

THE SPECIFICITY OF THE EASTERN ENLARGEMENT:
“A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE FOR THE EU”

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ABSTRACT

THE SPECIFICITY OF THE EASTERN ENLARGEMENT: A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE FOR THE EU

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This thesis analyses the Eastern enlargement of the EU in comparison with the past four enlargement rounds, as a result of which it proves that Central and Eastern enlargement (CEE) is a unique experience for the EU. After the fourth enlargement, the EU turned its face to the CEECs, which witnessed unexpected events of a historic nature, with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. This date symbolises a great change for the CEECs, such as the end of communism, transition to open market economy, democratisation and stability. A special focus is given to the inclusion of the CEECs into the EU necessitating to make adjustments both in the EU and in the CEECs. The specificity of the fifth enlargement derives from all the changes and challenges that it poses to the applicant countries and the Union but also to its neighbours. It concludes that the factors of uniqueness of the Eastern enlargement will strengthen the probability of the inclusion of the future applicants in the Eastern part of the continent. This enlargement is a positive development for the old and the new member states, it is one of the most important 'political necessities' and 'historical opportunities' that the EU is facing since its establishment, because it will not only ensure the unification, stabilisation, security, economic growth and general well-being of the continent but also because it has opened the way of membership to the future possible applicants in the Eastern part of the continent.

Keywords: Enlargement, Classical Method, Eastern Europe, Conditionality

ÖZ

DOĞU GENİŞLEMESİNİN FARKLILIĞI: AB İÇİN BENZERSİZ BİR DENEYİM

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Bu çalışma AB'nin "Doğu Genişlemesi"ni önceki dört genişleme süreci ile karşılaştırarak analiz etmekte ve bunun sonucu olarak da Doğu genişlemesinin AB için benzersiz bir deneyim olduğu hipotezini kanıtlamaktadır. AB, dördüncü genişleme sürecinden sonra, yüzünü 1989 da Berlin Duvarı'nın yıkılmasıyla birlikte beklenmedik tarihi nitelikte olaylara şahit olan Merkez ve Doğu Avrupa ülkelerine çevirdi. Bu tarih, Merkez ve Doğu Avrupa ülkeleri için, komünizmin sona erışı, açık pazar ekonomisine geçiş, demokratikleşme ve istikrar gibi büyük bir değişimi sembolize eder. Bu çalışmada, Merkez ve Doğu Avrupa ülkelerinin AB'ye dahil olma süreçlerine ve bu süreçlerin gereği olarak AB'de ve bu ülkelerde gerekli hale gelen uyumlamalara ayrı bir önem verilmiştir. Beşinci genişlemenin farklılığı, aday ülkelere, AB'ye ve komşu devletlere sunduğu tüm bu değişiklik ve zor koşullardan kaynaklanmaktadır. Tezin sonunda Doğu genişlemesinin benzersiz oluşunun unsurlarının kıtanın Doğu kanadındaki gelecekteki adayların Birliğe girme şansını güçlendireceği vurgulanmaktadır. Bu genişleme, yeni ve eski üyeler için olumlu bir gelişme, hatta AB'nin kuruluşundan beri karşılaştığı en önemli "politik gerekliliklerden" ve "tarihi fırsatlardan" biridir. Bunun nedeni, yalnızca birleşmeyi, istikrarı, güvenliği, ekonomik büyümeyi ve kıtanın genel refahını sağlaması değil, ama aynı zamanda kıtanın doğusunda gelecekteki muhtemel adaylara üyelik yolunu açmasından kaynaklanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Genişleme, Klasik Metod, Doğu Avrupa, Koşulsallık

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my one and only mother, Seval Erdemir.

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INTRODUCTION

This study will analyse and discuss that the fifth enlargement process of the European Union (EU), i.e. the Central and Eastern European Countries' (CEECs) enlargement of the EU, is a unique case when compared with the previous four enlargement rounds. In order to keep the scope of the research at a meaningful level, this study will exclude the Mediterranean countries of Cyprus, Malta and Turkey but will only include the 10 CEECs, namely; the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania, not at individual level but usually on a general basis. It is highly likely that 2004 enlargement will continue but with a more demanding criteria and strategy. This study will not deal with post-2004 enlargement issues but intends to make a critical analysis of the Eastern enlargement so that some lessons could be drawn for the next rounds of enlargement including the case of Turkey.

Before going into the reasons of the specificity of the CEE enlargement, in the first chapter, there will be a brief look at the past four enlargement rounds, which will form the historical background of the EU's enlargement process starting in 1970s. The first reason for historical analyses of enlargement is that it is a recurrent feature of post-war European integration process, together with the process of widening. The study will not specifically deal with the interaction between these two but it will highlight the fact that, for a better understanding of European integration, one should study deepening and widening simultaneously. However, this study only deals with the case of EU enlargement process. The second reason for a historical analyses of enlargement is to show why and to what extent Eastern enlargement process, more specifically pre-accession strategy, is different from the previous enlargements of the EU. Therefore, historical background is needed for such a comparative analyses of the EU's successive enlargements and one could grasp the "uniqueness" of Eastern enlargement by only comparing it with its predecessors.

Chapter 2 explores the transition of the CEECs from communism to democracy and the market together with the approach and the concerns of the EU and the Member States towards the fifth enlargement. In Chapter 3, there is an analysis and exemplification of the specificity of this enlargement in two groups; interms of the political and security factors on the one hand, and economic factors on the other by comparing it with the previous four enlargements and by referring to the important summits that have taken place in the course of the CEE enlargement process. Regarding the methodology and strategy, Eastern enlargement constituted a “challenge” to the classical method of enlargement and its key principles. Eastern enlargement is a unique one not only due to “pre-accession strategy” developed for the CEECs, but also interms of the “context” (post-cold war era) it takes place in, the overall implications for the EU, for its member governments, for the newly acceded countries and finally for the future of European order as a whole. Eastern enlargement is the only EU enlargement where the debate on European integration is linked to a ‘wider debate on the future of Europe’. It raises more critical questions of the boundaries and identities of Europe.

Conclusion part emphasises the uniqueness of the Eastern enlargement and how the classical method of enlargement has been modified throughout the five enlargement rounds. It also projects a light on to the future of the EU after the finalisation of the CEE enlargement in 2004, from security, economic and political perspectives. Besides these, this part points out the importance of the CEE enlargement and its effect on the EU, on its neighbours and on the world and by doing so once more, proves that the fifth enlargement of the EU has not had a precedent and, therefore, bears a specific quality.

The EU has already undergone four successive enlargements: in 1973; Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom, in 1981; Greece, in 1986; Portugal and Spain and in 1995; Austria, Finland and Sweden. In 1998, the EU formally launched the accession negotiations process that will make enlargement possible with the ten applicant countries: the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania.

Starting with the submission of the first formal applications for membership to the EC in 1961, all throughout the 1990's, 'enlargement' has been a significant issue in the agenda of the EEC/EC/EU and since the Rome Treaty was signed, the Community has been driven by the need to balance the demand of "*widening and deepening*". At different times, the emphasis has been on achieving both, more or less simultaneously rather than choosing an "either/or" option. The enlargement to the South with Greece in 1981 is followed by the Single European Act, and the accession of Spain and Portugal in 1986, then the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, which led to the EU, and the fourth enlargement took place with the accession of Austria, Sweden and Finland in 1995. Shortly after this, an IGC was made in 1996 to deepen the European integration, to prepare for the necessary institutional reforms and to adjust the EU to further enlargement towards CEECs. Therefore, widening and deepening should be regarded as complementary to each other rather than to be treated as the two contradicting themes of the EU.

The formal enlargement process started in 1961 with applications from the UK, Denmark and Ireland. Especially in the UK's case we can see the core principles of the EC's classical method of enlargement. The United Kingdom's membership was a debated subject throughout the 1960s. One of the blocks was the determined resistance of the French President, Charles de Gaulle. The main reasons for this resistance were political and French fears that the US would be able to influence the development of the Community because of its special relationship with Great Britain. In October 1962, the negotiations opened with Britain and broke down by the veto of de Gaulle. Ireland applied on 31 July 1961, in October 1962; the negotiations opened and broke down by the veto of de Gaulle. Later on, Danish government as well announced its intention of applying for membership on the same day as the British application of another in 1967. Only under the changing domestic and international circumstances of Europe in the early 70's that, all three countries joined the EU on 1 January 1973.

Greece applied to the Community for an Association Agreement in June 1959. Association Agreement was signed in Athens in July 1961. Following the military

coup in Greece in April 1967, the Community ‘froze’ the Agreement. In July 1974, the military dictatorship in Greece collapsed and the Greek Government submitted a formal application on 12 June 1975. However, the Commission had three concerns. The first concern was the delicate state of Greco-Turkish relations; the second concern was about the economic implications of accession and the third was related to the impact of Greek membership on the decision-making and policy development of the EC. Nevertheless, on 9 February, at the Council meeting, the Commission’s opinion was rejected unanimously by the member states. The Accession Conference which took place on 23 May 1979, decided on the accession date to be 1 January 1981 and this enlargement showed how political considerations could be as strong as the economic ones in determining the full membership issues.

The Spanish Government applied to the EC to negotiate an Association Agreement in 1962, which was not answered until 1964 and led to a preferential trade agreement in 1970. A formal application for EC membership came in July 1977. However, French, Italian and Greek fears of the economic consequences of Spanish entry and German considerations on the budgetary implications, prolonged the duration of the negotiations from 1979 until 1985. The Commission’s Opinion on the Portuguese application was delivered to the Council in May 1978. It welcomed the application as an important step in the consolidation of the democracy but envisaged a ‘partnership’ between the EC and Portugal in order to affect economic restructuring. Finally, both entered into the EU in 1986. Spain and Portugal saw the EC membership as a means of reinforcing their return to democracy.

The fourth enlargement is totally a new context for EU enlargement, opening the route for the entry of “neutral” European countries and those of the CEECs. Austria was the first to apply to join the EU in July 1989, then Sweden in June 1991 and finally Finland in March 1992. The negotiations started in February 1993 and the Copenhagen Summit in June set the target date for accession as 1 January 1995. The 1995 enlargement was regarded as the shortest in the Community’s history and the last to use the pure classical method. It also indicated that widening and deepening are compatible processes within the framework of this enlargement.

Between 1989 and 1991, the world witnessed quite unexpected events of a historic nature. On 9 November 1989, events in the East accelerated with the fall of the Berlin Wall and with the end of Communism in CEE. By the end of the 1990s, many of the former communist states of Eastern Europe, such as Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic had turned westward to search for stability and assistance, and applied to join the European Union. With the Cold War coming to an end, there occurred a significant shift in the political map of Europe. The EU faced its hardest challenge to date facilitating both the process of the transition and integration of the post-communist CEECs into Europe and accepting them as the members to the EU.

As far as the CEECs are concerned, accession into the EU symbolised not only their re-entry into the European family of nations, but also the consolidation of their newly formed democracies, a political shelter that would protect democracies from totalitarian regimes, and provide a useful channel for carrying out necessary reforms in their political systems and legislation on human rights, enabling the achievement of socially balanced market economies and economic renewal. In fact, one of the political motivations of the CEECs for joining the EU has been related to their desire to return to a European model of democracy.

When the approaches of the Member States and the EU concerning the fifth enlargement are examined, it is possible to observe some concerns on both sides. Regarding “internal security”, the sources of fear was the uncertainty in Eastern Europe created by the collapse of the Soviet Empire. On the political level, the concern “whether such a big enlargement could slow down European integration”. There were contracting views as whether to widen or deepen, do both at the same time or do one after the other. The “economic” gap accounted for concerns in the citizens of the Union as well. The fear was that, there would be an inflow of unemployed people to the Western part of Europe. In addition to these, there was a belief that the problems of efficiency and effectiveness of EU institutions and policy-making process as a whole would be doubled with the inclusion of the CEECs.

Although the CEECs' inclusion to the EU was generally accepted, there was no consensus among existing member states about which or how many applicants be admitted, or when. However, although there had been some doubts regarding the CEEC enlargement, there was no total rejection of the enlargement, but a conditional support of the enlargement process. It was considered as a "unique, historic task" to further the integration of the continent by peaceful means, extending a zone of stability and prosperity to new members.

Eastern enlargement is "unique" because when comparisons are made with the previous enlargements, first of all, it shows differences in terms of the opportunities it presents to the EU, the member states and the candidate countries, since it not only "*introduces a new historic and moral dimension*" to the European Union, but also constitutes an opportunity for Europe because of "*political stability*", "*economic prosperity*", its "*position in the world*", its "*culture*" and "*the deepening of European construction*" it offers to Europe. Secondly, it presents differences in terms of the challenges it presents to the EU and the member states such as the deepening and widening issues, and the far-reaching European integration concerning security and monetary issues. Thirdly, Eastern enlargement is different in terms of the pre-accession strategies adopted by the EU towards the CEECs before becoming members of the EU. Finally, it shows differences of the EU's relations with "wider Europe", hence making enlargement a continuing process towards Western Balkans and re-establishing relations with its old and new eastern neighbours. In doing so, current enlargement raises questions about the boundaries and the identity of the EU. Thus, the uniqueness of enlargement derives from a combination of three elements; context (bringing together challenges and opportunities); "strategy" and "implications".

