

Six Years after the 2004 Enlargement:

Taking Stock

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	5
1 Introduction	8
2 Political impact: institutions, legislation, policies	9
2.1 Decision making: new Member States as softies or troublemakers?	9
2.2 How do new Member States rate in compliance with the <i>acquis communautaire</i> ?	14
2.3 Common Foreign and Security Policy.....	16
2.4 Justice and Home Affairs: organised crime and trafficking versus the coordination of law enforcement and the judiciary	19
3 The economic impact	20
3.1 New market opportunities and competition for EU funds	21
3.2 Fears of competition on the labour markets through migration and delocalisations (‘social dumping’)	22

4 Integration and interconnectivity	29
4.1 The representation of the new Member States in the EU institutions	29
4.2 Integration of the new Member States into various European networks.....	30
5 The case of policy research.....	34
6 Convergence or divergence between East and West?	36
6.1 From Nice to Lisbon: reluctance towards deeper integration among the new Member States?	36
6.2 Beyond Croatia: the future of enlargement	38
6.3 Russia and the Eastern Neighbourhood	41
7 Conclusions	43
References	44

Executive Summary

There is no comprehensive assessment of the impact of the 2004 (and 2007) enlargement of the European Union (the fifth enlargement) except the official documents of the European Commission. The first one was approved and published two years after (CEC 2006b), the second one five years after (EC 2009a). The latter study provides three views on the impact of enlargement: the perspective of the EU as a whole, of the new Member States (NMS) and of the EU-15.

The purpose of this study is to address the question to what extent the fears and expectations regarding the 2004 enlargement, felt on both sides, in the EU-15 as well as in accession/candidate states, have come to fruition or whether they have materialised at all. The key question of this study is this: To what extent have the expectations and fears in the old and new Member States been validated or vindicated?

Among the declared objectives of the EU's enlargement policy were the following: to improve political stability in the EU neighbourhood; to enhance geopolitical stability by preventing dormant conflicts in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) from erupting; and to extend the zone of peace, security and prosperity. Among its expected benefits were the following: a stronger position in a globalised world by increasing the size of the internal market; an increase in internal trade and capital flows; and higher economic growth through economies of scale. Opening up new markets was expected to strengthen European competitiveness on a global scale.

The enlargement policy had been driven mainly by the candidate states but also by neighbouring EU-15 Member States which were interested in political stability and increased economic dynamism. Proximity mattered. Enlargement was seen as a way to revitalise the economies of borderlands, promote fair competition, facilitate cross-border trade and improve transport networks through community regional programmes. At the same time, there were also concerns about the potentially negative consequences of enlargement. Social dumping, immigration and organised crime were listed as the most prominent risks. The political class of the EU-15 also feared that enlargement might slow down the process of European integration (widening at the expense of deepening) and erode existing common policies, be it agricultural policy, structural cohesion or foreign policy. Transition periods in sensitive areas such as the free movement of people, labour and services were negotiated as necessary safeguards.

The main concerns among the candidate states were on the one hand the weakening of recently regained sovereignty, and on the other about 'second-class membership' (different standards for new and old Member States). The candidates also claimed transition measures to protect sensitive sectors of their own (e.g., the purchase of land by EU nationals etc.).

The citizens in the Member States have perceived the enlargement process mostly in terms of gains and losses in specific areas. A Eurobarometer (2009) poll done in February showed overwhelming support (80%) for the notion that the 'fall of the Iron Curtain provided good business opportunities for western enterprises in the CEE region'. In terms of the consequences of enlargement on employment there are

clear differences in perception: in some countries enlargement was perceived as a cause of job losses (mostly in Greece, Hungary, Cyprus, Portugal and Latvia) whereas in others it was not (Sweden, the Netherlands and Finland). Half of the respondents believed that enlargement had led to an increased feeling of insecurity in the EU as a whole; however, the majority of respondents (56% in the EU-15 and 65% in CEE) agreed that it had 'increased European security by allowing progress in the fight against organised crime and illegal immigration'.

According to a majority of respondents the enlarged EU has become more difficult to manage (66%), to some degree because of the 'divergent cultural traditions of the NMS' (54%). However, measured by the overall experience of the recent five to six years, gains have outweighed losses, fears and concerns have proven to be unfounded and hopes have been justified.

1 Introduction

In 2004 the European Union experienced the biggest single enlargement in its history: the number of Member States almost doubled and its population reached nearly a half billion people. The enlargement put a symbolic end to the Cold War division of Europe. A parallel process, the deepening of European integration launched by the Laeken Declaration in December 2001, led to the Lisbon Treaty that was finally ratified almost eight years later. The EU has radically changed in size and institutions, but has preserved its core values and its principles remain unchanged. The accession to the EU of the NMS has vindicated their long period of transition and opened a historically unique chance for them to take part in shaping a future for Europe.

This paper will explore some of the consequences of the 2004 enlargement by contrasting expectations and reality against the backdrop of recent experience. The first section will address the political and security aspects of enlargement, the second section the economic aspects.

2 Political Impact: Institutions, Legislation, Policies

2.1 Decision making: new Member States as softies or troublemakers?

Those who remember the European Communities as a 'club' of six distinguished, French-speaking prime ministers on familiar terms with each other's spouses and children would be shocked by the atmosphere at the European Council of 27. The College of the European Commission consists of representatives of each Member State and the number of Members of the European Parliament has reached almost eight hundred. Many have feared for the EU's ability to make decisions after the enlargement. As the record of the recent six years has convincingly shown, they were wrong.

The acceleration of the legislative process in the EU has not been stopped or held back, neither in the struggle for deep institutional reform, nor because of the participation of representatives of the NMS. More decision-makers and their increased heterogeneity have not considerably affected the whole process (Thomson 2007).

