not established yet. This had to be done by the politicians in the 90ies. So in this new European order the CEES had to find their place. The end of the East-West-conflict produced a growing number of Eastern European requests for associate or full membership with the EU to open its doors to them. "Almost immediately after assuming power, the post-communist leaders of Central and Eastern Europe began to suggest that their countries should be admitted to what soon was to become the EU, as well as NATO" (van Oudenaren 2000:315). The old EC-countries had to find an answer to the demands of the political elites in Eastern and Central Europe. First, the EC countries practiced a policy of economic support (PHARE-Programme,

the founding of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in 1991, the conclusion of the first Europe Agreements in December 1991). After some hesitation, the EC countries formally decided enlargement to be an explicit goal of the European Union on their summit in Copenhagen in 1993. From this day onwards, the question was no longer *if* there is the entry for the CEES but *when* there will be the membership of those states. The enlargement of the European Union rises many questions concerning the developments in the EU itself, in the applicant countries and in the old member countries. What will be with the coherence of an enlarged EU? What will be the role of this greater EU in international relations? Will there not have to be a reform of the EU institutions? Can the big gap - economic and political - be filled in a short time without losing coherence and the freedom to act. Is there a possibility to stabilize the Eastern and Central European region? What will be the consequences for societies in the applicant countries? What will be with the competitiveness of companies of the CECs? What will be with the public opinion in the applicant countries and the support for EU membership when it will become clear that the membership has not only advantages but also disadvantages for them? What will be with the societies in the old EU countries when there will be a big migration of workers from East to West? Questions over questions which should now be tried to be answered.

2. The Fifth Enlargement - East Comes to West

The history of the European Community/Union is a history of enlargement. According to the European treaties, every European country has the right to enter the European Union. The first enlargement happened in 1973 when Great Britain, Denmark and Ireland entered the European Community. The British attempt to form a rivalry organization - the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) - had failed. In 1981, Greece, which had made its application in 1975, became the 10th member of the Community. Five years later, Spain and Portugal, after having shaken off their dictatorships, and meanwhile having become democracies, entered the EC in 1986. There are some doubts whether the entry of the GDR to the Federal Republic of Germany - and thus simultaneously to the EU - can be seen as a further enlargement. There are politicians and scientists who do so, especially in France. But the real fourth enlargement came in 1995 when Austria, Finland and Sweden entered the European Union, a union which differed in the midst of the 90ies very much from the EC in the 60ies.

Enlargement, however, has not come to a halt.

So, the fifth enlargement of the EU is nothing new but somewhat of continuity. Nevertheless, compared to the former enlargements there are big differences this time. The enlargement of the EU to encompass the CEES is qualitatively and quantitatively unprecedented. These countries have no or less experience in democracy. The CEES were not integrated in Western economic systems like the former applicant countries. "By contrast, all ten Central and Eastern European applicants are economically far worse off than even the poorest EU member state, and all are fledgling democracies. All had been cut off from Western Europe either by incorporation into the Soviet Union (i.e., Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) or by Soviet occupation and domination. The end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union therefore presented a historic opportunity to reintegrate into Europe culturally, politically, and economically. EU enlargement into Central and Eastern Europe is an important part of that process" (Dinan 2000:185).

2. 1. Formal Accession Criteria

The Copenhagen Summit (European Council) made a definitive decision in June 1993 when it stated that "the associated countries in Central and Eastern Europe that so desire shall become members of the European Union ... Accession will take place as soon as an associated country is able to assume the obligations of membership by satisfying the economic and political conditions required". This was the first occasion on which the EU member states formally declared enlargement as an explicit goal of the European Union. Now of course it is most interesting to know what are the political and economic conditions? At first, an applicant state must fulfill the demands of the articles 49 and 6(1) of the Treaty of the European Union.

Article 49

Any European State which respects the principles set out in Article 6 (1) may apply to become a member of the Union. It shall address its application to the Council, which shall act unanimously after consulting the Commission and after receiving the assent of the European Parliament, which shall act by an absolute majority of its component members.

The conditions of admission and the adjustments to the treaties on which the Union is founded which such admission entails shall be subject of an agreement between the Member States and the applicant state. This agreement shall be submitted for ratification by all the contracting states in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.

Article 6 (1)

The Union is founded on the principle of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States.