This enlargement process introduces comprehensive conditions related to economic, political transformation and cultural adaptation on the part of the CEECs, the EU and also the member countries. It involves much more adjustment than in the past and because of this necessity it may be named as "unique" and described as an '*adaptive*'

strategy¹. This adaptive process contrasts with previous enlargements, in which the burden of adjustment fell almost exclusively on the applicant countries.

The process of a series of summits are important meetings not only in setting out the criteria for membership but also in evaluating the situation of the applicant countries and making them one step closer to membership each time. They started with the ‘Copenhagen European Council’ in June 1993. The EU’s policy towards accession of the CEECs became clearer, when the strict conditionality were offered to the candidate countries that they should become members of the EU as soon as they are able to assume the obligations of membership by satisfying the economic and political conditions. It spelled out for the first time the conditions for membership, which have become known as the ‘Copenhagen Criteria’. Since 1993, with the Copenhagen European Council, “conditionality” has become central to the enlargement process and invoked as a pre-condition for the initiation of the accession process. According to the criteria, applicant states are to change their domestic policies and institutions to bring them into line with the EU requirements.

With the ‘Essen European Council’, in December 1994, we see the emergence of a “pre-accession strategy”, which can be considered the first real concrete step towards enlargement. The core of the Essen strategy in the Essen documents themselves is described as ‘to provide a route plan for the associated countries in order to get prepared for integration into the Union’s internal market *acquis*’. The enlargement strategy entails two essential elements the first of which is “*a pre-accession strategy*” for each of the 10 CEECs. The pre-accession strategy has played a twofold role: on the one hand it has guided the candidate countries to make their economic and political systems together with foreign and security policies converge towards the EU norms, with considerable financial aid, and, on the other hand, it has provided leverage for the EU to influence political and economic developments in the candidate countries.

¹ J. Redmond, “The Enlargement of the European Union”, in S. Croft et. al. The Enlargement of Europe. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999, p.56.

Following the Essen Summit, the accession process continued with the ‘Madrid Summit’ in December 1995, and then giving way to the ‘Amsterdam European Council’ of June 1997 and six months later, the ‘Luxembourg European Council’ of December 1997, following with the ‘Helsinki European Council’ of 10-11 December 1999, then, held in December 2000, the ‘European Council in Nice’ and finally, the ‘Copenhagen European Council’, held on 12-13 December 2002, authorised that, the eight CEECs had completed their negotiations and were ready to join. However, two other candidate countries, Bulgaria and Romania, were unable to conclude their negotiations on time, and their membership has been rescheduled for 2007.

Enlarging the EU Eastward is a long and complex process. So, what will its major political, economic and security implications are for the EU, for its neighbours and for the CEECs as well? What will be the new notions in an enlarged EU where hard borders may be replaced by soft borders with a new context of enlargement? In the Conclusion these questions will be reflected upon. Finally, after reading these two parts and getting the answers to these questions, there will be a better understanding of the specificity of the Eastern enlargement.

1. THE HISTORY OF THE ENLARGEMENT PROCESS OF THE EU

“Enlargement is not an operation of a mechanical nature; it is a truly historical process of unique dimension that will succeed if promoted with patience, prudence and principle.”²

Walther Stützle

1.1. FROM POST WAR YEARS TO THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE EU

The current enlargement is the continuation of a series of enlargements, which the EU and its forerunners have completed in the past and should be seen as a further milestone within the process of enlargement.

During the Post-World War years, formation of European economic and political unions, together with enlargement, acquired more importance. In 1952, France, Germany (West), Italy and the 3 Benelux countries created the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). In 1957, the European Economic Community (EEC) was formed by the above six countries. In 1973, the EEC was enlarged to include Britain, Denmark, and Ireland. In 1981, Greece became the tenth member and in 1986, Portugal and Spain became the eleventh and twelfth members of the EEC.³ The EEC was renamed the European Community (EC) and is currently the EU. On January 1, 1995, Austria, Finland, and Sweden joined the EU.⁴

By the mid-1990's further enlargement of the EU, to include the CEECs has become critical for the future of European integration. The possible expansion of the EU to

² Walther Stützle, “The New Security Dimensions- Europe After the NATO and EU Enlargements”, Report of the Frösunda Conference, Edited by Adam Daniel Rotfeld, Organised by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute in cooperation with the Swedish National Defence College and the Warsaw Center for International Relations, Frösunda, 20-21 April 2001, p.35.

See: <http://editors.sipri.org/pdf/NSD.pdf> in <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/docs/>

³ N. V. Granaris "The Limits of the European Union: The Question of Enlargement" in George A. Kourvetaris and Andreas Moschonas, The Impact of European Integration. Political, Sociological and Economic Changes. London: Praeger, 1996, p.287.

⁴ Ibid.

thirty members is a challenge concerning both the objectives and the process of the EU.⁵

The Treaty of Rome mentions enlargement in several places. In its preamble, the Treaty of Rome speaks of a determination to lay the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe and as stated in the preamble, enlargement has always been part of the EC/EU's "historic mission". Despite the strains imposed on both the Union and its new members, the queue of applicants, stretching from the Southern Mediterranean, through CEECs, into the former Soviet Union is proof of EU's attractiveness for its neighbouring countries. Despite its arcane rulebook, opaque procedures and high membership fee, the EU is still considered the 'best club in Europe', worth making sacrifices to join.⁶

1.2. THE CLASSICAL METHOD OF ENLARGEMENT

In the past, enlargement was guided by a set of principles which Preston has called 'classical method' of enlargement.⁷ Indeed, many of the principles underlying this method have their origins in the 1940s and 1950s from the 'Community integration method', which is based on the logic of 'spillover' central to neo-functionalism.⁸ It states that integration by sector cannot be achieved in isolation; as one sector is integrated, there will be consequences, both advantageous as well as disadvantageous, for related sectors and a 'spillover effect' will occur, suggesting a kind of inevitability to the process.⁹ As member states pooled their sovereignty in an increasing number of policy areas, the institutional structures of the EC attained greater legitimacy, which generated demands for further integration.¹⁰ Due to complex and opaque procedures, there were concerns about the effectiveness and accountability, however, the Community method endured.¹¹

⁵ C.Preston, Enlargement and Integration in the European Union. London: Routledge, 1997, p.3.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ C.Preston, op.cit., 1997, p.3.

⁸ C.Preston, op.cit., 1997, p.8.

⁹ E.Erkoçak, Ever Enlarging Europe: Enlargement of the EU, 1990s and Turkey, Master's Thesis, Bilkent University, 2000, p. 39.

¹⁰ C.Preston, op.cit., 1997, p.8.

¹¹ Ibid.

Actually, 'classical' method of enlargement is an integral part of this Community integration method. According to classical method, applicants must accept the obligations of membership in full; that formal accession negotiations must focus only on the practicalities of membership; that problems created by new members would be resolved by creating new policy instruments; that new members join on the basis of limited incremental adaptation by the Community, and finally, that the Union prefers to negotiate with groups of states that already have close relations with each other.¹²

The pure classical method, which lasted until the Eastern enlargement (2004) of the EU, takes its major power from establishing at the beginning of negotiations what the key outcomes should be: the integration of new members into a club with an ever-expanding rulebook.¹³ The major responsibility being given to the new members will enable them to conclude negotiations quickly with a strong incentive. The classical method also insulates accession negotiations from wider integration debates within the EU, which might slow down the enlargement process even further.¹⁴

The classical method of enlargement theorised and practiced over four enlargements of the EU a consistent pattern both to the accession procedures and implicit assumptions and rules that have shaped the expectations of the outcome of the negotiation process.¹⁵ Preston presents us with six key principles derived from the Community's method of integration. Despite the diversity of the issues arising in the four enlargement rounds, the principles¹⁶ have endured.

These principles are:

1. 'Applicants must accept the *acquis communautaire* in full. No permanent opt-outs are available'. This includes the content, principles and political objectives of the founding Treaties of the EU. This

¹² J.K. Glenn, "EU Enlargement", in, Michelle Cini, (ed), European Union Politics. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003, p.215.

¹³ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.9.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ C. Preston, "Obstacles to EU Enlargement: The Classical Community Method and the Prospects of a Wider Europe", Journal of Common Market Studies, Vol.33, (3), 1995, p.452.

¹⁶ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., pp.18-22.

principle has been a core component of the Community method since its earliest days. The reason why UK was rejected by De Gaulle in its 1963 application was because it was not capable or unwilling to adapt to the Community *acquis*. This principle acts as a discipline on potential members and reduces the risk that accession negotiations will undermine some of the complex package deals between the existing member states.

2. 'Accession negotiations focus exclusively on the practicalities of the applicants taking on the *acquis*'. The focus is on negotiating time-limited transitional periods, setting target dates for the reciprocal reductions and removal of tariffs and quotas, and for legal harmonization and policy alignment.
3. 'The problems arising from the increased diversity of an enlarged Community are addressed by creating new policy instruments to overlay the existing ones rather than by a fundamental reform of the existing instruments' inadequacies'. For example, the EC established new policies designed to buy off the most difficult interests in the applicant state and the member states most affected. The creation of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in 1975 was mainly a response to the UK budget problem, rather than a serious attempt to address regional disparities in a Community framework. Integrated Mediterranean Programmes (IMPs), created in 1984 to compensate French, Italian and Greek farmers for the Iberian enlargement, was a similar exercise.
4. 'New members are integrated into the EC's institutional structure on the basis of "limited incremental adaptation", facilitated by the promise of a more fundamental review after enlargement'. The probability of enlargement always opens a wider debate concerning decision-making procedures, institutional effectiveness and accountability. However, an overall institutional reform does not precede enlargement.
5. 'The Community prefers to negotiate with groups of states that already have close relations with each other'. For the EU this creates some economies of scale in negotiations across the parallel accession conferences, particularly since these groups usually bring up similar

issues for negotiation. From the applicant's perspective, this linkage is usually unwelcome. For instance, small states, such as Portugal and Denmark, which presented few problems to the EC, were inevitably linked to more problematic candidates. The only exception to this principle was Greece.

6. 'Existing member states use the enlargement process to pursue their own interests and collectively to externalise internal problems'. Greece, for example, received assistance through the Integrated Mediterranean Programmes in return for removing its block on Iberian enlargement. The agreement in 1970 on CFP (Common Fisheries Policy) was facilitated by the prospects of bringing in four new members with substantial fishing interest. The CFP thus became part of the *acquis*, which applicants had to accept.

These principles have supported the integration process and have guaranteed the attractiveness of the Community as a club worth making sacrifices to join although they have sometimes been accepted only reluctantly.¹⁷ This may have been because of the serious '*weaknesses*' this method has had. For instance, since it insists on the full acceptance of the *acquis communautaire* by new member states and permits no permanent derogations or partial forms of membership, it limits the possibilities for flexible or creative forms of integration in response to unique situations or changing conditions.¹⁸ The adjustment costs are generally expected to be handled by the new members, which might lead to resentments by them and affect the integration process negatively as well.¹⁹ The cases of UK and Spain can set an example for this. The failure to address the predictable problems arising from the budgetary consequences of the UK's trade patterns led to a renegotiation of entry terms in 1975.²⁰ The political hardness caused by the British budget problem continued for over a decade and was one of the reasons behind the stagnation of European integration process, both politically and economically during the 1970s. Similarly, the terms pressed on

¹⁷ C.Preston, 1995, op.cit., p. 453.

¹⁸ M.Baun, A Wider Europe. The Process and Politics of European Union Enlargement. Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000, p.19.

¹⁹ C.Preston, 1995, op.cit., p.457.

²⁰ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.9.

Spain, particularly for agriculture and fisheries, have led the Spanish to take a hard line on subsequent CFP and CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) negotiations and to increase their demands for side payments.²¹

Therefore, with regard to classical method of enlargement, one would argue that, it has been instrumental for ensuring the successful conclusion of the accession negotiations, yet the method also paved the way for intensive bargaining between the existing member states and the new comers in the post-accession phase.

1.2.1 ACCESSION NEGOTIATION PROCEDURES AND ACCESSION PROCESS

The framework for enlargement process was put forward in Article 237 of the Rome Treaty. As Article 'O' of the Treaty on European Union, with some modification, it states that:

Any European state 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 the 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.²²

The decision to apply formally for membership is determined primarily by the domestic politics of the applicant state. No matter what the nature of the applicant's previous relations with the EC, the decision to apply is a major 'historical choice', which necessitates a domestic political consensus to support a credible application. The EC does not take a formal position on these domestic political considerations,

²¹ Ibid.