Paradoxically, knowledge about the decision-making process and the roles of national actors in the EU political game has increased thanks to the political debate on new competences for the EU (in energy, foreign or social policies) and claims of a more flexible Europe by proponents of the Constitutional and Lisbon Treaties. Both conservative and ultra-left-wing opponents of the Lisbon Treaty used the

decision-making process to make their case to the citizens of the NMS: behind the nice façade of the EU institutions there is a hidden threat to national interests and sovereignty. Brussels stays 'Brussels' even with national representatives involved as MEPs, officers, ministers and commissioners. There are several reasons given for why this fear is legitimate: an ideology of 'Europeanism' (argued for by V. Klaus)¹ or the informal dominance (*directoire*) by big EU states, especially France and Germany, fed by stereotypes and prejudices. Such debate distorts the image of the EU in the NMS. On the other hand it provides an opportunity for diplomats and politicians to explain the decision-making process in the EU.

The role of the NMS in European legislative decision making can be described as reluctant, inconsistent and mostly reactive. In most of the NMS, concrete political considerations for tackling specific EU policies have not been developed, except in random cases such as hygienic norms, environmental regulations, etc. Despite this record, some real and justified concerns were acknowledged in the transition arrangements (the free movement of capital and labour, waste-treatment plants for municipalities up to 2,000 habitants etc.). Hence, instead of arguing for more accommodating regulations in problematic areas, NMS have chosen the strategy of adaptation and asked for time to achieve the standards.

Finally, do NMS cooperate more closely as a sub-group within the EU? V4² countries that are members of the EU

¹ Klaus depicts Europeanism as a 'substitute' for or 'a soft version' of socialism: 'It is Europe where we witness the crowding out of democracy by post-democracy, where EU dominance replaces democratic arrangements in the EU member countries, where [some people] do not see the dangers of empty Europeanism and of a deep (and ever deeper) but only bureaucratic unification of the whole European continent' (Belien 2005).

² The V4 or Visegrad Group consists of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

had been expected to pursue coherent policies. However, the experience of the recent past has not reassuring. V4 countries pursue their own particular interests, they compete for resources and prestige and they exploit historic, geographic and political differences rather than seek optimal results through cooperation. A pattern of competition may be discerned also in the areas of infrastructure projects (see the section below), access to EU structural funds or attracting FDI.

Decision making in the Council of the EU. When it comes to institutional matters and first-pillar policies, some describe the European policies of the NMS as those of troublemakers. It has been generally assumed that adding new Member States would make decision making more problematic. However, rhetorical positions and posturing have rarely led to legislative action. There was a fear³ that the Nice Treaty voting rules (applicable as of 1 November 2004) in the Council would make decisions difficult to achieve. However, the fear did not materialise, since most of the decisions have been made by consensus (before 2004, 80% of decisions were made by consensus and only 20% by qualified majority voting). The empirical fact that decision making in the enlarged EU (EU-25 and EU-27) has not been paralysed reflects the theoretical finding that ‘group size has a marginally diminishing negative effect on legislative output. Adding members makes stronger differences for smaller groups... group size matters most when linked to an increase of group heterogeneity’ (Hertz and Leuffen 2008). The practice of policy making has not changed as dramatically as some

³ ‘The Nice Treaty rules cripple the EU’s ability to act since they make it very difficult to find winning majorities’ (Baldwin and Widgrén 2004).

expected before enlargement. The number of legislative acts adopted annually has actually increased since 2004.

Taking the example of Presidency programmes, one can observe that there is no a priori division in policies between new and old Member States. Issues such as energy security, neighbourhood policy or liberalisation of the internal market have been put on the EU agenda by NMS as they have been seeking cross-European coalitions.

New Member States and the EU Presidency

The active political agenda of the NMS can be seen in the Council Presidency programmes of those which have already held the Presidency and those which are preparing for it. The priorities of a Presidency express a general political vision of European integration and the key interests of the Member State, and therefore often reflect a domestic political agenda.

Slovenia

Among the Slovenian Presidency's priorities one can find institutional issues (the Lisbon Treaty) and regional security (Western Balkans EU integration), which both touch closely on the country's national interests, but also rather general problems such economic and social progress (the Lisbon Agenda), climate/energy and intercultural dialogue.

Czech Republic

The Czech Presidency, with the motto 'Europe without barriers,' seemed to set quite an ambitious agenda.

However, due to both internal (political instability) and external factors (the gas crisis, war in Gaza, the financial/economic crisis), the results achieved were limited.

Hungary

Hungary has announced that its Presidency in 2011 will deal most probably with energy and the economic crisis, which has deeply harmed the Hungarian economy: 'by 2011 the EU will have managed to overcome the crisis, but Hungary is likely to deal with issues related to the crisis during its Presidency' (Göncz 2009).

Poland

The Polish Presidency in the second half of 2011 might be oriented to the Eastern dimension of the EU foreign policy and to strengthening European defence cooperation.

The European Parliament. According to the analysis of voting patterns in the EP between July 2004 and December 2005 (Hix and Noury 2006), coalitions were formed according to party lines, the Left–Right dimension and ideological stances. MEPs voted more along party lines than national ones, although the composition of the sixth EP was more heterogeneous than that of the fifth EP. The most cohesive factions were the Socialists and the Greens, whereas UEN and IND/DEM were on the opposite end of the spectrum. The Liberals (ALDE) witnessed a decline of cohesiveness due to the increased heterogeneity of the

group. The group of European Conservatives and Reformists, established in 2009 by the British, Czech and Polish Conservatives and Eurosceptics, could not efficiently block the legislative process leading towards more strict regulation and deepening European integration. MEPs from some NMS appeared more cohesive along national lines than those from old Member States, however this could be attributed to the fact that smaller states generally have more cohesive national caucuses.

Six years after the enlargement there is less evidence of common interests shared exclusively by NMS. Both the increased number of Member States and the greater geographic, political, economic and social diversity of the EU countries give more opportunity for coalition building between older and new Member States. As Thomson states, 'Member States which share the same position on any given controversy take different positions on other controversies. This is true of both old and new Member States. Although we observe some clustering of the new Member States on a minority of issues, the new members are a diverse group' (Thomson 2007, 17).