In general any applicant state has to accept the *acquis communautaire*, the primary and the secondary law of the Union. Article 6 and 49 summarize the formal way of entering the Union and concentrating the most important demands of the Union for new members. The European Council in Copenhagen stated more exactly the criteria an applicant state has to fulfill:

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

In addition, the European Council stipulated that "the Union's capacity to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration, is also an important consideration in the general interest of both the Union and the candidate countries".

On the following European Councils, there was made more precision. In 1995, the summit in Madrid stated that membership requires that the candidate country has to create the conditions for its integration through the adjustment of its administrative structures. While it is important that European Community Legislation is transposed into national legislation, it is even more important that the legislation is implemented effectively through appropriate administrative and judicial structures. This is a prerequisite of the mutual trust required by EU membership. Two years

later, the Luxembourg Council underlined that "as a prerequisite for enlargement of the Union, the operation of the institutions must be strengthened and improved in keeping with the institutional provisions of the Amsterdam Treaty". In Helsinki in December 1999, the summit confirmed that compliance with all the Copenhagen criteria is the basis for accession to the Union and added that candidate countries "must share the values and objectives of the European Union as set out in the Treaties". The summit recalled in particular that compliance with the Copenhagen criteria is a prerequisite for the opening of accession negotiations and urged candidate countries to make every effort to resolve any outstanding border disputes and other related issues. Furthermore, the Helsinki Summit emphasized the importance of high standards of nuclear safety.

This Helsinki Summit also accepted Turkey as an official applicant candidate – as Turkey has officially applied for membership in 1987 – knowing that this Moslem state will not be able to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria. But since Turkey was one of the big losers of the East-West-conflict – Turkey lost its strategic importance for Western countries as a direct neighbor to the former Sovietunion - the EU countries perceived Turkey as a mediator between Europe, the Near East region and Asia as well as a bridgebuilder to the Islamic world. By declaring Turkey as an official member state - Turkey was already associated to the former EC in 1962 - the EU countries try to control the development of a country which most of the EU members are connected with by NATO.

2.2 The Accession Process

Before getting the status of an official applicant State, the EU made a pre-accession strategy towards the candidate countries of Central Europe which was founded on: European Agreements, Accession Partnerships and National Programs for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA), pre-accession assistance, including the PHARE Program, environment and transport investment (IPSA Program), agricultural and rural development support (SAPARD Program), co-financing with the international institutions (IFIs), opening of European Community programs and agencies.

The Madrid European Council of 1995 called on the European Commission to submit an assessment of the candidates' applications for membership as soon as possible after the Intergovernmental Conference

(IGC) on the reform of the EU's institutions - it was completed in 1997 with the treaty of Amsterdam - and to prepare a detailed analysis concerning the consequences of an enlargement for the EU. The summit also stated that the necessary decisions for launching accession negotiations would be taken within six months of the IGC's conclusion.

In July 1997, the Commission presented the *Agenda 2000*, a single framework in which the EU Commission outlines the broad perspective for the development of the EU and its policies beyond the turn of the century, the impact of the enlargement on the EU as a whole, and the future financial framework for the years 2000 - 2006. The Commission also made its opinions on the candidate countries' applications.

The Commission evaluated the political, economical and social situation of each applicant country in relation to the Copenhagen criteria. For this opinion making, the Commission took into account information given by the applicant states, assessments made by the Member States and the European Parliament and progress made under the European Agreements, a special program of the pre-accession strategy. The opinion of the Commission was not only an analysis of the status quo but simultaneously a forward-looking analysis of expected progress.

Initially, there was a discussion within the Member States whether the negotiations should be opened according the so-called startline model, that means with all the applicant countries, or if one should start with a convoy of those states which had made most progress. The EU Commission recommended in its 1997 – Opinions to start on the basis of the convoy-model with the following countries: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Cyprus. In order to prepare the applicant states for the membership and as a part of the pre-accession strategy, the EU publishes reports every year on the progress of each country towards aligning their national laws and standards with those of the EU.

Half a year after the Amsterdam Treaty, negotiations began according the convoy-model with Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia because these states had made much more progress than the other applicant states. In 1999, the European Summit of Helsinki decided that there should also be opened formal enlargement negotiations with Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria and Romania since the

Kosovo war in springtime 1999 had shown that it was not very smart to let the Balkan States without any hope concerning an entry perspective. This attitude seemed to be counterproductive to the goal of stabilizing the European continent.