²² M.Maresceau. (ed) Enlarging the European Union. Relations between the EU and Central Eastern Europe. New York: Longman, 1997, p.13.

but it influences the shape of negotiations and any concessions made in particularly sensitive areas.²³

The timing of an application is also determined by its linkage to other applications. Although the negotiating procedures accord a notional equality to applicants, in reality there are ‘leaders’ and ‘followers’. However, it is not the case that the followers are necessarily less enthusiastic about membership than the leaders.²⁴ For instance, the timing of the Danish and Irish applications was determined by the complex politics of the British application, just like the application of Portugal, which was shaped by that of Spain.²⁵ In the EFTA enlargement, the early application by Austria, even before the EEA negotiations had started, affected the timing of the Scandinavian applications.²⁶

A ‘procedural framework for accession negotiations’ was adopted by the Council in 1992 as a standard procedural model for the definition of the formal negotiating process to be followed before the accession negotiations start. It contains eight elements which are listed below:²⁷

1. The accession negotiations should be conducted according to uniform procedures by the EU.
2. The Council has responsibility for determining the common position of the EU, though this should not prevent COREPER (Committee of Permanent Representatives) from defining common positions if it is able to.
3. To ensure agreement with these common positions, the Commission is invited to make proposal on all problems posed by the negotiations on matters relating to the Treaties. Since the Maastricht Treaty, the Presidency in liaison with Member States and the Commission, can make proposals on ‘second pillar’(Common Foreign and Security Policy) and ‘third pillar’ (Justice and Home Affairs) matters.
4. In keeping with Article 151 of the EC Treaty, COREPER has responsibility for preparing the work of the Council concerning common positions.

²³ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.10.

²⁴ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., pp.11,12.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ G. Avery, “The European Union’s Enlargement Negotiations”, in, Oxford International Review, Summer 1994, p.27.

5. Negotiating meetings between the EU and the applicants are chaired on the EU side by the acting Presidency of the Council.

6. Common EU positions are set out and upheld by the Presidency, or by a decision of the Council and the Commission, if existing EC policies are concerned.

7. The rules of 5 and 6 also apply when negotiations are conducted at COREPER level.

8. Particularly in cases where existing common policies are concerned, the Council gives the Commission the task of seeking out solutions to problems with candidate countries and reporting these to the Council for further guidance.

This framework accords the leading role to the Council, unlike most of the external negotiations in which this responsibility is given to the Commission. Although this ‘role reversal’ is important in reminding both applicants and member states of the sensitivity of the mutual adjustments they might have to make, in fact the Commission still plays a pivotal role in the whole process. As the formal guardian of the treaties and positioned in equal distance from all the member states, it plays the role of ‘honest broker’ in the process.²⁸

The first phase of the accession process for all applicants is the analytical examination, or “screening” of the chapters of the *acquis communautaire* with the applicant country.²⁹ This exercise is carried out by the Commission, together with the applicant countries. The objective of the screening process is to determine the extent to which the applicant is in compliance with EU laws and regulations and what further adjustments might be necessary.³⁰ The Council then requests the Commission to prepare its Opinion (‘Avis’).³¹ The time needed to prepare the opinion may vary. After the opinion is adopted by the Commission and is sent to the Council of Ministers, the Council eventually decides whether to open accession negotiations.³² The time period until the opening of negotiations may vary. If the Council decides to open negotiations, it convenes an ‘Accession Conference’ with

²⁸ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.13.

²⁹ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.105.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.13.

³² C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.15.

each of the applicants, which meets at Ministerial or Ambassadorial level.³³ This Conference first defines the areas for negotiation. Christopher Preston suggests that there are two phases³⁴ for negotiations first of which is the ‘exploratory phase’, when the Commission goes through the *acquis* together with the applicant country to determine the adaptations of the Community acts or national legislation. The second one is the ‘substantive phase’, when both sides are working for more substantial negotiations to come. The Commission prepares a general view of the Community on the common positions (exploring the limits of compromise, adjustment of the applicant states to existing Community policies and attaining unanimity for these positions. Here, the Commission has a critical role as an “honest broker” in mediating among member states in the formation of common positions³⁵) and the applicant waits for the internal politics of the EC to be resolved. After the substantive phase, the Community sets a date for their completion. Trying to find acceptable compromises to meet applicants’ needs without breaching the *acquis communautaire* requires a detailed work to be done by the Commission.³⁶ After the approval of the European Council, ratification in both the EU and applicant countries is necessary, which utilises parliamentary, or referendum procedures or both.³⁷ This process was more of a formality until in recent years when it has gained political significance. We see the examples of this in the referendum made in France for Turkey’s accession into the EU.

1.2.1.1 Classical Method in Action

The formation of EU policy of enlargement is realised with the contributions of all four enlargements depending on certain principles and criteria. These four enlargement rounds were influenced by the EU governance norm of ‘classical method’, which has been discussed in the above paragraphs.³⁸

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.16. See also: M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., pp.11-15.

³⁵ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.17.

³⁶ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.17.

³⁷ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., pp.14-17.

³⁸ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.19.

However, when the core principles of this method have been analysed, we see that they have been tried to modified by the applicant states and have been tested in terms of their durability all through the enlargement rounds (some principles lost their meaning due to the inclusion of certain member states into the EU - like Principle 5 and the inclusion of Greece-). According to **Principle 1**, ‘applicants must accept the *acquis communautaire* in full. No permanent opt-outs are available’. This principle is derived from the belief that new members are joining a club with a rulebook rather than entering into a free collective bargain.³⁹ Nevertheless, most applicants believe that their own circumstances are unique and deserve an equality of respect, even when this might challenge a principle of *acquis*. For instance the UK believed that its wider trading links deserved special consideration, however, that consideration was not realised although UK had been invited to participate in forming the *acquis* in 1955-57.⁴⁰ This set an example to the other applicants that some of their interests are non-negotiable. The fishing industry of Spain, the ownership of forests in Finland, second homes in Denmark, alpine transit in Austria, regional industrial incentive schemes in Ireland, and the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) for Norway are all such examples.⁴¹ Despite the enormous expansion in the *acquis*, this basic position has not been softened but stated more explicitly in the successive enlargements. Therefore, the first principle of the classical method is modified with the acceptance of special treatment or special regimes for certain concerns and sensitivities of the newcomers.

What **Principle 2** suggests is that, ‘accession negotiations focus exclusively on the practicalities of the applicants taking on the *acquis*’. In order to help the accession countries, the classical method uses transition periods of five years for the removal of tariffs, quotas and other restrictions. This period has been originally considered short for the member states to understand that the demands of membership cannot be postponed indefinitely. However, this classical transition has been modified at times when the member states had difficulties with their domestic sectoral interest

³⁹ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.228.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

groups.⁴² For instance, Spain's 'sensitive' Mediterranean agricultural exports were subjected to a seven-year transition; the CFP has seen transition periods stretched to ten years.⁴³ Where the new members have real difficulties with aspects of the *acquis*, an agreement to review the policy area, without prejudice, after transition is written into the accession Treaty. Some of these adaptations for instance of EFTA's environmental standards for four years following the 1994 enlargement, extend beyond the practicalities of implementation and raise issues of principle.⁴⁴

When it comes to **Principle 3**, it says that, 'the problems arising from the increased diversity of an enlarged Community are addressed by creating new policy instruments to overlay existing ones rather than by fundamental reform of the existing instruments' inadequacies'. The EC has added new policies especially in the 'cohesion' area. Though some of the design faults in the original policies, in particular the CAP, have been recognised, their reform has been too slow to prevent accretion of new policies.⁴⁵ This principle is largely an unintended result of the weight given to the first two principles. Although it is necessary in constructing package deals, its limitations are also widely recognised. There is an emerging debate within the EU about whether and how the whole cohesion policy area can be recast.⁴⁶

According to what **Principle 4** states, 'New members are integrated into the EC's institutional structure on the basis of limited incremental adaptation, facilitated by the promise of a more fundamental review after enlargement'. This principle has helped to overcome the difficulties of accepting the *acquis* and it has required delicate management of negotiations since the applicants have to be persuaded that, even though the institutional decision-making system may create real difficulties for them, for instance in areas where they might be vulnerable to being outvoted in the Council, they nevertheless can have real influence after accession.⁴⁷ However, this

⁴² C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.229.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.230.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

principle proved to be the most challenging of all for the existing members, mainly because incrementalism resulted in an ever increasing gap between deepening and widening of the EU. The EU has continuously widened, but has not deepened itself sufficiently.

Principle 5, ‘the Community prefers to negotiate with groups of states that already have close relations with each other’, has come to an end. It is unlikely to be repeated because the pressures of further enlargement require active and politically difficult choices by the EU on the scheduling of accession and of differentiating between the applicants. The EU has never before been faced with more than four applicants at any one time except for the singular inclusion of Greece into the EU.⁴⁸

When we come to **Principle 6**, it says that, ‘Existing member states use the enlargement process to pursue their own interests and collectively to externalise internal problems’. The development of the CFP is the clearest example of the EC developing a new policy in anticipation of enlargement. This proved very difficult for the UK and Spain and impossible for Norway.⁴⁹ Therefore, insistence on this principle would result in post-accession bargaining over some sensitive issue areas or would even block enlargement as has been in the case of Norway.

The analysis of four enlargement rounds and the evolution of the EC’s policies and institutions suggest that the challenge of further enlargement requires more fundamental thinking if the benefits of the Community method are to be preserved and extended.⁵⁰ The experience suggests that the ‘core’ of the classical method of enlargement will continue with some modification for the new contextual factors.⁵¹

In the following chapters, we will see how the classical method has changed its original character and adjusted itself to the challenges that would come with the new members including changes to its policies, finances and decision-making institutions.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.231.

⁵⁰ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.19.

⁵¹ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.231.

A review of the four enlargement rounds will help understand the following enlargements and the criteria applied to the new members.

1.3. THE PAST FOUR ENLARGEMENTS OF THE EU

1.3.1. THE FIRST ENLARGEMENT

The formal enlargement process started in 1961 with applications from the UK, Denmark and Ireland. Especially in the UK's case we can see the establishment of the core principles of the European Community's (EC's) classical method of enlargement. The first enlargement set out the framework within which future applicants had to operate during the negotiations process and for the requirements of domestic adjustments.

1.3.1.1. The United Kingdom

The United Kingdom's membership was a debated subject throughout the 1960s. One of the obstacles was the determined resistance of the French President, Charles de Gaulle. The main reasons for this resistance were political and the French fears that by allowing Great Britain, a country with a special relationship to the USA, to become a member of the Community, the US would be able to influence the further development of the Community.⁵² This was contrary to de Gaulle's belief that the EC should be independent of American influence.

Britain had doubts about a supranational economic community in Europe based on a common market, since it established its economic development on the maintenance of maritime trade and gave priority to creating open trade agreements and dealing with tariff issues and sector specific schemes within the GATT. Britain set up and participated in a rival organisation, European Free Trade Area (EFTA)⁵³, based on

⁵² International UNESCO Education Server D@dalos
"Current challenges - Enlargement and Reform"
www.dadalos-europe.org/int/grundkus5/aktuell3.htm

⁵³ EFTA was established in 1960 with the signing of the Stockholm Convention by Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK in order to abolish import duties, quotas and other obstacles to trade in Western Europe and to support liberalism in world trade. Iceland joined

the principle of intergovernmentalism and on a free-trade area excluding the idea of supranationalism.⁵⁴ Therefore, British opposition to the EC was both economic and political; they disliked “supranationality” and the aim of “political unification of Europe”. While Britain favoured a free-trade area, France insisted on the maintenance of the common market.⁵⁵

The Spaak of 1956 put forward the importance of the overall internal consistency of the institutional framework and criticised the British free trade area proposals as lacking rigour and coherence⁵⁶. This established a core principle of the Community method, which shaped future enlargements, that ‘the *acquis communautaire* should be seen as a whole’ (See Principle 1 of the classical method).

While not closing off the possibility of Britain ever becoming a full EC member, de Gaulle’s doubts were wide ranging and fundamental to British interests. His opinion was that full membership demands not only technical and policy adjustment to the Treaties, but also a more profound reorientation of political attitudes along the “European” lines.⁵⁷ De Gaulle’s veto on British membership came in January 1963, which basically based on the British incompetence in its determination to share a European ideal with EEC and its continuing special relations with the US. So, for de Gaulle, Britain was too Atlanticist but not adequately “European” to become a full member of the EC.

Britain applied for the second time for EC membership in May 1967.⁵⁸ Although the Commission wanted the opening of negotiations, once again de Gaulle opposed the idea, stating that the re-structuring of the British economy had to be completed before Great Britain’s request could be considered.⁵⁹ The resignation of de Gaulle in April 1969 gave the chance to Britain to reactivate its application. At the Hague

EFTA in 1970 and Finland became an associate member in 1961 and full member in 1986. Liechtenstein became a member in 1991. Taken from <http://efta.int/docs/EFTA>. See also M. Baun, 2000, op.cit., pp.38-39 and C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., pp.26-27.

⁵⁴ M.Holland, *European Community Integration*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993, pp.130-131.

⁵⁵ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.24.

⁵⁶ G. Avery, 1994, op.cit., p.28.