2.2 How do new Member States rate in compliance with the *acquis communautaire*?

There are two possible definitions of what it means for a legislative act to be 'implemented': it is the process of 'translating policy into action' (Barrett 2004, 251) or the realisation of a political programme; or it refers to 'what happens after a bill becomes a law' (Bardach 1977) when we can measure the impact of political decisions. Problems appeared in relation to the amount of legislation produced by the European Union and often in language difficulties

when the act was elaborated and then implemented in countries using, in total, twenty-three official languages.

According to Toshkov, especially before accession ‘compliance with EU law in CEE is embedded in the domestic political context ... Despite the short time and little administrative resources that the candidate countries had, political preferences and institutions have to some extent exerted impact on the compliance outcomes’ (Toshkov 2009, 167). This attitude remained in the NMS, even after enlargement.

The total amount of European legislation is increasing every day. The eight years of the accession process preceded by another six years of transition to democracy were shaped by substantial legislative activity in the parliaments of the NMS. Since the motivation to be a member is now gone, there is no ongoing control of the national legislative process as was the case during the accession talks. Today the NMS often fail in their obligations to comply with the *acquis communautaire* and to implement it immediately into their legislation. The possible legal sanctions of the European Commission for non-implementation of legislation adopted by the EU before the accession to the EU could easily be applied against some NMS (e.g., Bulgaria and Romania have been repeatedly cut off from some EU financial instruments due to failure in the fight against corruption). The focus on the NMS obscures similar failures in complying with legislation in older EU Member States such as Greece or Italy. For example, the EC has taken legal action against the Energy Efficiency Directive of January 2009 against all 10 NMS as well as two-thirds of the other EU countries (IHS 2009).

Bulgaria, together with Latvia and Germany, is the champion among all EU Member States, having transposed 99.41% of all EU directives. Among the top ten are seven of the ten NMS; beside the above mentioned there are Romania, Slovakia, Malta, Lithuania and Slovenia (EC 2009). These figures confirm the hypothesis that a high percentage of transposition of EU legislation (in the sense of ‘bill becomes a law’) does not necessarily mean that the legislative acts are translated into action (the case of Bulgaria is significant). Law enforcement is still one of the most important distinctions between ‘old’ and ‘new’ Member States.

The NMS have not only the duty to comply with EU legislation, but since 2004 they also have the opportunity to shape it and to examine its interpretation and implementation through the Court of Justice of the European Communities (ECJ). Polish authorities report that Poland ‘actively defends its interests wherever doubts or controversies appear as regards the application of the Union legislation’ (Wiśniewski et al. 2008). The concrete consequence of this attitude is the fact that Poland is one of the most active countries in pre-judicial proceedings by the ECJ in which a country’s interpretation of the Community law is presented.

2.3 Common Foreign and Security Policy

A weakening of common foreign policy was one of the pre-accession fears among the EU-15. Except in individual cases such as the Polish veto (see the box below) the NMS have not blocked EU decision making.

The Polish veto

Poland vetoed the EU's mandate to negotiate a new partnership agreement with Russia before the Helsinki Summit in November 2006, following a Russian ban on imported meat and food products from Poland. Poland unsuccessfully asked for EU solidarity to convince Russia to lift the discriminatory ban on one of the Member States. The veto sparked sharp criticism: Gernot Erler, Deputy Foreign Minister of Germany, said that the Polish government 'is not doing itself any favours with this veto ... it is isolating Poland within the European Union.' On the other hand Carl Bildt, Foreign Minister of Sweden, defended Poland's right to raise the issue and be supported 'in the trade dispute' (See Deutsche Welle 2006).

On the contrary, the mediating role played during the Orange Revolution in Ukraine by Javier Solana, Alexander Kwasniewski and Valdas Adamkus was proof that enlargement has strengthened, not weakened, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

Foreign policy (especially with regard to the Eastern neighbourhood) was the policy area most influenced by the NMS. Poland's European policy is heavily influenced by relations with the EU's Eastern neighbours, especially in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and Black Sea Synergy. The NMS tried to counter-balance French support for the Mediterranean dimension of the ENP with the Swedish-Polish Eastern Partnership initiative. EU enlargement has led to a shift towards the Eastern

dimension and the development of the Eastern Partnership during the Czech Presidency.

It has been observed that despite the intrinsic differences among national foreign policies, new and old Member States negotiate on a daily basis to find consensus and implement the objectives of the CFSP. However pro-US the NMS are considered to be, on most policy issues they side with the EU mainstream. The NMS are more suspicious of Russia due to recent history; the ‘the legacies of the twentieth century live on, not just in people’s memories but in practical issues’ (Grabbe 2004, 74).

The example of energy policy

Energy policy has become one of the most important functions of the EU. The lesson of the January 2009 gas crisis for NMS has been that the EU has to strengthen its negotiating position vis-à-vis external gas suppliers and that it will not ‘speak with one voice’ without material conditions of solidarity, that is, without further integration of the internal energy market, infrastructure connectivity and legal framework. The NMS—though sometimes keen to maintain the intergovernmental character of the CFSP—did not hesitate to support measures to increase their common effectiveness during the energy dialogue with Russia through streamlining the EU’s complex decision-making mechanism, for example, the decision of the March 2009 EU Council to decrease ‘the threshold for deciding actions at Community level’ (EU Council 2009).

2.4 Justice and Home Affairs: organised crime and trafficking versus the coordination of law enforcement and the judiciary

Contrary to the public outcry and fears, magnified by the media, enlargement has not caused any serious problems in internal security. In 2006, a representative of Europol admitted that 'the most important effects from a criminal point of view happened before the end of 2004'.⁴

The accession of the NMS to the Schengen Area in December 2007 was another test for managing overblown fears. Prior to the abolition of internal border controls, the majority of German and Austrian citizens expressed concern regarding what could happen afterward: '60% of Germans agreed that open borders were an invitation to crime and more than 75% of Austrians opposed' the opening of the borders (Lungescu 2007).

Frequent German passenger controls of buses crossing the common border even one year after the enlargement of the Schengen Area became a point of dispute between the Czech and German (especially Bavarian) Interior Ministries. Although German authorities justified their activities through proven results (detaining third-state nationals without Schengen visas), the strictness and lack of communication boosted the impressions of 'second-class membership' among Czech society.