The process of negotiations take the form of a series of bilateral inter-governmental conferences between the EU Member States and each of the applicant countries. Following a detailed examination of the different chapters of the *acquis communautaire*, that means all primary and secondary law of the EU, in the meantime more than 80.000 pages, negotiations are opened with each candidate country, chapter by chapter (screening). The EU Commission proposes common negotiating positions for the community for each chapter relating matters of EU competence. The Member States then approve unanimously the negotiating positions (or not). Negotiating sessions are held at the level of ministers or deputies, i.e. permanent representatives of the Member States, and ambassadors or chief negotiators of the applicant countries. The results of the negotiations will be incorporated in a draft accession treaty, which is submitted to the European Parliament for assent by absolute majority. That means that the European Parliament has a strong power concerning the enlargement process. Without its consent no enlargement is possible. After signature, the accession treaty is submitted to the Member States and the applicant country for ratification according to its constitutional procedures, in some cases even a referendum. When the treaty comes into effect, the Member Candidate becomes a Member State like all the other ones with equal rights. This process can take more than two years. As it is foreseen that the negotiations talks should be finished at the end of year 2002, realistically seen the first new members will enter the EU in 2005.

2.3 The Current Situation of Enlargement

In October 1999, the Commission presented a second set of Regular Reports, recommending to the European Council that:

- "accession negotiations will be opened in 2000 with all candidate countries that have fulfilled the Copenhagen political criteria and have proved to be ready to take the necessary measures to comply with the economic criteria, i.e. Bulgaria, Malta, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and the Slovak Republic";

- "the opening of negotiations with Bulgaria will be conditional upon a decision by the Bulgarian authorities, before the end of 1999, on acceptable closure dates for Units 1-4 of the Kozloduy nuclear power plant, and upon a confirmation of the significant progress accomplished in the economic reform process";
- "for Romania, the opening of negotiations will be conditional on the confirmation of effective action announced by the Romanian authorities to provide adequate budgetary resources and to implement a structural reform of child care institutions before the end of 1999; it is also conditional upon a further assessment of the economic situation before negotiations are formally opened, in expectation that appropriate measures will have been taken to address the macro-economic situation";
- "the nature and the number of negotiating chapters to be successively opened with each candidate country will be determined by the EU applying the principle of differentiation, i.e. taking full account of each candidate's progress in preparing for membership under the Copenhagen criteria";
- "the chapters already provisionally closed in the ongoing negotiations will be reviewed, as agreed, in order to allow due account to be taken of newly adopted acquis. Provisional closure of chapters henceforth will be decided by taking full account of the result of the negotiations and the degree of which candidates have fulfilled their commitments to make progress in their preparations for membership".

These recommendations were endorsed by the Helsinki European Council in December 1999, and indicated that the next progress reports were to be presented in December 2000.

3. Fulfilling the Fourth Criterion – EU Must Be in Shape for Enlargement

On the Copenhagen Summit, the Heads of the State and the Government did not only put demands to the applicant countries but put themselves under pressure in order to get the EU in shape for enlargement. That means that there must be a reform of the institutions of the Union without losing coherence and the ability to act.

3.1 The First Attempt - the Treaty of Amsterdam

In June 1997, the Foreign Ministers of the EU signed the Treaty of Amsterdam, the third big reform of the Rome Treaties after the Single European Act (SEA) in 1986/87 and the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992. The Treaty fell far short of its original goal of political union to accompany the economic and monetary union. Concerning the reform of the institutions in preparation for a further expansion of membership, the summit has failed. Nevertheless, the Amsterdam Treaty brought some progress and includes the following instruments:

- Matters relating to asylum, visas, immigration and external border controls were made subject to EU rules and procedures (with opt-outs for Britain, Denmark and Ireland, the Schengen Agreement was incorporated into the EU-framework, and cooperation between national police forces as well as the work of Europol were strengthened;
- The EU got new policies like employment, sustainable development, human health and consumer protection. But in these areas the EU can only formulate normative goals; the real actors stay the Member States. Furthermore, 'subsidiarity' was given a new definition.
- The Treaty foresees some small changes in the structure of the institutions in anticipation of enlarged membership. It was also decided that at least one year before the membership of the EU rises to 20, a new IGC will be convened to carry out a comprehensive review of the treaties and the functioning of the institutions.
- In order to promote coherent, effective and visible foreign policy, a policy planning unit was established, decision-making procedures were simplified, cooperation with the WEU was emphasized, and provision was made for a single commissioner to be the EU representative of external relations.
- Several changes were made concerning the institutional practices, including downgrading the cooperation procedure and changing the co-decision procedure to place the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers on a more equal basis,

"increasing the number of areas that are subject to qualified majority voting, and giving additional powers to the Court of Auditors and the Committee of Regions"(McCormick 2000:84).