⁵⁷ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.29.

⁵⁸ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.30.

⁵⁹ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.31.

Summit in 1969, it was agreed that the negotiations for British entry along with the other three countries could start.⁶⁰ Upon this, the negotiations with Britain opened on 30 June 1970. The Accession Treaties were signed in Brussels in January 1972, and the British membership officially started on 1 January 1973.⁶¹

The outcome of the renegotiations did little to solve the structural problem of the EC budget and Britain's trade patterns. This demonstrated the weakness of the classical method of enlargement. Yet, Britain's strained relationship with the rest of the EC partners following the accession, clearly showed that, enlargement was not purely about accession, but extended to post-accession issues within the EU.

1.3.1.2. Ireland

Irish policy towards European integration was dominated by two sets of factors. Economically, vulnerability of Irish industry shaped perceptions of European initiatives and politically, the dominance of Ireland's bilateral relationship with the UK and adherence to neutrality were critical.⁶² Therefore, Ireland's relations with the EC were bound up with Britain's EC relations.

Ireland applied on 31 July 1961. EC was cautious in the Irish application. Anxieties were raised about the compatibility of Irish neutrality with the EC's political ambitions. In October 1962, the negotiations opened and broke down by the veto of de Gaulle.⁶³ On May 1967 the Irish application was represented and with the Hague Summit of November 1969, events moved quickly towards full accession negotiations which were concluded in January 1972 leading to the publication of a White Paper and the inclusion of Ireland in 1973.⁶⁴ The classical method posed few problems for Ireland. Irish negotiating priorities threatened neither the overall *acquis* nor any powerful domestic interest groups in the EC.

⁶⁰ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.32.

⁶¹ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.36.

⁶² C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., pp.39-41.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

1.3.1.3. Denmark

Along with other Scandinavian countries, Denmark was sceptical in the post-war attempts to have a closer economic and political union in Western Europe and preferred a looser framework of the OEEC. Denmark was one of Europe's largest food exporters and its two main markets' (the UK and Germany) membership to different trade blocks put Denmark in a situation that it had to prevent any barriers being erected between the two groups.⁶⁵ Denmark chose to be a member of the EFTA and use EFTA membership as a tool for relations with the EC over the continental trade issues.

Following the Bonn Declaration of July 1961, Danish government announced its intention of applying for membership on the same day as the British application in 1967. Negotiations were opened in June 1970 and were relatively easy and unproblematic. The Danes accepted the *acquis communautaire* without reservation, avoided the identifying a long list of problems but requested that they should enter without any transitional periods for industrial and agricultural goods.⁶⁶ The Danish referendum concentrated mainly on economic issues, and avoided speculation concerning the future development of the EC into a stronger form of union and Denmark joined on 1 January 1973.⁶⁷

1.3.1.4. Norway

An EFTA country having close links with the UK and concerns about the political goals of the EC, Norway followed the same route with Denmark and the UK. Since it had concerns about national sovereignty, agriculture and fisheries, it submitted its application one year after Denmark and British application, in April 1962.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.41

⁶⁶ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.43.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

After de Gaulle's veto in 1963, it could reactivate its application following the UK's in July 1967. The full accession negotiations opened in 1970 and the Norwegian Government looked for permanent exemptions for agriculture, to ensure the maintenance of settlement in remote regions, as well as special arrangement for fisheries since it is quite important for the Norwegian economy and for coastal communities.⁶⁹ Norway has signed the Accession Treaty in January 1972 along with other applicants yet the referendum on 24-25 September 1972 resulted in rejection of the entry terms. Instead, Norway negotiated a free trade agreement with the EC and gradually deepened the relationship with the other EFTA countries.⁷⁰

The Norwegian negotiations tested the limits of the Community's classical method. Despite the EC's recognition of Norway's particular concerns on agriculture and fisheries, no permanent derogations were allowed.⁷¹ With this enlargement, the importance of the domestic political consensus and its possibility to override the most cautiously performed negotiations were also indicated.

To sum up, the first enlargement negotiations have been the most protracted to date, and in the UK's case, the most problematic. De Gaulle's concerns set an example to the depth of adjustments demanded from all new EC members. The problems that the UK experienced regarding EC membership are mainly related to UK domestic political conflicts, rather than the terms of accession. As stated in the above paragraph, the Norwegian negotiations demonstrated that accession is not inevitable and may depend on domestic consensus. Most importantly, the first enlargement negotiations set an example for future enlargement rounds and in addition to this, the principles of classical method made the mutual expectations clearer (of particular importance is the UK's case, which did not set a positive model for a country "to accept the *acquis communautaire* in full" – as the Principle 1 of the classical model).

⁶⁹ F.Nicholson and R.East, From the Six to the Twelve: the Enlargement of the European Communities. Harlow: Longman, 1987, p.120.

⁷⁰ C.Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.44.

⁷¹ Ibid.

1.3.2. THE SECOND ENLARGEMENT (Greece)

In July 1974, the military dictatorship in Greece collapsed, following the Turkish intervention in Cyprus and Greece's military withdrawal from NATO, which was a critical period in the re-evaluation of Greece's external political and economic relations.⁷² The Greek Government submitted a formal application on 12 June 1975 without waiting for the full implementation of the Association Agreement with its CU provisions extending over 12 or 22 years until 1984.⁷³

The Commission had three concerns⁷⁴, which led in its proposal stating that a "pre-accession stage" should be established. The first concern was the delicate state of Greco-Turkish relations as stated above. The second set of concerns was about the economic implications of accession. Since the Greek economy was weak, significant resource transfers would have to take place from the EU budget. The third set of issues was related to the impact of Greek membership on the decision-making and policy development of the EC.

Arguing that Greece was not ready for full membership, the Commission was also seeking to protect the principles underpinning the classical enlargement method.⁷⁵ The Greek Government reacted strongly to the Commission's Opinion. Karamanlis threatened to withdraw the Greek application and lobbied member governments hard to disregard the Commission's opinion.⁷⁶ On 9 February, at the Council meeting, the Commission's opinion was rejected unanimously by the member states, despite the fact that Greece was not ready for full membership in economic terms. Greece assured that as a full member, she would not block the EC's developing relations with Turkey.⁷⁷

⁷² C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.48.

⁷³ P.Kazakos, "Greece and the EC: historical review", in, Panos Kazakos, P.C.Iokamidis, (eds.), Greece and EC Membership Evaluated. New York: St.Martin's Press, 1994., p.3.

⁷⁴ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., pp.50-51.

⁷⁵ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.51.

⁷⁶ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.52.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

The accession date was being set as 1 January 1981 at the Accession Conference of 23 May 1979. The Greek strategy gave the highest priority to the ‘speed of negotiation’; so that it could join alone, without waiting for Spain and Portugal, which shows how Greece modifies the Principle 5 of the classical method of enlargement, rather than structural adjustments, even if this left some adjustment problems to be dealt with after accession.

This enlargement clearly showed how political considerations could be as strong as the economic ones or even more important in determining the issue of full membership⁷⁸. So, while Principle 1 of the classical method was retained, with its exclusive stress on adaptation to the *acquis* through transition arrangements, there has been an important modification in its interpretation; political concerns were given more importance and urgency over the economic ones. For the Community, the stress on the classical method risked internalising Greece’s structural economic problems before policy instruments have been developed by the Community to cope with them.

The accession of Greece, followed by those of Spain and Portugal consolidated EU’s economic, political and security presence in its Southern periphery and it presaged further Mediterranean enlargement which continued with the Iberian enlargement in 1995, giving way to the arguments surrounding the free movement of workers and Mediterranean agriculture.

1.3.3. THE THIRD ENLARGEMENT (Spain and Portugal)

By opening to the South, the Community faced a historic shift in its balance of power, away from the core founders of the EC and its close former EFTAN associates, towards Europe’s new democracies on its Southern periphery. This enlargement became a test of the capability of the EC to act as a stabilising influence in the region and to establish a new framework for the development of

⁷⁸ M.Holland,1993, op.cit., p.167.

democratic, liberal, pluralist economic and political structures and processes in the applicant countries.⁷⁹

Spain and Portugal saw the EC membership as a means of reinforcing the return to democracy; as the culmination of a process of opening up the economy to international (especially European) trade, competition and investment; as the consummation of a spiritual 'return to Europe', marking the end of their extra-European 'vocations', the final attainment of first World status and the reversal of centuries of marginalisation in European affairs.⁸⁰

Spain pursued inward-looking, autarchic economic policies due to the Franco regime. After Franco died in November 1975, the Government of Adolfo Suarez submitted a formal application for EC membership in July 1977 where it welcomed the Spanish application. However, French, Italian and Greek fears of the economic consequences of Spanish entry and German considerations on the budgetary implications, prolonged the duration of the negotiations from 1979 until 1985.⁸¹ On 1 January 1986, the date of accession for Spain (and Portugal) was set.⁸²

There was not any internal debate about the EC membership of Spain, mainly because the membership was a political return to Europe after a long isolation period marking this reintegration as well as strengthening its newly consolidated democracy. Meanwhile, the classical enlargement process would continue, and the Commission Opinion on Spain was delivered to the Council in November 1978 welcoming the Spanish application while pointing out 'six areas of concern'⁸³ in making the necessary adaptations.

⁷⁹ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.63.

⁸⁰ R. Bideleux. R. Taylor. (eds). European Integration and Disintegration: East and West. London: Routledge, 1996, p.128.

⁸¹ I.S. Tsalicoglou. Negotiating for Entry: the Accession of Greece to the European Community. Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1995, pp. 154-155.

⁸² C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.80.

⁸³ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., pp. 69-70. These 'six areas' were; for industry; dismantling of the tariffs, the reduction in the state aids and the introduction of VAT, in agriculture; increase in the Community's farming area by 30 percent and agricultural working population by 31 percent causing to further surpluses in some products due to the CAP's price guarantees, in fisheries; the integration of the large Spanish fleet into the CFP, for the free movement of labour; the propensity of the Spanish labour to emigrate to seek employment, for the regional policies in the EC; potential problems due to

The Commission's Opinion on the Portuguese application was delivered to the Council in May 1978. It welcomed the application as an important step in the consolidation of the democracy there but stressed on the structural weakness of the Portuguese economy.⁸⁴

Southern enlargement constituted a unique case in the history of the EU, because it was formulated as an integral component of a major reform package: SEA (Single European Act). During the negotiation phase of the Single European Act (SEA), both Spain and Portugal signed accession treaties; both countries attended the IGC and other community meetings as non-voting participants and fully accepted the evolving *acquis communautaire* (classical method- Principle1).⁸⁵ Accession Treaties were signed on 12 June 1985 and the accession of Portugal and Spain were completed on 1 January 1986.

1.3.3.1 Southern Enlargement: An Assessment and the Classical Method

To make an assessment on the Southern enlargement and the classical method, it can be stated that, there are 'two key lessons of Iberian enlargement'. The first is that, the EC policy reform needs to be confronted before the enlargement can proceed if the classical method is to retain credibility and the second lesson is that the 'widening' and 'deepening' should be balanced within each and every single policy area of the EC.⁸⁶ A systematic change or adaptation seemed to be necessary concerning the procedures of enlargement in order to confront later waves of enlargement.

It is also important to note that although the political considerations shaped the member states' attitude towards the possibility of the Mediterranean enlargement;

the regional imbalances in the French-Spanish border as a result of new sources of Competition, for the external policy; the potential negative consequences of the strong comparative advantage of Spain in Mediterranean products on the other non-EC Mediterranean countries.

⁸⁴ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., pp.70-71.

⁸⁵ M.Holland, op.cit., p.50.

⁸⁶ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.86.

economic differences were the focus of negotiations and marked them as hard bargaining processes.

EC membership not only accelerated economic growth and structural change in Spain and Portugal, but also brought tangible welfare gains to most of their inhabitants and progressive changes in thinking, attitudes, institutions and practices.⁸⁷ Although the negotiations of accession were the longest and the toughest ones in the EC/EU history, they proved to be successful within the context of the Community enlargement method. The Iberian enlargement also constituted an example of integration of countries with a lower level of development and with a looser infrastructure.

1.3.4. THE FOURTH ENLARGEMENT (Austria, Sweden, Finland)

The 1995 enlargement, as the fourth enlargement, may be called the last enlargement that the classical community method can be applied.⁸⁸ As a relatively homogenous group of small, wealthy, open trading nations with long traditions of democracy, the EFTA countries were able to adopt the *acquis*.⁸⁹

Austria was the first to apply to join the EU in July 1989, then Sweden in June 1991 and finally Finland in March 1992.⁹⁰ However, before accession negotiations were opened, these three countries were offered an economic partnership under the European Economic Area (EEA) arrangement; the latter formula clearly expressed the Commission's preference for deepening over widening during the early 1990s.

The EEA was signed in 1992, allowing the EFTANs to participate in the single market. Although it committed the EFTANs to contribute to the Cohesion Fund, it excluded agricultural policy, fisheries, structural policy, taxation and foreign policy.