⁴ 'The intensity of trafficking has not worsened in a significant way during the last three years in the EU' (Antonio Saccone, head of the Crime Analysis Unit of Europol, during a lecture at the Cicero Foundation, Paris, 14 December 2006).

According to the study carried out later (Atger 2008), it was the view of Austrian, Czech, German and Polish authorities that ‘there was no increase in the irregular migration figures in the month following the removal of common borders’. In the case of Poland, a 50% decrease of illegal migration flows was even reported. The Czech Republic became the second Schengen country (together with Luxembourg) having neither an external border nor a sea border.

3 The Economic Impact

The bulk of the debate regarding the economic consequences of enlargement has been about market opportunities for trade and investment as well as the impact of opening markets to the free movement of labour and services. The financial and economic crisis of 2007–2008 has been another external shock that has tested the level of integration of the economies of the NMS. Some NMS—those which consolidated their financial sector during the nineties (e.g., Poland, the Czech Republic)—have been affected primarily by the economic downturn in the EU-15. Other NMS that ran large current account deficits (e.g., the Baltic states, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary) have suffered more immediate financial consequences. Yet a detailed evaluation of the impact of the crisis would require deeper analysis that is beyond the scope and purpose of this study.

3.1 New market opportunities and competition for EU funds

According to the Commission's data and analysis (EC 2009a), the EU-15 (especially those with increased trade and investment with the NMS) benefited from enlargement by a cumulative increase in economic growth of around 0.5%. Since 2004, the number of new jobs has grown by about 1.5% annually in the NMS; in the EU-15 there has been an increase of about 1% per year since enlargement.

The mutual benefits and opportunities are vividly documented by the Commission's data. In 2007, almost 80% of all NMS exports went to the rest of the EU, and 19.5% went to other NMS (compared with 13.25% in 1999). The EU-15 (the 'old' Member States) sells 7.5% of their exports to NMS, an increase of almost 5% over the levels of a decade ago. In short, economic integration between EU-15 and NMS has deepened.

'If money was our main reason for joining the European Union, we would have been better off applying for membership to the United Arab Emirates', said former Czech Prime Minister Miloš Zeman. In winning the hearts and minds of the people for the EU membership, the financial arguments played a crucial role in the CEE countries, as did the emotional appeal to re-establishing European unity. Approaching 2013, the end of the current financial perspective, the differences between NMS in terms of their future payer/beneficiary position is becoming clearer. Slovenia and the Czech Republic are closest to the net payer position if the current crisis does not profoundly harm either country's economy.

Transfers to Member States by the EU represent about 0.8% of EU GDP, of which 20% was allocated to the NMS in

2007. In the current EU Financial Perspective 2007–2013 this should reach 35% annually on average (the NMS' share of the EU's GDP is 7% and they represent 20% of the Union's population). Funding from the EU budget in 2007 was 2.1% of the GDP of the NMS; this will rise to 3% in 2013. 'When transfers are taken into account, the NMS as a group are net recipients from the EU budget to an amount of 1.3% of GDP in 2007 while, on average, the old Member States were net contributors in 2007 with about 0.1% of GDP' (EC 2009a).

Agriculture represents on average 2% of the GDP of the EU but the CAP subsidies account for about 40% of the EU budget. Among individual NMS there are striking differences— from the relatively more rural countries such as Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Poland, to the Czech Republic or Estonia where agriculture accounts for a small share of GDP. *Agenda 2000*, the outcome of the 1997 German Presidency, calculated for the first time the price of the enlargement, especially concerning CAP direct subsidies to the NMS. Resulting from accession negotiations, long-term transition arrangements have been implemented on direct agriculture subsidies from 2004 to 2013 for all NMS. In 2004 the NMS received only 25% of the full subsidy (per hectare and farm); by the end of the current financial perspective period this will reach the same amount as for farmers in the EU-15. The NMS obtained from the EC an agreement providing for the partial compensation of subsidies from national budgets.

3.2 Fears of competition on the labour markets through migration and delocalisations ('social dumping')

The free movement of capital and goods established by the Single European Act makes the enlarged EU the largest and

most integrated supranational market in the world (accounting for more than 30% of the world's GDP and 17% of the world's international trade). The free movement of labour and services still has considerable limits, as was shown by the debate about the Bolkenstein Directive in 2004–2005, which was largely responsible for the French refusal of the Constitutional Treaty in May 2005. Fears and concerns related to labour migration have never gone away.

When eight countries from CEE joined the EU in 2004, most 'old' Member States opted to impose a transitional period because of concerns about possible labour market disturbances. The free movement of labour in an enlarged EU proved to be particularly controversial among trade unions.

Germany and Austria have restricted access to their labour markets, whereas the UK and Ireland adopted a liberal regime for workers from the NMS (interestingly, the British and Irish trade union movements supported the policy of their governments; there was agreement among the social partners on the need for additional labour to sustain economic growth).

Before 2004 the highest emigration flow from the NMS went to Germany and Austria (about 60%). After enlargement, Ireland and the UK were the destinations of choice for those from CEE countries, and Spain and Italy for those from Bulgaria and Romania (CEC 2009). In 2004–2007, more than 680,000 NMS citizens arrived in the UK, 380,000 in Ireland. Germany issued around 350,000 work permits for citizens from the NMS per year; in Austria the number of permit-holders from the NMS increased from 48,000 in 2003 to 57,000 in 2005 (Tamas and Münz 2006).

However, in relative terms, the migration associated with the enlargement of the EU—intra-EU mobility after accession—has so far proved modest compared to migration flows from outside the EU (see, e.g., Spain where the annual inflow of foreign nationals from third countries has steadily increased from 99,000 in 1999 to 646,000 in 2004).