The treaty of Amsterdam does not fulfill the hopes formulated by the applicant countries for it was in exactly those fields of institutional reforms where the summit had failed. Amsterdam brought three so-called *leftovers* to be regulated on a further Intergovernmental Conference foreseen four years after the Amsterdam Treaty.

3.2 The Second Attempt - the Treaty of Nice

From the 7th to the 11th of December 2000, the European Summit in Nice negotiated under the French presidency in order to find a solution for the three *leftovers* of Amsterdam. After hard and intensive struggles between the Member States a draft - the *Treaty of Nice* - was adopted. It is worthwhile to look at the qualification of this treaty, made by the President of the Commission, Romano Prodi: "At Nice, fifteen Member States, each focusing on its national interests, were able to reach only an imperfect agreement which did not go far enough. What is more, most of the Heads of State or Government were more concerned with blocking the future action of the Union than with seizing the opportunity of advancing the common venture. Nice was a clear demonstration of what it meant by agreement on the lowest common denominator"(Prodi 2001).

Nevertheless, the European Summit was successful insofar as for the *leftovers* of Amsterdam could be found a solution. The most difficult item on the agenda was the matter of re-weighting votes in the Council of the European Union (Council of Ministers). First of all, the European Council reached an agreement on re-balancing the votes in the council (of ministers), a condition for the change of decision-making in direction to the qualified majority voting system. Big countries get more votes within the Council of Ministers, although small countries get more votes compared to their population. The gap between them increases, as the following table shows:

Table 1: Votes and Populations of the Countries

Council of Ministers voting allocation			
EU-Members	current	new	Population (mill.)
Germany	10	29	82,0
Great Britain	10	29	59,2
France	10	29	59,0
Italy	10	29	57,6
Spain	8	27	39,4
Netherlands	5	13	15,8
Greece	5	12	10,5
Belgium	5	12	10,2
Portugal	5	12	10,0
Sweden	4	10	8,9
Austria	4	10	8,1
Denmark	3	7	5,3
Finland	3	7	5,2
Ireland	3	7	3,7

Luxembourg	2	4	0,4
<i>Total</i>	87	237	375,3
Candidates*			
Poland	6	27	38,7
Romania	6	14	22,5
Czech Republic	5	12	10,3
Hungary	5	12	10,1
Bulgaria	4	10	8,2
Slovakia	3	7	5,4
Lithuania	3	7	3,7
Latvia	3	4	2,4
Slovenia	3	4	2,0
Estonia	3	4	1,4
Cyprus	2	4	0,8
Malta	2	3	0,4
Total	134	345	481,2

*Allocation if country were an EU-member

Especially in the new constellation, the balance between *the big four* should be - according to the French political will - kept, although Germany represents with more than 82 million inhabitants a twenty percent higher population than France does. Opposition by the smaller states as well as the political pressure of the medium sized states like Spain formed a compromise of decision-making which can hardly be understood by the man on the street. When the treaty will be set into force, forming a majority will require to outgrow several hurdles. In the enlarged EU, with different

countries having different numbers of votes, 74,6% of those votes will be needed to form a "qualified majority" and the majority of the Member States. This means that a coalition of three big countries plus one small one will be able to block a qualified majority. Another form of blocking minority is one that requires a check that any decision has the backing of countries representing at least 62 per cent of the total population of the enlarged EU.