⁸⁷ R. Bideleux, R. Taylor, 1996, p.149.

⁸⁸ C. Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.87.

⁸⁹ J. Redmond, The 1995 Enlargement of the European Union, Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997, p.12.

⁹⁰ F. Cameron, "Keynote Article: The European Union and the Fourth Enlargement", in Journal of Common market Studies, Vol: 33 (2), 1995, p.18.

It offered no real participation and influence on EC decision-making.⁹¹ In short, EEA was a tool for postponing the membership used by the EC in order to deepen without any pressure of widening.

The negotiations started in February 1993 and the Copenhagen Summit in June set the target date for accession as 1 January 1995.

The 1995 enlargement was regarded as the shortest in the Community's history and the last to use the pure classical method.

1.4 ENLARGEMENT PROCESS OF THE EC/EU PRIOR TO EASTERN ENLARGEMENT: AN ASSESSMENT

To sum up, enlargement, the EU's most important foreign policy power under the Article 237 of the Treaty of Rome has broad implications for the EU's position in the world. Enlargement brings the EU closer to border regions – the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe. It has brought the EU closer to the United States via British membership. The new members also bring their own foreign policy interests and expertise into the EU.

The contribution of UK, for instance, has been in terms of global network of diplomatic, political and economic interests that helped to form many new EU foreign policy actions.⁹² On the other hand, Britain's membership generated conflict over national contributions to the EC budget that resulted in the controversial policy of the British debate in 1984.⁹³ It also incorporated British overseas outreach, which aided the Anglo-Irish detente that helped progress towards peace in Northern Ireland.⁹⁴ Meanwhile, Ireland championed Third World Development and national liberation causes within the EU, and Denmark showed how a small member could have enormous effect on the goal of the European Security and Defence Identity

⁹¹ F.Cameron, op.cit., p.19.

⁹² J. Redmond. G.G.Rosenthal. (eds) The Expanding European Union. Past, Present, Future. Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1998, p. 198.

⁹³ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit.,p.2.

⁹⁴ A. Missiroli. "Central European Between the EU and NATO", in, Survival, Vol 46, (4), 2004-05, p.125, in The International Institute for Strategic Studies Quarterly (IISS).

(ESDI).⁹⁵ Greece's 1981 accession brought the EU closer to Balkans and to Middle East affairs but on the other hand complicated the EC's relations with Turkey.⁹⁶ Spain and Portugal, with their accession in 1986, encouraged the development of deeper EU-Latin American ties in the 1980's, as well as EU-Mercosur Pact and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in the 1990's.⁹⁷ Swedish, Finnish and Austrian accession in 1995 is also important in EU foreign policy. Sweden helped for the democratisation, market reforms in the Baltic republics, environmental situation in the Baltic Sea area; Austria deeply implicates the EU in the affairs of Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs).⁹⁸ However, by expanding the EU's membership to the north and east, this fourth enlargement also raised concerns about the EU's institutional efficiency and its internal political balance and cohesion.⁹⁹

Enlargement has created a civilian superpower in international economic, commercial, financial development and diplomatic terms as the incorporation of new members transforms the EU in global terms. Enlargement has made the EU agriculturally self-sufficient, thus less dependent on traditional non-member suppliers, increased the EU's share of world trade so that it has become the world's largest importer and exporter, increased the EU's coastline and control of some of the world's richest fishing zones, increased the EU's gross domestic product, which now exceeds that of the United States and expanded the diplomatic reach of the EU nearly all nation-states and a large number of multilateral organisations, including other regional trade blocs, which see the EU as a model of cooperation.¹⁰⁰

All previous enlargements followed the "classical method" of enlargement, the Principle 1 of which suggests that "accession is conditional upon the candidate state's agreeing to fully accept and apply the *acquis communautaire*". In this sense, it largely predetermines the outcome of the accession negotiations and places the main burden of adjustment on the applicant country. However, this principle is

⁹⁵ J. Redmond. G.G.Rosenthal, 1998, p. 199.

⁹⁶ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit.,p.2.

⁹⁷ J. Redmond. G.G.Rosenthal, 1998, p. 199.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit.,pp.2-3.

¹⁰⁰ J. Redmond. G.G.Rosenthal, 1998, pp.205-206.

modified with the acceptance of special treatment or special regimes for certain concerns and sensitivities of the newcomers. For instance, Greek application proved that political conditions were prioritised over economic ones, which indicates that a modification has been made. Principle 2 suggests “accession negotiations focus exclusively on the practicalities of the applicants taking on the *acquis*”. However, this has been modified on a number of occasions when the member states had difficulties with their domestic sectoral interest groups. The CFP has seen transition periods stretched to ten years. Where the new members have real difficulties with aspects of the *acquis*, an agreement to review the policy area, without prejudice, after transition is written into the accession Treaty. For instance, in the case of Greece, the Commission’s Opinion placed the emphasis on the integrity of the *acquis* and advised a slow accession process. However, the Council overrode the Commission’s concerns and, in a political act, decided to open accession negotiations without having yet all the guarantees Greece would be ready to adopt the *acquis*. In a similar way negotiations were opened with Spain in 1979 despite widespread fears about the country becoming an ‘enfant terrible’ due to its foreign policy orientation, the size of its population, and its backward economic structures, including massive unemployment and the third largest fishing fleet in the world and a labour intensive agricultural sector.¹⁰¹ When it comes to Principle 3, it foresees that “the problems arising from the increased diversity of an enlarged Community should be addressed by creating new policy instruments rather than by fundamental reform of the existing instruments’ inadequacies”. The EC has added new policies especially in the ‘cohesion’ area. Though some of the design faults in the original policies, their reform has been too slow to prevent accretion of new policies. There is an emerging debate within the EU about whether and how the whole cohesion policy area can be recast.

Principle 4, which states that “new members are integrated into the EC's institutional structure on the basis of limited incremental adaptation”, seems to be the most challenging of all, mainly because incrementalism resulted in an ever increasing gap between deepening and widening of the EU. The EU has continuously widened, but

¹⁰¹ J.I.Torreblanca, “Arguing about enlargement”, in, Sjurssen, H. (ed) Enlargement in Perspective. Center for European Studies: University of Oslo, 2005, p.28.

has not deepened itself sufficiently. Principle 5, stating that, “the Community prefers to negotiate with groups of states that already have close relations with each other”, has endured with the singular inclusion of Greece into the EU. For both practical reasons, in managing parallel accession conferences and for reasons of policy linkage, this principle has served the needs of the EC, although it has been found frustrating by some of the applicants. Principle 6, which permitted the existing member states “to use the enlargement process to pursue their own interests and collectively to externalise internal problems”, caused post-accession bargaining over sensitive issue areas or even blocking the enlargement process as has been in Norway case.

The experience of the four enlargement rounds suggest that the core of the classical method of enlargement will continue. However, new factors, such as the diversity of the applicants and their level of economic development would stretch to the limit the use of classical transition periods. In addition to this, the preoccupation of the EU with deepening and widening will increase strains. What the previous enlargements suggest is that deepening and widening are not necessarily incompatible. Iberian enlargement, in particular, indicated that widening could enhance deepening when applicants are enthusiastic about the integration process.

While responding to the new levels of diversity with the CEECs but at the same time trying to keep the core of the classical method proves challenging for both the EU and for the applicant states. In the next chapter, the focus will be on the question of ‘How the principles of the classical method might need to be modified to cope with these challenges?’.

2. THE NEW CONTEXT OF ENLARGEMENT; MAIN REASONS OF THE CEE ENLARGEMENT AND DIFFERENT APPROACHES ON THE ISSUE

2.1 RECENT HISTORY OF THE CEE AND THE MAIN REASONS BEHIND THE CEE ENLARGEMENT

As described in Chapter 1, The European Union (EU) has a history of successful enlargements. In 1973 Britain, Denmark and Ireland joined; then Greece in 1981 and Spain and Portugal in 1986, after the demise of their dictatorships, thus underpinning their democratic development, in 1995 it took in Austria, Finland and Sweden. In the past 30 years, the EU has grown from six members with a population of 185 million into an international entity of 15 members with 375 million people. In 2004, it expanded to 25 members with 450 million citizens.

With the Second World War coming to an end, there occurred a significant shift in the political complexion of Europe.¹⁰² To the West, sovereign states restored democracy and pursued market-oriented paths to reconstruction and renewed growth.¹⁰³ To the East, the conditions were created for the rapid emergence of a communist bloc that was to be steered from Moscow for almost half a century.¹⁰⁴ Between 1989 and 1991, the world witnessed quite unexpected events of a historic nature. On 9 November 1989, the Berlin Wall was breached, and hundreds, then thousands of East Germans poured over into West Berlin.¹⁰⁵ The political dynamics within the East German government quickly slipped out of the control of the ruling Communist Party, and within a year (October 1990) the unification of two Germanies was officially sealed.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² H. Ingham. M. Ingham. EU Expansion to the East. Prospects and Problems. UK: Edward Elgar, 2002, p.1.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ R.Sakwa. A.Stevens. (eds) Contemporary Europe. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000, p.43.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

Events in the East accelerated from this point onwards. Although solidarity had been established in mid-1989 at the head of a coalition government, within two years, Communist parties in other Eastern European countries had either been forced from government, as in Czechoslovakia, or else changed their character.¹⁰⁷ Through policies such as, ‘*glasnost* and *perestroika*’¹⁰⁸ in foreign policy, terrible condition of the Soviet economy was tried to turned around.¹⁰⁹ However, enforced cooperation could be maintained no longer and, at the beginning of the twenty-first century by the early 1990s, many of the former communist states of Eastern Europe, such as Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic had turned Westward to search for stability and assistance, and applied to join the European Union.¹¹⁰

The newly independent states of CEECs had a long way to travel since they lacked the established political, economic and legal structures that would allow them smoothly join the EU.¹¹¹ The challenges of the eastward enlargement became clearer as the former Soviet-bloc countries struggled to introduce reforms. Forty years of central planning and a communist monopoly over political institutions could not be erased overnight, nor did removing them leave a ‘blank state’ on which new democratic and market institutions might be constructed.¹¹² In some cases, pro-democracy movements quickly fell from power, while in others former communists reinvented themselves as democratic socialists or social democrats along West European lines, even declaring ‘European integration’ to be their primary political objective.¹¹³

In addition to political and economic reasons, the CEECs wanted to join the EU for enhanced security reasons as well, because in their history, the CEECs had suffered from the expansionism of bigger neighbours in the East and West. Their requests to

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Glasnost: openness in society, Perestroika: the introduction of some competitiveness in the economy in order to restructure it.

¹⁰⁹ R.Sakwa. A.Stevens, 2000, op.cit., p.44.

¹¹⁰ R.Sakwa. A.Stevens, 2000, op.cit., p.45.

¹¹¹ “More Unity and More Diversity. The EU’s Biggest Enlargement”. Directorate-General for Press and Communication, 2003, p.8, in, <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/publications/booklets/move/41/en.doc>.

¹¹² J. K. Glenn, 2003, op.cit., p.217.

¹¹³ Ibid.

join the EU reflected the fear of finding themselves free but unanchored in a rapidly changing Europe¹¹⁴. For enhanced security, they wished to join the EU, and NATO.¹¹⁵

Kok describes the membership of the CEECs as the ending of their dream to ‘return to Europe’ after the artificial division of the Iron Curtain. Membership symbolises not only their re-entry into the European family of nations, but also stabilisation of their young democracies, and provision of the environment for the achievement of socially balanced market economies, increased opportunities for direct investment and economic renewal, a stable business environment, and progressive social policies.¹¹⁶ Zielonka claims that, when it came to enlargement, Western Europe acted out of enlightened self-interest as well as altruism and the most fundamental dimension of this enlightened self-interest was not financial or economic, but “political and geostrategic”.¹¹⁷

History is definitely an important factor that has influenced prioritisation of the CEECs in the enlargement process of the EU as a means of ending unnatural division (‘artificial divide’) of Cold-War Europe. The notions of ‘return to Europe’ and a ‘common Europe home’ indicated the identity and history related factors in the politics of EU enlargement.¹¹⁸ Indeed, it has been one of the important motivating factors in the background to the enlargement politics of the European Union to integrate all the ‘historically’ and ‘culturally’ close European states in the EU in order to strengthen European unity. After half a century of Communism, political elites in the CEE were keen to make their countries ‘normal’ again and being normal meant part of the European mainstream.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ W. Kok. “Enlarging the EU. Achievements and Challenges”, European Union Institute, 2003, p.21, in, <http://www.iue.it/RSCAS>

¹¹⁵ Ibid. (Enlargement will extend the EU into Russia’s traditional sphere of influence and the accession of Baltic states into the area of former Soviet Union itself will expand the EU’s border with Russia and alter its security relations with Moscow. See: M.Baun, 2000, op.cit.,p.7).

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ J. Zielonka, 2004, op.cit., p.22.

¹¹⁸ H.Arikan. Turkey and the European Union. An Awkward Candidate for EU Membership?. England: Ashgate, 2003, p.25.