The following table provides a snapshot of data from 2006–2007 (according to available national statistics):

Table 1: Change in the NMS population resident in selected EU-5 Countries following EU enlargement May 2004 (Thousands)

	Denmark	Ireland	Sweden	UK	Austria	Germany	Italy	Total emigrant population	% of total population	% of working age pop.
Czech. Republic	0,2	2,5	0,1	13,5	0,3	6,1	2,2	24,8	0,24	0,34
Estonia	0,2	1,1	-0,1	3,0	0,0	0,8	0,3	5,2	0,39	0,57
Hungary	0,3	1,9	-0,3	8,0	0,3	6,0	2,2	18,4	0,18	0,27
Latvia	0,3	4,8	0,3	15,7	0,0	1,4	0,5	23,1	1,01	1,46
Lithuania	1,0	9,6	1,3	29,7	0,1	2,0	0,8	44,5	1,30	1,91
Poland	3,2	37,9	6,3	167,5	6,0	62,0	30,9	313,8	0,82	1,19
Slovakia	0,1	5,1	0,2	27,3	1,6	3,2	1,2	38,8	0,72	1,00
Slovenia	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,3	1,1	1,2	0,4	3,1	0,16	0,22
TOTAL NMS	5,4	62,8	8,0	265,0	9,3	82,7	38,5	471,7		
% of total population	0,10	1,49	0,09	0,45	0,11	0,10	0,07			
% of working age population	0,15	2,17	0,14	0,72	0,16	0,15	0,10			

Note: The largest migrations from the NMS, relative to the population of the sending country, have been from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia.

In 2005, in the two countries with the highest share of non-nationals in the working-age population, namely Austria and Germany (at about 10% each), only a small share (1.5% and 0.6%, respectively) came from the EU-10 (about 7% are non-EU nationals). The largest share of EU-10 nationals (about 2% against a total of 8% for all non-nationals) is in Ireland (Summa 2008).

According to available statistics and analysis (Doyle, Hughes and Wadensjö 2006) there is only limited evidence that recent labour migration from the NMS has had a negative impact on the employment opportunities of native workers in Britain and Ireland. There has been no noticeable increase in unemployment anywhere (see the table below). Taking into account that a large majority of workers from the NMS have been employed in low-skill occupations and far below their education profile (e.g., 62% in the UK [Riley and Weale 2006]) they compete with less-skilled workers who are mostly another immigrants. The migration after the enlargement provoked changes on both sides of the East-to-West flow. In the migrants' countries of origin a brain drain has been observed (Slovakia has been affected by a brain drain to the Czech Republic since the mid-nineties). In receiving countries this has led to a reduced price for labour, which stimulates economic growth. Financial remittances of workers to their home countries have increased household incomes (substantially in Poland, by about 1.5% of GDP, and in Bulgaria and Romania by 5.5% of GDP [Brücker et al. 2009]). The temporary nature of current labour migration helps the economies of the NMS to bring back even more qualified workers, generally speaking English, with life experience from living abroad.

**Table 2: EU enlargement and migration:
Impacts on unemployment (% point difference from base)**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2015
Denmark	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00
Ireland	0.84	1.24	1.03	0.68	0.35	-0.29
Sweden	0.06	0.08	0.06	0.04	0.02	-0.02
UK	0.23	0.32	0.24	0.16	0.10	-0.04
Austria	0.04	0.06	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.00
Germany	0.04	0.05	0.03	0.01	0.00	-0.01
Italy	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.00
Czech Rep.	-0.12	-0.18	-0.14	-0.08	-0.04	-0.03
Estonia	-0.21	-0.29	-0.25	-0.21	-0.20	-0.18
Hungary	-0.10	-0.14	-0.09	-0.03	-0.02	-0.02
Latvia	-0.50	-0.74	-0.63	-0.53	-0.48	-0.47
Lithuania	-0.65	-0.94	-0.81	-0.73	-0.68	-0.56
Poland	-0.29	-0.45	-0.41	-0.32	-0.21	-0.16
Slovakia	-0.34	-0.49	-0.41	-0.35	-0.33	-0.30
Slovenia	-0.08	-0.12	-0.11	-0.10	-0.10	-0.10

Source: Barrell, Fitzgerald and Riley (2007)

The fear of cheap and socially less-protected labour from the NMS was one of the strongest and most discussed issues related to the 2004 EU enlargement. Since May 2004, contrary to some predictions, ‘overall, the economic impact of migration from the new EU member states has been modest, but broadly positive’ (DWP 2006, 9) for Britain, according to the official study prepared by Britain’s Department for Work and Pensions. In the migrants’ countries of origin the impact was not unambiguously

positive. 'The opening of the labour markets indirectly influenced a decline in unemployment rate as well as an increase in salary pressure in Poland. This resulted in domestic employers raising salaries, as they were afraid of losing their best-qualified staff' (Wiśniewski et al. 2008).

The perception of immigrants-commuters from the NMS has been generally more positive than that of long-term residents from non-EU countries. The majority of workers from the CEE countries do not intend to live in a foreign country permanently; some do not bring their families with them, which leads local people to perceive them more positively, unlike the perception locals have of non-European nationals. However, in a recent survey done during the time of the economic crisis, 47% of British people answered that there are 'too many' citizens of other EU countries living in the United Kingdom (Transatlantic Trends: Immigration 2009, 13). The most problematic case is the Romanian Roma community in Italy, which first became the target of xenophobic attacks and then—in 2007—unprecedented legal measures (deportations of Romanians with criminal records) on the part of Italian authorities (Lungescu 2007).

The first wave of labour migration had subsided even before the financial crisis—which diminished job opportunities for migrants—partly because of natural limits to demand and partly due to the acceleration of the convergence in wages and economic growth in the NMS. The EC expects labour migration to double in the next 12 years (CEC 2009). Ahearne et al. (2009) predict a more differentiated situation: the 'economic crisis may slow down the catching-up process of at least other six new member states [i.e., not the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia]. This could lead eventually to higher migration from new Member States.'