Table 2: Seats in European Parliament according to Treaty of Nice

Member State	Seats in EP according the Treaty of Nice	Seats in percent
Germany	99	13,52%
United Kingdom	72	9,84%
France	72	9,84%
Italy	72	9,84%
Spain	50	6,83%
Netherlands	25	3,42%
Greece	22	3,01%
Belgium	22	3,01%
Portugal	22	3,01%
Sweden	18	2,46%
Austria	17	2,32%
Denmark	13	1,78%
Finland	13	1,78%
Ireland	12	1,64%

Luxembourg	6	0,82%
EU-15	535	73,09%
Poland	50	6,83%
Romania	33	4,51%
Czech Republic	20	2,73%
Hungary	20	2,73%
Bulgaria	17	2,32%
Slovakia	13	1,78%
Lithuania	12	1,64%
Latvia	8	1,09%
Slovenia	7	0,96%
Estonia	6	0,82%
Cyprus	6	0,82%
Malta	5	0,68%
<i>applicant countries</i>	<i>197</i>	<i>26,91%</i>
EU-27	732	100,00%

The second *leftover* was the extended majority voting. The European Council was able to reduce in about 30 of these articles the unanimous decision to a majority vote. Most of these articles were not very important ones, very important matters like tax and social security policy remain subject to national veto. But nevertheless, it is a very important matter - and most of the comments did not appreciate the progress made in this field. In the future, the president of the EU-Commission as well as the

President of the EU-Central Bank will be appointed by a qualified majority. Situations like in 1995 when one government blocked the installation of a president of the Commission or the president of ECB in 1998 because of an unanimous vote will not happen any more. Of course, it is a pity that the European Summit was not able to agree on more fields with a qualified majority vote but a fruitful reform in personal decisions was done.

Concerning the third *leftover*, the European Council was able to make progress, too. The Treaty of Nice makes substantive reforms in three important aspects of the Commission: a) the procedure of appointment of its members; b) the powers of the President and c) the numbers of the members of the College. The Treaty of Amsterdam already opened the way towards a reconfiguration of the Commission as a parliamentary cabinet, not only by increasing the role of the European Parliament in the appointment of its members, but also by means of increasing the powers of the President as regards the College. The Treaty of Nice intends to go further in this line and establishes a set of provisions that puts the President in a superior position within the College, transforming him from a mere *primus inter pares* into a real President. The Treaty of Nice now adds the power to decide on the internal organization of the Commission, including the structure and allocation of responsibilities, to re-shuffle this allocation during the Commission's term of office, and to appoint the Vice-Presidents. Furthermore, in order to reinforce the effectiveness of these provisions, the Treaty also establishes that the members of the Commission shall carry out their duties under the authority of the President and allows him to request the resignation of any member of the College when deeming it necessary.

With regard to the reduction of the number of members of the Commission, the Intergovernmental Conference opted for a staggered and complex solution that (a) first reduces the numbers of members of the Commission to one national of each member state, from 1 January 2005 until the EU has 27 member states, and (b) then, when the Union consists of 27 member states, reduces the number of members of the Commission to a smaller number of members of the Commission and adopt the implementing arrangements for a rotation system among the member states of the Union, based on the principle of equality.

Concerning the institutions the Treaty of Nice includes changes of seats in the European Parliament. The biggest and the smallest country,

Germany and Luxembourg, could keep their seats of 99 resp. 6 parliamentarians. All in all, the principle of representation is arranged in a better way than in former times (see table 2). The demographic factor is to be reflected more strongly in the distribution of seats in the European Parliament. The seats in the European Parliament are to be re-distributed as new member states are admitted in the course of enlargement. All other EU member states besides Germany and Luxembourg will remain unchanged.

Concerning the future cooperation of the EU-Member States, the Summit changed the flexibility clause. When the Treaty of Nice will be set into force, groups of at least eight countries may pursue greater integration in certain areas. This agreement of closer cooperation is an important decision on the part of the EU. It is intended to make it possible for a group of EU countries to cooperate more intensively on specific issues. Especially in an enlarged Europe of EU 20 or EU 27, this decision can become of fundamental importance.

Last but not least, on the basis of a German-Italian initiative with a view on a further deepening of the integration, the prospect was opened of holding a broad debate on the future of Europe that will lead to a new comprehensive Intergovernmental Conference in 2004. In this IGC, the final vision of Europe as well as the competencies of the Union and in relation to the member states shall be clarified, the role of the national parliaments in the new architecture of Europe shall be defined and the status of the Charter of Fundamental Rights (proclaimed at Nice) shall be regulated definitely.