¹¹⁹ H.Grabbe, The Costellations of Europe. How Enlargement will Transform the EU. London: Center for European Reform, 2004, p.14.

When the reasons for enlargement are evaluated from the EU's side, further enlargement brings many benefits to the EU, such as increased security and political and economic gains. However, the fact that the major benefit of enlargement is in the field of 'security' cannot be neglected. Because enlargement will spread prosperity and stability to the Eastern and Southern Europe and the EU does not want this to be hindered with inflows of refugees, criminal activity and terrorism which originate from the Eastern and Southern parts of Europe. Besides this, the EU fears that an unstable Eastern Europe would give Russia the chance to exert power in the region. Therefore, the EU sees Eastern enlargement as a stabilisation factor. Apart from the most important security reasons of enlargement for the EU, there are some other reasons that can also be counted as to have secondary importance. First, the CEECs have the potential for future economic growth creating markets for EU producers. Second, they have the potential to increase the EU's role in international world trade and economic affairs.

On the part of the CEECs, since they have suffered from the expansionism of bigger neighbours, they wanted to join the EU and also NATO for enhanced security reasons. For them, membership also symbolised stabilising their newly formed democracies and achieving balanced market economies after the Cold War.

2.2 APPROACHES OF THE MEMBER STATES AND THE EU ON ENLARGEMENT

In this enlargement process, the Commission is not the only player. A rather interesting and unique interplay between the Commission, the European Council and somewhere in the middle of these two, the EU Presidency as well as some individual member states have shaped and influenced this enlargement debate.¹²⁰

When the approaches of the Member States and the EU concerning the fifth enlargement are examined, it is possible to observe some doubts on both sides.

¹²⁰ M. Maresceau, "The EU Pre-Accession Strategies- A Political and Legal Analysis", in, Ç. Nas. M. Dartan. The EU Enlargement Process and Turkey. İstanbul: Marmara University European Community Institute, 2002, p.134.

Concerning the problem of 'security', the post-Cold War situation for the EU has played an important part in the current enlargement policy. The revolutionary events in Eastern Europe, which led to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of the Communist bloc, have fundamentally changed the nature of security challenges to the EU, which increased the security independence between the core and periphery of Europe.¹²¹ Eventually, the EU came to the reluctant conclusion that the integration of these transition countries into existing European structures would lessen the cost of new security challenges for the EU.¹²² Indeed, considering the degree of risks and costs associated with the political and economic instability on the periphery of the EU, the general view was that European security, as a whole, cannot be guaranteed without sustained economic development and the maturing of the democratic institutions in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean.¹²³ As the Report of the European Commission states:

Enlargement is a challenge which the Community cannot refuse. The other countries of Europe are looking to us for guarantees of stability, peace and prosperity and for the opportunity to play their part with us in the integration of Europe. For the new democracies, Europe remains a powerful idea, signifying fundamental values and aspirations, which their peoples kept alive during the long years of oppression. To consolidate their newfound liberty, and stabilise their development, is not only in their interest, but ours. (European Commission, 1992, p.5).

Taking the Commission recommendation seriously, the member states considered the 'stabilisation of Europe' as the main objective of the current enlargement policy. In fact, the instruments for the EU's enlargement strategy for the CEECs have rather aimed at meeting the political and economic needs of these countries through a comprehensive '*pre-accession strategy*', which has been strengthened by the new instruments of Accession Partnerships and

¹²¹ The nation-state building process in the CEECs has fostered regional conflicts, thereby constituting a serious threat to the stability of Europe, as was seen in the civil wars in Yugoslavia. Similar to the CEECs and countries in the Balkans, Turkey has also been facing the emergence of new sources of instability: Kurdish nationalism, the spread of religious extremism, in particular Islamic fundamentalism, political turmoil and economic hardship have caused much political instability in Turkey. See: H. Arıkan, 2003, op.cit., p.18.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ H. Arıkan, 2003, op.cit., pp.18,19.

the reinforcement of pre-accession aid.¹²⁴ All of these can be regarded as the EU's effort to neutralise new security threats from the CEECs in order to strengthen peace, stability and democracy in these countries. Enlargement and its pre-accession strategy were chosen as a means for the stabilisation of the Eastern periphery.

Related to the '*security concerns*' due to diversity between Western and Eastern part of Europe, Czech President Václav Havel, in February 2000, told the European Parliament that, "Europe is one political entity whose security is indivisible."¹²⁵ He went on:

The idea that there could forever be two Europes- a democratic, stable and prosperous Europe engaged in integration and a less democratic, less stable and less prosperous Europe- is, in my opinion, totally mistaken. It resembles a belief that one half of a room could be heated and the other half kept unheated at the same time. There is only one Europe, despite its diversity, and any weightier occurrence anywhere in this area will have consequences and repercussions throughout the rest of the continent.

On the part of the European Parliament (EP), the recent enlargement process has been considered as a historic opportunity to ensure democracy, respect for human rights and the strengthening of common European values in Europe.¹²⁶ Romano Prodi, the President of the European Commission, spoke of nothing less than the 'tide of history' and the noble task of reuniting Europe' when he addressed the Spaak Foundation in October 2000, where he also added that after the completion of the process there would, for the first time, be a 'strong and prosperous Europe playing a leading role on the world stage'.¹²⁷

One of the important preoccupations of citizens was in the field of "*internal security*": The collapse of the Soviet Empire had created a vacuum of uncertainty

¹²⁴ H. Arkan, 2003, op.cit., p.19.

¹²⁵ J. Zielonka, 2004, op.cit., p.23.

¹²⁶ H. Arkan, 2003, op.cit., p.22.

¹²⁷ G. Pridham "Democratisation in CEE: A Comparative Perspective", in, S. White. I. McAllister, M. Light "Enlargement and the New Outsiders" Journal of Common Market Studies, Vol 40, (1), 2002, p. 136.

across Eastern Europe and the forces of instability, and even of organised crime seemed alarmingly strong.¹²⁸ A vast political and economic space lay open to the contest of ideas and profits.¹²⁹ These were sources of fear for the citizens of the Union and they were asking questions as such to themselves: Would there be an ‘increased risk of crime’, and ‘more immigration?’, would there be ‘a reduction in the standards of protection for the consumers’, particularly food standards, would there be increased problems for the environment, such as risks from nuclear power plants in the future members?¹³⁰

The doubts among the Member States on the “*political level*” were related to the question whether such a big and heterogeneous enlargement would slow down the pace of European integration or dilute EU’s achievements at the time or whether enlargement would dilute the ongoing deepening of European integration.¹³¹

In response to the political changes in CEECs, some EC leaders, such as Jacques Delors and François Mitterand, favoured an internal ‘*deepening over enlargement*’, arguing that a more integrated EC would be better able to help the new post-Communist democracies, it would be a firmer foundation for a united Europe and would also help the Community to exert a greater attraction to the rest of Europe.¹³² However, Britain did not agree with the view that further deepening was the proper response to the political changes in CEECs. Allen suggests that the British seemed to favour widening over deepening because it would lead to a “looser” and less integrated EU, while the French simply opposed it for the very same reason.¹³³ Thatcher had called for a ‘*wider Europe*’ that stretched from across the Atlantic to the Urals, arguing that a more tightly integrated EC would be less capable of responding to the needs and aspirations of the Eastern Europeans.¹³⁴ The Germans,

¹²⁸ J. Zielonka, “Challenges of EU Enlargement”, in, Marc F. Platter and Larry Diamond (eds) Journal of Democracy, Vol.15, (1), January 2004, p.22.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ W. Kok, 2003, op.cit., p.25.

¹³¹ The European Commission Website at the European Union Web site
<http://www.europa.int/comm/publications/booklets/move/41/en.doc>.

¹³² M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.26.

¹³³ J. Redmond. G.G.Rosenthal. (eds) The Expanding European Union. Past, Present, Future. Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1998, p.218.

¹³⁴ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., pp.26-27.

on the other hand, saw no conflict between widening and deepening but regarded them as mutually reinforcing processes and supported them both. When it comes to EC leaders, many did not share Thatcher's view, but they seemed to agree with the French view of 'deepening first' in order to strengthen the EC before it could take in new members from Central and Eastern Europe.¹³⁵ Eventually, at the Dublin Summit in 1990, EC leaders agreed to hold two parallel IGCs, one on EMU and the other on European Political Union (EPU), both of which eventually launched at the December 1990 Rome Summit.¹³⁶ During the IGC 90/91, a massive Eastern enlargement was a "remote possibility" and the EC Member States had come to a conclusion that deepening should prioritize over enlargement. Therefore, the EC formulated its response to the prospects for the inclusion of the post-Communist democracies with serious doubts about its internal development and a renewed commitment to 'further deepening'.

The "*economic*" and "*social gaps*" between Western and Eastern Europe accounted for concerns in the minds of the citizens of the Union. The concerns were such that, lower wages and social protection in the new member states would lead to the relocation of investment and employment and that free movement of workers within the enlarged market would result in an inflow of migrant labour.¹³⁷ Huge differences in social conditions were also reflected in subjective measures of well-being. What characterise the population in nearly all the accession countries is a very low level of happiness and life satisfaction which is even much lower than in even the least satisfied EU member states.¹³⁸

Another concern is related to the problem of "*democratic deficit*", which the Union is suffering from and there is reason to fear that enlargement would only make it deeper.¹³⁹ From the perspective of the "old" EU members, enlargement could harm

¹³⁵ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.27. ("Widening and deepening" issue, together with the views of the countries, will be dealt with in the following pages more in detail).

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ W.Kok, 1993, op.cit., p.25.

¹³⁸ J. Delhey. "The Prospects of Catching up for New EU Members: Lessons for the Accession Countries to the European Union from Previous Enlargements". Netherlands: Kluwer Academic, 2001, in, *Social Indicators Research* Vol 56, (2), p.208. See: <http://www.kluweronline.com>

¹³⁹ J. Zielonka, op.cit., p.30.

EU level democracy by; moving governance even farther from citizens' reach. More citizens mean fewer opportunities for any meaningful participation in EU politics and policy-making. Here, the key questions are whether the new member countries from Eastern Europe would be able to achieve sufficient progress on democratisation or whether there is any risk that their admission could lead to the erosion of democratic practices within the Union. Thirdly, enlargement would introduce new members that would not be willing to shift powers from national to the European level.¹⁴⁰ According to many, the reason why Eastern Europe would be reluctant to give powers to the EU and its institutions is the history of domination by Moscow. As the local Eurosceptics say, why should these newly independent countries swap one union (the Soviet) for another (the European), or throw off Kremlin rule only to be governed from Brussels?¹⁴¹

The democratic deficit problem and the growing number of applicants bring into the scene the problem of the 'efficiency and effectiveness of the institutional structure' of the EU as well. According to Bertram, if the Union does not succeed in overcoming these institutional problems, it runs the risk of its authority and public support being declined, member states progressively reclaiming powers that they had previously handed over to EU institutions, and the Community withering away, opening up prospects for a return to old-time European power rivalries. On the other hand, if the EU cannot open itself to the newcomers from Eastern Europe, it would lose the chance to encourage stability there and would make itself vulnerable to the impact of social, ethnic and even military conflicts in that region.¹⁴² Concerning the increase in the number of member states, according to De Witte, enlargement not only raises the transaction costs among them but also the likelihood of more diverging preferences about policy outcomes, as well as of an increased use of veto by any EU country in those cases where the Council must decide by unanimity.¹⁴³ Bertram adds that, the effective functioning of its institutions is the central issue for

¹⁴⁰ J. Zielonka, op.cit., p.31.

¹⁴¹ J. Zielonka, op.cit., p.32.

¹⁴² C.Bertram, Europe in the Balance: Securing the Peace Won in the Cold War. Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1995, p.56, 59.

¹⁴³ Bruno de Witte, "Anticipating the Institutional Consequences of Expanded Membership of the European Union", in, International Political Science Review, Vol. 23, (3), 2002, pp.235-248, See: p. 241.

the Union's future, much more so than a widening of its competencies or improving its imperfect system of democratic checks and balances.¹⁴⁴ While sharing the general view that the institutions will be put under strain because of enlargement, Grabbe notes that the Union is unlikely to come to a halt, since it has shown itself to be adept at muddling through and eventually implementing the reforms that are needed to keep the Union going.¹⁴⁵

While the EU was appreciated in its contribution to this remarkable transformation process, it was heavily criticised for its reluctance in not providing a clear statement regarding the prospects for accession for the CEECs until it sets the Copenhagen membership criteria in 1993 and not having set a date for entry either.¹⁴⁶ The body of 'hard evidence' concerning the enlargement decision is very limited; first, the agreement on a policy of neither publicly endorsing nor publicly rejecting the membership aspirations of the candidate countries, which the Twelve reached in November 1990 in the Council Group on Eastern Europe; second, the commitment which Germany and France included in the bilateral treaties they reached with Poland, Hungary, the Czechoslovakia in 1991 to support their membership aspirations; third, the Franco-German summit meeting in Weimar in May 1991, where France and Germany discussed how to manage the prospect of future accession of CEE; fourth, the discussions on the timing and content of the membership perspective held by a High Level Group of European Political Cooperation (EPC) Political Directors in May 1993.¹⁴⁷ Therefore, Eastern enlargement looks like a typical 'non-decision': something which just happened because nobody opposed it and about which we can find very little evidence.¹⁴⁸

When the views of the member states on the CEE enlargement are considered, we see that, over time the member states were at times ambivalent. EU countries in close geographical proximity to CEE tend both to have more immediate concerns

¹⁴⁴ C.Bertram, 1995, op.cit., pp.56, 59.