'Relocation' instead of renationalisation: Sarkozy and offshoring

In an interview with the French TV Channel TF1 on 5 February 2009 President Nicolas Sarkozy stated that 'it is justified to build a Renault factory in India to sell Renaults to India. But building a factory in the Czech Republic to sell cars in France, that is not justified... [it would be good] to stop all this offshoring, and if possible bring production back to France' (*The Economist* 2009). His remarks on the necessity of 'relocalisation' of offshored industries provoked disagreements in Central Europe and especially in the Czech Republic, which then held the Council Presidency. Sarkozy's economic policies can be described as an eclectic combination of reform-liberal rhetoric and a continuation of traditional French dirigiste practices. When it comes to the EU—especially in a time of crisis—the liberal approach is mostly represented among CEE governments, whereas the state-centric mindset is prominent among the French political elite.

Concerns of relocalisation in the auto industry have been widely discussed also in Spain. A detailed study (Bilbao-Ubillos and Camino-Beldarrain 2008) showed, however, that there are no 'weighty reasons for the final car assemblers operating in Spain to relocate.' The same goes for component producers. Only systems manufacturers might consider business relocation (for them labour costs have a higher relative importance, disinvestment costs are low).

4 Integration and Interconnectivity

4.1 The representation of the new Member States in the EU institutions

Officially there are no quotas for the representation of Member States in EU institutions. However, in the last round of enlargement, there was a provision for EU institutions to organise special competitions open exclusively to NMS nationals. This exception is applicable until 2010 (2011 for Bulgaria and Romania) in order to stimulate the representation of NMS nationals without any decrease in the qualifications demanded. David Bearfield, Director of the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO), does not want to 'speak of quotas, but rather of orientation objectives for employment of NMS nationals' ('David Bearfield' 2009).

Due to the lack of qualified candidates with long-term experience at the highest levels of national or supranational administration, the NMS are still underrepresented in top positions in European institutions. Those state employees who are competent to fill directorial or managerial functions in the EU are mostly those who were involved in the accession talks on the side of candidate country and who later joined the EU institutions. An official Polish paper describes 'the outflow of experienced employees from Poland's government administration' (Wiśniewski et al. 2008).

That there is a decreasing number of NMS nationals, relative to their population, the higher up one goes in the institutions, is reflected in the fact that the quota of jobs

allocated to Polish citizens in the EC was filled only at 75% overall. Among directorial positions, only 44% of the positions allocated were filled, and among junior managerial positions, only 32%. In the first year and a half of membership (until November 2005), only 10% of the positions allocated were filled by Polish citizens.

4.2 Integration of the new Member States into various European networks

One of the primary goals in the first years after accession was the integration of the new Member States. It is useful therefore to consider the degree of integration into the EU 'material' infrastructure as well as the 'plug-in' into virtual policy, advocacy and knowledge networks. When considering the level of infrastructure integration one would have to venture into comprehensive analysis, the scope of which is beyond this paper. Therefore we present here only two specific cases that are indicative of the trend in the recent six years.

The case of infrastructure: transport and energy. It seems quite significant that according to the strategic plan of Trans-European Transit Networks (TEN-T) - (884/2004/EC),⁵ of 30 priority axes there are only five which have relevance for NMS.⁶ Four of these are in the railway system:

Axis 6: Lyon–Trieste–Ljubljana–Budapest (with a possible connection to the Ukrainian border)

⁵ 884/2004/EC, 29 April 2009, available at http://ec.europa.eu/ten/transport/priority_projects/index_en.htm

⁶ See the maps of the axes in EC (2005). available at http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/maps/doc/ten-t_pp_axes_projects_2005.pdf.

Axis 22: Athens–Sofia–Budapest–Vienna–Prague–
Nuremberg/Dresden

Axis 23: Gdansk–Warsaw–Brno/Bratislava–Vienna

Axis 27: Rail Baltica–Warsaw–Kaunas–Riga–
Tallinn–Helsinki

Only one axis of the motorway network has relevance for NMS:

Axis 25: Gdansk–Brno/Bratislava–Vienna (interestingly, there is no priority project in an East–West direction).

The case of the Czech Republic's road and rail interconnections

Insufficient integration into a transport network that crosses the former Iron Curtain can be illustrated by the case of the Czech Republic, which is geographically the closest of the NMS.

The Czech highway system: the D5 reached the German border in 1997, only in 2006 were the systems connected, the D8 from Dresden to Ústi nad Labem was finished only in 2006, the connection to Austria (S10–A3) is still to be built (the Czech Republic has been advocating for a connection to the Austria–Czech border since 2001).

In terms of rail connections, the most ambitious goals for modernising trans-border corridors aspire to reductions in travel times: Nuremberg–Prague in 3 hours and 20 minutes, Berlin–Prague in 3 hours and Prague–Vienna in 3 hours and 30 minutes.

The total amount of EU financial resources allocated to energy infrastructure projects was relatively low until the 2008 Second Strategic Energy Review (CEC 2008) recognised that the '(TEN-E) instrument and its budget were conceived and developed when the EU was considerably smaller and faced energy challenges of a completely different dimension compared to today,' as illustrated below.

According to the list of TEN-E projects supported during the years 1995–2009 (TEN-E financed projects 1995–2009, 2010),⁷ only a small minority of the projects as of 2004 were relevant to NMS, which was disproportional to the needs of the underdeveloped infrastructure of the CEE region:

- 2004: two projects (in Poland) out of 18 (representing 5% of the annual TEN-E budget)
- 2005: three projects (Estonia, Hungary, Poland) out of 16 (representing 5% of the annual TEN-E budget)
- 2006: two projects (Hungary, Latvia) out of 13 (representing 9% of the annual TEN-E budget)
- 2007: three projects (two in Hungary, one in Lithuania) out of 15 (representing 20% of the annual TEN-E budget)

Most of the CEE projects included feasibility studies on high-voltage grid interconnections, synchronisation with the UCTE (Union for the Coordination of the Transmission of Electricity) system or new gas storage facilities. It is however debatable whether the low participation of NMS in TEN-E projects between 2004 and 2007 was a consequence of low

⁷ TEN-E financed projects 1995–2009, European Commission, 3 March 2010, Brussels, Available at http://ec.europa.eu/energy/infrastructure/tent_e/doc/2009_ten_e_financed_projects_1995_2009.pdf

preparedness for implementation or was due to the institutional inertia of the programme from the pre-accession period.