The most important result of the Treaty of Nice is perceived in the applicant countries: that now the enlargement process is on the way, that means that the EU reaffirmed its political commitment and its total determination to a successful conclusion of enlargement. The applicant states can keep up their efforts in transposing the *acquis* into national law and actually implementing it - including a macroeconomic and financial stability.

4. Consequences of the Fifth Enlargement of the EU

The enlargement of the EU will increase the Community from now

15 states to 27, when all those applicant countries with which the EU is currently negotiating will have entered the EU. The population would be increased by 28 % whereas the GNP would grow not more than about 4 percent. Accession will mean that the capacity of Europe as an actor in international relations can increase, if the community can manage successfully the domestic problems, which will increase through the enlargement. The coherence within the community will decrease and the differences between the countries and regions will increase. In the year 1998, it was Slovenia the as best of the applicant countries which reached 68 percent of the average-EU-GDP per head, whereas Rumania reached only 27 percent and Bulgaria 23 percent. In economic terms the differences between the old and the new member states are bigger than they were in the 80ies when at the southern enlargement Greece, Spain and Portugal entered the EC. But not only the growing economic differences will be a problem but the fact that many small countries will get the membership must have major consequences for the EU. There are only two states which have a relatively large population: Poland with 39 Mio. inhabitants and Romania with 22,5 Mio. All the other countries are characterized by small populations. Politicians in the bigger countries like Germany with more than 82 million or France with 57 million inhabitants fear that in an enlarged EU they could be overruled. In this context, it is quite clear that new forms of coalitions will be formed and old leading nations in the integration process could fall into a minority role. Maybe the privileged partnership of Germany and France, probably weakened in the last years, will loose more of its importance for the European integration process. In France, politicians as well as the political class are afraid that Germany could cooperate more with Poland and concentrate its political activity to Central Europe. But perhaps the Weimar triangle, the regular cooperation between France, Germany and Poland, may lead to a new approach in the European integration process and will help the CEC-States to a better start within the EU.

If the EU will be enlarged by the 12 applicant states, the territory of the community will be enlarged by 24 percent. But much more important is the fact that the EU will have direct neighbors like Russia, Turkey, Ukraine and Belo-Russia. This enlargement means that the EU is connected to crisis areas; not only that the problem of immigration and refugees will be a big challenge for an enlarged European Union, but also the military fights in the Caucasian areas as well as the conflicts in the Islamic republics of

Aserbajdschan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kirgisien can have negative effects on EU-Europe. The more the EU approaches to the crisis areas the more the community has to develop a strategy how to answer to such challenges. In the case of Russia, a country which cannot become member of the EU but which is definitely a European country, the EU must continue its strategy of incorporating the country into a European security system. The EU has to negotiate special agreements with Russia to enable a closer relationship with the EU. The EU must be seriously interested in stabilizing the unstable Russian system for in case of a destabilization of Russia an enlarged EU would have big problems. The strategy towards Belo-Russia and the Ukraine can not differ in principle; it must be operated on a lower level.

Another problem of the enlargement process is the limited public enthusiasm for enlargement in some EU countries. It was in Ireland where a referendum about the Treaty of Nice was defeated in June 2001 by a small majority. And even if only one third of the voters participated in this referendum, the process showed that the EU has a problem to find recognition in the constituencies. It is the second time that voters did not accept the results negotiated of an EU government, for in 1991 it was the Danish constituency which opposed the Maastricht Treaty. In a new referendum in 1992, the Danish voters accepted this treaty although there were no legal changes. There were only some declarations of the Heads of State and the Government of the EU which gave Denmark some political securities without any legal statute. One can imagine that in the Irish case there will be some political statements concerning the Irish status of neutrality and then there will be a support of the Treaty of Nice in Ireland. Nevertheless, this attitude of the Irish constituency shows that there is an increasing number of people within the EU countries who oppose the way of integration the EU is going. The question is whether there must be new forms of negotiation of further integration in which public opinion is more and more incorporated. The model of the Intergovernmental Conferences, that means the negotiations of the employees of the governments and at the end of these negotiations the conference of the Heads of State and Government, seems to be no longer an adequate means for the political process. There is the idea of a congress, a convent, in which members of the governments, the European Parliament, the national parliaments and other representatives of the civil society are represented and by this composition the communication between the constituencies and the governments are

represented in a better way.

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