¹⁴⁵ H.Grabbe, 2004, op.cit., p.52.

¹⁴⁶ M.A. Smith. G. Timmins. "The EU and the Challenge of Enlargement", in, Building a Bigger Europe. EU and NATO Enlargement in Comparative Perspective. England: Ashgate, 2000, p.125.

¹⁴⁷ E.Barbé, E.Johansson-Nogués (eds.) Beyond Enlargement: The New Members and New Frontiers of the Enlarged European Union. Barcelona: Institut Universitari d'Estudis Europeus, 2003, p.23.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

about security and stability, and in many cases to have closer economic ties than the rest of the EU. This applies to the Scandinavian member states, Finland, Germany, Austria, and Greece and to a lesser extent Italy.¹⁴⁹

Since the foundation of the Union, Germany had always wanted to be a close ally of the smaller countries, considering their interests in EU bargaining, a trend which continued with the CEE enlargement too. Germany has sought strong ties and good relations and has signed reconciliation agreements with its eastern neighbours, the Czech Republic and Poland, in order to resolve post-war bilateral problems.¹⁵⁰ Germany was the most enthusiastic member state about the Eastern enlargement, having most to gain economically from exploiting a wider European single market, and the greatest interest projecting security eastwards.¹⁵¹ Germany wanted to develop a ‘structured relationship’ between the EU and CEECs, thereby keeping a delicate balance between the necessary respect for the EU’s internal decision-making process and the necessary inclusion of the CEECs.¹⁵² Secondly, it wanted to improve the ability of CEECs to assume the EU’s *acquis communautaire*.¹⁵³ Therefore, concerning its population and economic strength, it is not difficult to see that, Germany as one of the most powerful EU member states has played a leading role in the eastward enlargement process from the very beginning.

Italy and the Benelux countries shared much of the German approach. In the Belgian Government’s view, consolidating the European Union before expanding it was an essential requirement.¹⁵⁴ The Dutch government was in favour of including the countries of Central and Eastern Europe into the political and economic structures of the West.¹⁵⁵ The Luxembourg government supported accession on a ‘case-by-case’

¹⁴⁹ H. Grabbe. K. Hughes. Enlarging the EU Eastwards. London: Pinter, 1998, p.5.

¹⁵⁰ H. Grabbe, 2004, op.cit., p.57.

¹⁵¹ N.Hopkinson. The Eastern Enlargement of the European Union. London: HMSO, 1994, p.6.

¹⁵² N.Hopkinson. The Southern and Eastern Enlargements of the European Union. London: HMSO, 1995, p.4.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ “Government Policy Paper addressed to the Belgian Parliament on the 1996 IGC” in *the White Paper on the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference*, p.12

¹⁵⁵ M.Cesar, The Next Enlargement of the EU and Its Institutional Implications, Master’s Thesis, Middle East Technical University, Department of International Relations, 1999, p.22, in, “Note of 14 November 1994 on the Enlargement of the European Union: the opportunities and obstacles” in *the White Paper on the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference*, p.86.

basis, in other words when all the required conditions had been met.¹⁵⁶ Italy favoured enlargement and a federal EU.

The UK and Denmark preferred widening to deepening, they were in favour of Eastern enlargement in principle; however, they were sceptical about supranational decision-making structures. Denmark had reservations about the deepening of the federal character of the Union, but was supportive of enlargement.¹⁵⁷ The UK supported enlargement as a means of enhancing European security, but motivated by an assumption that enlargement could mean dilution and would prevent further deepening of the EU, and keeping it as little more than a single market organisation.¹⁵⁸ There had been widespread suspicions that the UK's support for enlargement reflected a desire to see a weaker, looser EU rather than genuine geopolitical and security concerns.¹⁵⁹ An alternative view is that¹⁶⁰, “the British government had been an enthusiastic supporter of enlargement, since it did not see the EU as an exclusive club but as a dynamic, outward looking group ready to spread the benefits of membership wherever Europeans wanted to join”.

France had only had a secondary interest in enlargement and it was not too anxious to let the CEECs join the Community family¹⁶¹ since it feared threats to its domestic markets from cheaper industrial goods and agricultural products of the CEECs.¹⁶² Nevertheless, she regarded enlargement to the east as inevitable, and wanted assurances that an Eastern enlargement would not weaken the EU or dilute it into a free trade area, including its relations with Mediterranean neighbours.¹⁶³

The poorest four ‘cohesion’ states, Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain “ were unlikely to view either the economic opportunities or the security gains of Eastern

¹⁵⁶ M.Cesar, 1999, op.cit., p.22, in, “Luxembourg Government memorandum of 30 June 1995 on the 1996 IGC” in *the White Paper on the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference*, p.85.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ H. Grabbe. K. Hughes, 1998, op.cit, p.6.

¹⁶⁰ N.Hopkinson., 1995, op.cit., p.5.

¹⁶¹ P.Van Ham, The EC The Eastern Europe and European Unity, Discord, Collaboration and Integration Since 1947, London: Pinter,1993, p.193.

¹⁶² J. K. Glenn, 2003, op.cit., p.217.

¹⁶³ N.Hopkinson, 1994, op.cit., p.7.

enlargement as a sufficient compensation for the anticipated losses in their share of the EU structural funds (and the CAP) if much poorer states became the new EU members.”¹⁶⁴ Spain and Portugal were concerned about a quick and comprehensive enlargement.¹⁶⁵ Their immediate concern was to participate in the single currency zone from the start¹⁶⁶ and they were increasingly concerned about the regional and social assistance that they received through the EU Structural Funds.¹⁶⁷ For the Greeks, enlargement should not be a pretext for the reversal of the economic and social conditions that support the North-South equilibrium within the European Union.¹⁶⁸

Austria was in favour of accession of the former territories of the Habsburg Empire into the EU. Finland and Sweden have had historical and cultural links with the Baltic States thus they attached particular importance to the Baltic States’ being treated in the same way as the other candidates and their eventual inclusion in the phase of accession negotiations.¹⁶⁹

When it comes to ‘Public opinion surveys’, the *Eurobarometer Survey* conducted in 1999 indicates that on average only 42 percent of EU citizens are in favour of enlargement, with the low levels of support existing in Austria 29%, France 33%, Germany and Portugal 38%, Belgium 39%, Britain 40%.¹⁷⁰ By contrast, the highest levels of support were found in Denmark with 62%, Greece 58%, Sweden 56% and Netherlands 55%.¹⁷¹ This survey also found that support for membership of individual applicants was low. For Hungary it was 46%, Poland 43%, the Czech Republic 40%, Estonia 36%, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, and Bulgaria 35%, Romania 33% and Slovenia 32%.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁴ N.Hopkinson, 1995, op.cit., p.4.

¹⁶⁵ M.Cesar, 1999,op.cit., p.23, in, “The 1996 Intergovernmental Conference: starting points for a discussion” in *the White Paper on the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference*, p.44.

¹⁶⁶ H. Grabbe. K. Hughes, 1998, op.cit., p.5.

¹⁶⁷ J. K. Glenn, 2003, op.cit., p.217.

¹⁶⁸ M.Cesar, 1999,op.cit., p.23, in, “Conclusions of the Interministerial Committee of the Greek Government, Athens, 7 June 1995” in *the White Paper on the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference*, p.42.

¹⁶⁹ M.Cesar, 1999,op.cit., p.24.

¹⁷⁰ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.214.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

The *Eurobarometer 2002* Survey indicates that people in the 15 member states are generally favourable to enlargement.¹⁷³ (Published in November 2002 - see Table 2.2) 66% of respondents in EU-15 expressed themselves in favour of the enlargement of the EU, while 22% were opposed; the remainder either gave no answer (9%) or said that it depended on the countries concerned (3%). The highest levels of support were recorded in Italy and Ireland (around 80%) followed by Spain and Belgium (70-75%); the lowest support was in the United Kingdom, Sweden and Finland (50-55%); in Germany and France, levels of support were close to the EU average (66%).

When looked at the opinions of the general public in the 15 member states of the EU regarding “which accession countries are more welcome and which to a lesser extent”, we come up with a picture showing that; the most popular accession country from post-Communist Eastern Europe is Hungary, followed by Poland and Czech Republic; the second group consists of Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia and Bulgaria and the third group with the lowest levels of support from within the EU are Lithuania, Romania and Slovenia.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ W.Kok, 2003, op.cit., p.27.

¹⁷⁴ For detailed information see C.W.Haerpfer. Democracy and Enlargement in Post-Communist Europe. The Democratisation of the General Public in Fifteen CEECs, 1991-1998. London: Routledge, 2002, pp.135-139.

Table 2.2 Support for Enlargement in EU -15 Member States

	<u>1+2</u> <u>infavour</u>	<u>3+4</u> <u>opposed</u>	1 Totally in favour	2 Rather in favour	3 Rather opposed	4 Totally opposed	5 Depends on the country	6 Don't know
Italy	<u>82</u>	<u>12</u>	44	38	8	4	4	2
Ireland	<u>79</u>	<u>15</u>	36	43	10	5	1	6
Spain	<u>73</u>	<u>8</u>	16	57	5	3	2	17
Belgium	<u>72</u>	<u>18</u>	23	49	12	6	3	7
Denmark	<u>67</u>	<u>21</u>	23	44	12	9	3	8
France	<u>66</u>	<u>27</u>	12	53	18	9	4	3
<u>Average of</u> <u>EU-15</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>9</u>
The Netherlands	<u>66</u>	<u>25</u>	23	43	17	8	2	7
Greece	<u>66</u>	<u>10</u>	30	37	6	4	9	14
Luxembourg	<u>64</u>	<u>23</u>	30	34	14	8	8	6
Germany	<u>64</u>	<u>27</u>	14	50	20	8	2	6
Portugal	<u>62</u>	<u>14</u>	6	56	12	2	2	22
Austria	<u>59</u>	<u>32</u>	21	38	24	8	5	5
United Kingdom	<u>54</u>	<u>26</u>	16	38	14	13	2	18
Sweden	<u>52</u>	<u>28</u>	23	29	15	13	1	20
Finland	<u>51</u>	<u>27</u>	14	37	18	10	4	18

Source: Eurobarometer (November 2002)

Although the CEECs' acceptance to the EU was generally welcomed, there was no consensus among existing member states about which or how many applicants be admitted, or when. Empirical evidence shows that only a few countries (Germany, Britain and Denmark) unambiguously supported the membership issue from the beginning and that, even a few weeks before the Copenhagen Council, a considerable number of member states were showing no sympathy for the offer they were going to make.¹⁷⁵ After all, the inclusion in the accession criteria list drawn up in Copenhagen of a final condition which had nothing to do with the candidates (that the Twelve were ready to accept them and maintain the momentum of European

¹⁷⁵ J.I.Torreblanca, *The Reuniting of Europe: promises, negotiations and compromises*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001, pp. 319-320, in, E.Barbé, E.Johansson-Nogués (eds.) , 2003, op.cit., p.28.

integration), together with the attitudes of a good number of governments (France, Spain and Belgium) reveals a threatened rather than a shared identity.¹⁷⁶ Therefore, the empirical evidence displays the EU member states' reluctance to do what was considered appropriate in response to enlargement and the high level of contestation, which has surrounded the whole process of enlargement.

European political leaders eventually decided about Eastern enlargement in 1993 because the member states considered the 'stabilisation of Europe' and 'neutralising new security threats' from the CEECs as the main objective of the current enlargement policy in order to strengthen peace, stability and democracy in these countries so that its Eastern border would be like a tampon region to protect the EU from the threat of Russia. According to Mayhew, enlargement of the CEE was inevitable, because if enlargement to those countries, which have carefully prepared their economies and citizens for accession, had not taken place, then these countries would have been liable to descend – politically and then economically, into chaos.¹⁷⁷ An imminent chaos developing on the eastern border of the Union would be destabilising for the future development of the Union, and would probably lead to its disintegration.¹⁷⁸

It can be noted that although there had been some doubts regarding the CEE enlargement, there was no rejection of the enlargement, but a support of the enlargement process to which the EU has committed itself irreversibly beginning with the Copenhagen to Luxembourg European Council and beyond. It would not be wrong to say that the above stated concerns of the Member States related to the CEE enlargement point out the "uniqueness" of this process.