The framework was changed in 2008 in the wake of the January 2008 gas crisis. SER 2 recommended six priorities essential for the EU's energy security (**bolded** priorities have a high relevance for the NMS):

- **the southern gas corridor,**
- **a diverse and adequate liquefied natural gas (LNG) supply for Europe,**
- **the effective interconnection of the Baltic region,**
- the Mediterranean Energy Ring,
- **adequate North–South gas and electricity interconnections within Central and Southeast Europe,**
- the North Sea Offshore Grid.

Moreover, the European Recovery Plan provided an additional opportunity to allocate resources to investments in interconnections, transit routes and reservoirs in the NMS and thus to enhance the energy security of the whole EU.

The importance of further infrastructure integration of NMS cannot be overestimated. A detailed analysis of cases in which supply has been cut shows that the reactions of Member States are determined by the direct impact on the individual state rather than by the damage done to the EU as a whole. Even substantial harm to another Member State elicits only rhetorical condemnation. Only further integration of the internal energy market in terms of infrastructure connectivity and a legal framework will ensure that the EU 'speaks with one voice.'

5 The Case of Policy Research

Policy research networks have been establishing their position and gaining respect in Brussels for decades. An important part of their mission is to serve as the extension of various national think tanks, universities or public affairs groups; hence there are more and more European research centres located in Brussels, working for the general or 'European' interest. For NMS the world of Brussels-based think tanks was closed for a long time and civil society in these countries was not strong enough to shape European policies.

We can identify three weaknesses facing policy research in the NMS: a depoliticised civil society, lack of funding from domestic sources and a lack of experts proficient in both academic research and public policy. After 1989, civic advocacy groups in the NMS were mainly funded through foreign donors, especially German and American foundations and the embassies of a few other states (the UK, the Netherlands and Canada). Since the enlargement and progress in economic convergence, foreign donors have started to redirect civil society funding towards non-EU countries in the Balkans and Eastern Europe. The prospects for national or private funding of highly specialised policy research centres are limited and European funding is possible mostly through transnational networks.

The Prague-based Policy Association for an Open Society (PASOS 2005–2010) was established in 2004 in order to 'promote and protect open society values, including democracy, rule of law, good governance ...' PASOS is

working for a central role for civil society in the transformation process. In recent years it has helped research centres from CEE countries cooperate at the European level through various research projects funded mostly by Soros foundations (e.g., OSI) or directly by the Sixth or Seventh Framework Programmes of the EU.

The European Partnership for Democracy (EPD 2009), based in Brussels, represents one of the most successful steps towards better representation of advocacy groups from the NMS in European governance. 'The EPD's mission is to advocate for a stronger presence of democracy support on the EU's agenda', especially in the Eastern and Southern neighbourhood. This democracy assistance could be described as the original contribution of the NMS to the CSFP. The synergy among the most influential Czech, Polish and Slovak advocacy groups behind this initiative comes from the EPD's Board of Directors (which includes, e.g., the leading Slovak human rights activist, Martin Bútora, Šimon Pánek from Czech People in Need Foundation and Jacek Kucharczyk from the Polish Institute of Public Affairs) and the Council of Patrons (with Václav Havel, but also Jacques Delors).

6 Convergence or Divergence Between East and West?

6.1 From Nice to Lisbon: reluctance towards deeper integration among the new Member States?

The process of adopting the deep institutional reform of the EU has lasted almost the whole decade. At least since 2000 opinions about the future of the EU have begun to differ among candidate countries/NMS. At the Nice EU Summit, the debate about the re-weighting of votes in qualified majority voting provoked the first open disagreement among candidate countries when Poland broke ranks with other countries, successfully insisted on obtaining an equal number of votes with Spain and demanded to be considered as one of the leading European countries.

Further disputes about the desirable progress towards integration emerged at the Convention on the Future of Europe, composed of EU institutional officials and representatives of the national parliaments of 15 EU Member States and 13 candidate countries (including Turkey). Two major issues were raised: a mention of 'God' in the preamble of the future EU Constitution (where Poland was very active), and the new system of qualified majority voting (QMV) in the Council. Both were considered as key elements of the institutional change—in terms of symbolism and balance of power—that re-emerged during the debate about the Constitutional Treaty and later the Lisbon Treaty.

A bumpy road towards Lisbon Treaty ratification in the Czech Republic

The Lisbon Treaty (LT) has been approved by both houses of the Czech Parliament. During the process the Senate asked the opinion of the Czech Constitutional Court regarding the consistency of six provisions of the LT with the Czech Constitution; after its decision (6 November 2008) that the specific provisions ‘are not inconsistent with the constitutional order’, the Senate approved the LT on 6 May 2009. The Chamber of Deputies approved the LT on 18 February 2009 and passed an accompanying resolution referring to the Czech–German Declaration of 1997, which stated that the ‘Charter of Fundamental Human Rights (CFHR) applies exclusively to European law’ and ‘the legal status of CFHR excludes retroactive applicability; i.e., questioning Czechoslovak legislation of 1940–46’. At the initiative of the Czech government, the matter was footnoted in the 19–20 March EU Council Conclusions. Nevertheless, in September a group of senators appealed to the Constitutional Court to rule on the consistency of the Lisbon Treaty as a whole with the Czech Constitution.

Vaclav Klaus and his world view

‘This is a victory for freedom and rationality over the artificial projects of the elite and the European bureaucracy.’ These were the comments of Czech President Václav Klaus on the result of the first Irish referendum on the Lisbon Treaty in June 2008. Even

though Klaus was Prime Minister in 1996 when the Czech Republic applied to join the EU, he has made no secret of his disagreement with the post-Maastricht development of European integration and has responded with statements such as ‘the EU costs more than the good it does’.

While President Klaus expressed himself vaguely on the Lisbon Treaty before the second Irish referendum (raising the indistinct spectres of ‘loss of sovereignty’ and ‘threats to freedom’), since the positive result of the second Irish vote in October 2009, he has presented more specific reasons for rejecting the Treaty and has laid down new conditions for ratifying the Treaty: he has announced—*without* consulting the government—that he would seek additional guarantees regarding the application of fundamental rights; in fact, opting out of the Charter (see Klaus 2009).

Interestingly, the main political parties (ČSSD, ODS) have not challenged his request. At the European summit a compromise solution was approved: adding the Czech Republic to Poland and the UK in Protocol No.7 to the LT. Finally on 3 November 2009, the Czech Constitutional Court rejected the appeal of the senators, and the President completed the ratification process with his signature the following day.

6.2 Beyond Croatia: the future of enlargement

It has been generally expected that the NMS would be more empathetic towards and hence supportive of any future EU

enlargement. The relative openness shown by NMS could be demonstrated by the fact that most of them did not apply restrictions on workers from Romania and Bulgaria after their 2007 accession. The Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Sweden decided not to apply any restrictions; in January 2008 Hungary together with Greece, Spain and Portugal joined those that have lifted restrictions.

According to the 2006 Eurobarometer survey (Eurobarometer 2006) most of the 10 NMS have been favourable to the future membership of the Western Balkan countries—the only notable exception being a negative opinion concerning the membership of Albania, not only in EU-15 countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Italy and Luxembourg) but also among some NMS (Czech Republic, 62% opposed; Slovakia, 54%; and Hungary, 56%).

The above-mentioned survey has shown that respect for human rights and minority rights together with a need for reconciliation and cooperation with neighbouring countries are considered the main prerequisites for future candidate countries. 'Respect for human and minority rights would cause difficulties for aspiring countries especially according to the French (62%), Luxembourgers (62%), Swedes (60%), Finns (59%), Greek Cypriots (59%) and Greeks (57%). Greek Cypriots (52%), Greeks (50%), Swedes (48%) and Slovenes (47%) found reconciliation and cooperation with neighbouring countries challenging for the countries in question the most.' (Eurobarometer 2006, 64)

The Croatia–Slovenia border dispute

The fact that an overwhelming majority of Slovenes (66% against 29%) have been supportive of membership for Croatia did not prevent the government of Slovenia from exerting pressure on Croatia in order to resolve border issues during accession talks. During the French EU Presidency, Slovenia twice blocked the opening of negotiation chapters as a direct result of the border dispute. Slovenia required Croatia to guarantee that none of the accession documents could prejudice a solution of the border dispute. In December 2008, the Slovenian government refused to give its consent to opening seven negotiation chapters during the EU–Croatia intergovernmental conference (Vutcheva 2008). This veto by Slovenia was widely criticised by other Member States and the Commission on the grounds that ‘bilateral issues should be negotiated outside the EU accession framework’.

Even beyond the Croatian–Slovenian dispute one has to note that the suggested inclusion of the ‘Irish protocol’ into Croatia’s accession treaty as the only legal procedure ensuring pre-referendum guarantees to Ireland would unnecessarily burden the next enlargement round.

As for opinions about Turkey’s membership in the EU, citizens of the NMS are more positive (44% in support versus 40% against) than those of the EU-15 (38% for versus 49% against) although they too are divided—Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovenia are the most supportive nations, whereas in the Baltic states, the Czech

Republic, Slovakia and Hungary more people are against the accession of Turkey.

A recent Eurobarometer poll (2009) has shown that the NMS do not form a homogeneous group in their opinion about future enlargement: 'EU respondents do not have fundamentally different opinions about the factors to be considered prior to further expansions ... the differences are subtle at most.' Hence, one cannot expect the NMS to pursue a common pro-enlargement policy within the EU.

6.3 Russia and the Eastern Neighbourhood

The Eastern dimension of the ENP has been a focus of NMS policy activities in the EU. In 2008 this led to the proposal for the Eastern Partnership (EaP). It was conceived as a Polish–Swedish initiative in May 2008, endorsed by the June 2008 Council (as a counterweight to the French proposal for the Union for the Mediterranean), elaborated by the Commission in the aftermath of the August war in Georgia and finalised in the Commission's communication of December 2008. The EaP was approved in the conclusions of the March 2009 European Council under the Czech Presidency.

The EaP aims at projecting the EU's normative power and at facilitating the approximation of various sectors and civil society in partner countries to EU standards. The main EaP objectives are to promote stability, good governance and institution building, the acceleration of reforms, legislative conformity and the further economic development and integration of the partner countries. In short, to provide a framework for drawing the Eastern European neighbours closer to the EU.

The Russian position on the EaP has been ambivalent. On the one hand it keeps criticising the EaP as if the EaP were intended to expand the EU's 'sphere of influence'. On the other hand it is mocked and downplayed as irrelevant 'paper policy'. Similarly, EaP policy has been criticised from opposing perspectives—for some it is too ambitious, for others (including partner countries) it is insufficient, as it does not explicitly provide a membership perspective.

During the past six years the NMS have again and again realised (see the case of the Polish veto above) that their position vis-à-vis Russia and also the EU interest in the Eastern neighbourhood can best be asserted through pursuing a common approach by the EU as a whole. Although some NMS are still seen by others as 'historically prejudiced against Russia', the way towards 'speaking with one voice' leads through building mutual trust and solidarity among all Member States. Russia will remain, for the foreseeable future, a divisive factor and actor in the EU and will hamper further 'communitarisation' of the NMS policies.

7 Conclusions

This study does not represent a comprehensive impact assessment of the recent EU enlargement but only a selected overview of existing research in relevant areas. We have focused on the political consequences of enlargement on decision making at EU level, particularly in foreign policy, its socio-economic impact, and post-enlargement developments in connecting infrastructure and the societies of the NMS.

Contrary to pre-accession fears, the free movement of NMS citizens has neither endangered social cohesion nor the internal security of the EU-15. This has been due to the relatively high absorption capacity of the old Member States (EU-15) and to the ability of NMS to adapt their societies to new conditions and to acquire necessary EU-related administrative skills.

For all members, old and new alike, there has been a double, simultaneous challenge: to 'digest' enlargement and to adapt to a deepened integration model (the Constitutional and then the Lisbon Treaty). Finally, one can conclude that we have been able to overcome those challenges. All in all, the recent enlargement has been a great success.

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