This enlargement led Europe to change dramatically in the past decade. With the end of Cold War, the east-west divide in Europe has been dissolved, and new economic, political and military structures between the European states were developed. The

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ A. Mayhew, Recreating Europe: The European Union's Policy Towards Central and Eastern Europe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p.180.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

European Community has been replaced by the European Union, for which the incorporation of CEECs has become a major strategic goal.

Finally, the EC realised the significance of the developments both on the CEECs' side and on the EU-15 side and regarded enlarging eastwards as one of the most important opportunities for the Community as it was preparing for a deepening of its integration. It was considered as a "*unique, historic task*" to further the integration of the continent by peaceful means, extending a zone of stability and prosperity to new members.

3. THE “UNIQUENESS” OF THE CEE ENLARGEMENT: EVOLUTION OF THE EU’S STRATEGY

3.1 THE FACTORS THAT MAKE THE CEE ENLARGEMENT UNIQUE

In order to make it more systematic and clearer to understand, the “factors that make the CEE enlargement unique” are grouped below under two sub titles as “political and security factors” on the one hand, and “economic factors” on the other, though sometimes it is not that easy to separate them into two since all these factors are quite interrelated in practice. They are examined in terms of their effects on the EU, its member states and on the CEECs.

Eastern enlargement is “unique” because when comparisons are made with the previous enlargements, first of all, it shows differences in terms of the opportunities it presents to the EU, the member states and the candidate countries, since it not only “*introduces a new historic and moral dimension*” to the European Union, but also constitutes an opportunity for Europe because of “*political stability*”, “*economic prosperity*”, its “*position in the world*”, its “*culture*” and “*the deepening of European construction*” it offers to Europe. Secondly, it presents differences in terms of the challenges it presents to the EU and the member states such as the deepening and widening issues, and the far-reaching European integration concerning security and monetary issues. Thirdly, Eastern enlargement is different in terms of the pre-accession strategies adopted by the EU towards the CEECs before becoming members of the EU. Finally, it shows differences of the EU’s relations with “wider Europe”, hence making enlargement a continuing process towards Western Balkans and re-establishing relations with its old and new Eastern neighbours. In doing so, current enlargement raises questions about the boundaries and the identity of the EU. Thus, the uniqueness of enlargement derives from a combination of three elements; “context” (bringing together challenges and opportunities); “strategy” and “implications”.

3.1.1 Political and Security Factors

The fifth enlargement process of the EU is “unique” because it presents an opportunity for “*political stability*” in Europe since it expands the zone of peace, which the Union currently represents to those territories that previously have been the scene of wars and innumerable conflicts.¹⁷⁹ It encourages all participating countries to advance toward unity and stability within Europe, it is a unique opportunity to peacefully integrate minorities, to resolve border conflicts and to temper nationalism.¹⁸⁰ It also offers benefits in more effective pan-European functioning in certain areas of common interest, such as environmental protection or the fight against organised crime.¹⁸¹

Enlargement is an opportunity to “*deepen European construction*” because it will give a new political and economic impetus to the process of European integration but at the same time, the EU will inevitably face controversial challenges of deepening and widening.¹⁸² Compared with the time of previous enlargements, European integration process has been more advanced, in terms of its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and European Monetary Union (EMU). Grabbe and Hughes suggest that, the “*security*” dimension is one of the most significant ways in which eastward enlargement is different from the previous enlargements and looking beyond security, eastward enlargement could add new dimensions to EU external policy, but probably in the longer term.¹⁸³ According to Baun, by enlarging, the EU risks importing instability by admitting countries with unresolved internal or external conflicts, such as ethnic tensions or border disputes with neighbouring states. An enlarged EU would also have more extensive borders with historically unstable areas of Europe, such as Western Balkans, even as it seeks to stabilise these areas by integrating them into the EU.¹⁸⁴ Enlargement will also extend the EU into Russia’s traditional sphere of influence and with the accession of Baltic states into the area of

¹⁷⁹ http://www.infoeuropa.org/catala/Ampliacio/but_amp/en/01_hu/cont.htm p.7.

¹⁸⁰ http://www.infoeuropa.org/catala/Ampliacio/but_amp/en/01_hu/cont.htm p.8.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ H. Grabbe. K. Hughes, 1998, op.cit., p.110.

¹⁸⁴ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.7.

the former Soviet Union itself, thereby expanding the EU's border with Russia and changing its security relations with Moscow.¹⁸⁵ For all these reasons, it is not surprising that security and geopolitical considerations have played a large role in EU policy on eastern enlargement.

This enlargement alone raises questions about EU's relations with "wider Europe", hence making enlargement a continuing process towards West Balkans and re-establishing its relations with old and new eastern neighbours. Eastern enlargement raises the question of "*boundaries*" for the EU; because, in all previous enlargements we see the EC either enlarging its own centre or attaching to this centre new members from its Western semi periphery¹⁸⁶. The countries of Central Europe have borders with states which are truly East European, and their accession will therefore lead the EU to share frontiers with states (Russia, Belarus, the Ukraine, Moldova, Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia and Turkey) which are totally different to the predominantly 'West European' Member States of the current Union.¹⁸⁷ Because of their 'geographic position', newcomers are taking over responsibility for controlling large stretches of these borders.¹⁸⁸ To support them in this task of border governance, the EU has provided considerable funding for the modern equipment and personnel training and will continue to do so until 2006, which is a good example to indicate the importance of this factor on the part of the EU.¹⁸⁹

The above stated argument becomes clear with Smith's definition of four types of 'boundaries'¹⁹⁰, one of which is the '*cultural boundary*'. It concerns the political foundations related to democracy, respect for law and human rights, common culture and heritage of its peoples. Therefore, it is possible to say that there was a certain

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Peter Balazs, "Strategies for the Eastern Enlargement of the EU: An Integration Theory Approach", in, Laurent, Pierre-Henri. Maresceau, Marc. The State of European Union. Deepening and Widening. Vol 4. Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1998, p.70.

¹⁸⁷ A.Mayhew, 1998, op.cit. p.181.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ The European Commission Website at the European Union Web site <http://www.europea.int/comm/publications/booklets/move/41/en.doc>, op.cit., p.5.

¹⁹⁰ It has been argued that 'boundaries' not only establish the limits of governance but also affect the system's capacity to govern. For details see: L.Friis. A. Murphy. "The European Union and Central and Eastern Europe: Governance and Boundaries", Journal of Common Market Studies, Vol.37, (2), June 1999.

cultural boundary between Western and Central / Eastern Europe but now with the CEE enlargement this seems not so important since “*shifting of cultural boundaries*” has become possible.

The above stated factors of “uniqueness” can be considered as ‘opportunities’ which affected both the Union and the member states, however, there are some difficulties in this process as well. These difficulties largely stem from the transition of these countries from communism to democracy and from more demanding and frightening accession criteria that have been applied to CEE candidates and other candidates.

Rollo claims that, the “*transition from communism to democracy and to market*” is the major issue separating this enlargement from the previous ones.¹⁹¹ It is the transition to the market that provides the greatest practical test for the countries of the East and contributes to the more than usually opaque processes that are at work over enlargement.¹⁹² The achievements in the area of democratic process proved to be somewhat less difficult and certainly less controversial than economic and social reforms.¹⁹³ In all the associated countries free and fair elections have been held, and there have been quite normal changes of government.¹⁹⁴

Grabbe and Hughes claim that, it is easier to notice economic transition in the region than a political one, because the effects of the historical legacy of the communist period on political life and the diverse systems of governance that have emerged in post-socialist countries, caused political changes to be less clear.¹⁹⁵ On the other hand, during the course of transition, Ingham questions whether countries that have only recently gained their economic and political independence after nearly half a century of Soviet domination would be keen to surrender some of their national sovereignty by foregoing their financial independence.¹⁹⁶ Nevertheless, Ingham argues that, the fact that democratic institutions are in place in all the CEECs is itself

¹⁹¹ J.Rollo, “Economic Aspects of EU Enlargement to the East”, in, M.Maresceau, 1997, op.cit., p.252.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ A.Mayhew, 1998, op.cit., p.203.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ H. Grabbe. K. Hughes, 1998, op.cit., p.44.

¹⁹⁶ H.Ingham. M. Ingham, 2002, op.cit., p.12.

a major achievement, and indicates the extent to which the CEE-10 have shed the legacy of authoritarianism.¹⁹⁷

To talk about the demanding accession criteria, one can first go to the Treaty of Rome. In order to become a member of the EU, the Treaty of Rome Article 237, laid down only one condition: ‘the entrant nation must be European’. Indeed, there were prerequisites for the previous enlargements too but these affected only the conditions of accession, not the “starting of negotiations” (pre-accession strategies) and the very “chances of joining”. However, in CEE enlargement, it is not the case. Apart from the Treaty of Rome, the principles of the EU in respect for “adherence to the basic democratic and human rights” have been emphasized in some previous European Councils as well, like the one held in Copenhagen in 1978, and the Maastricht European Council of 1991.¹⁹⁸ However, in implementation, different approaches have been adopted as will be explained below.

One of the most controversial factors of the specificity of the CEE enlargement is about the ‘Copenhagen Criteria’¹⁹⁹ since what it asserts goes beyond the above paragraph. The conditions of the ‘Copenhagen Criteria’²⁰⁰ are;

1. The stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for, and protection of minorities.
2. The existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union.
3. The ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.
4. The capacity of the EU to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration, which indicates the fact that membership and incorporation must proceed only in line with the EU’s ability to incorporate new member states.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ C.Hillion (ed), EU Enlargement: A Legal Approach. Oxford and Portland Oregon: Hart Publications, 2004, p.5-6.

¹⁹⁹ For details, see pp. 61-64 of this thesis.

²⁰⁰ W. Kok, 2003, op.cit. p.23. (The Copenhagen criteria will be discussed and examined in detail in the following chapter).

It is important to stress that, in the previous enlargements of the EU, no country willing to join the EU has fully complied with the *acquis* at the time of its entry since the EU offered them a transition period for full compliance with the *acquis*, and even allowing longer time for the less developed members, namely, Greece, Spain and Portugal.²⁰¹ However, for CEE enlargement, the Copenhagen criteria underlined the fact that applicant countries needed to complete the *acquis communautaire* in full prior to accession, including accepting unconditionally the future process of integration, with regard to the EMU and the CFSP and intensified integration in the area of JHA, in order to ensure that their internal political conditions do not pose any serious problems, not only for the existing political system of the EU, but also for its future objective of creating a common European system of political values.²⁰² Therefore, when the differences of treatment between the previous enlargements and this one is compared, there seems to be an unfair application on the part of the CEECs.

However, empirical research has shown that the candidate countries have accepted the validity of the EU's membership conditions under the Copenhagen criteria. What they seemed to be more concerned is the "subjective nature of the economic criteria, especially the capacity to withstand competitive pressure and *acquis* conditions", which cannot be measured objectively.²⁰³ Furthermore, CEE elites have noted that the EU member states themselves are not perfect when it comes to implementing fully the *acquis*. Related to this, another area of double standards is that, the Amsterdam Treaty provisions on EU membership (applied in the previous enlargement rounds) do not include respect for the rights of minorities; whereas the Copenhagen membership conditions, do.²⁰⁴ The EU, thus, insists that applicant

²⁰¹ H. Arıkan, 2003, op.cit., p.34.

²⁰² H. Arıkan, 2003, op.cit., p.35.

²⁰³ A.Krok-Paszowska and J. Zielonka, "The EU's Next Biggest Enlargement: Empirical Data on the Candidates' Perceptions, RSC Working Paper no. 2000/54, in, M.Cremona. (ed) The Enlargement of the European Union. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 119.

²⁰⁴ M.Cremona, 2003, op.cit., p. 120. For Details See: G. Amato and J. Batt, "Minority Rights and EU Enlargement, Report of the First Meeting of the Reflection Group on the Long-Term Implications of EU Enlargement: The Nature of the New Border", RSC Policy Paper no. 98/5 (1998).

states but not member states should protect minority rights, although admittedly the minority protection regime within the EU is gradually strengthening.²⁰⁵

It has been noted earlier that the current enlargement presents differences for the EU, the member states and the candidate countries in terms of challenges, since all parts have to adjust themselves to these challenges and particularly to the far-reaching European integration with a higher level of adaptation in all fronts. Regarding this issue, Inotai argues that²⁰⁶, for at least two reasons, the associated CEECs were in a worse position than previous applicants. First, they had to adjust themselves to “*a flexible and unpredictable EU*”. Accession criteria could be amended according to changing circumstances and the changing interests of the EU and the member countries. Second, “*the level of EU integration was much advanced*” at the time than it had been a decade ago when the Mediterranean enlargement occurred. Both of these cases constitute another factor of uniqueness of the Eastern enlargement, which has strongly affected the candidate countries and forced them to make more comprehensive adaptations compared with the previous enlargements.

Thus, what seems distinctive in the current enlargement process is the dual challenge of transition and integration for the CEECs. The EU in a way has affected the course and political outcome of economic and political reforms in these countries by applying them a new pre-accession strategy prior to accession negotiations, subject to strict and firm ‘Copenhagen criteria’. Apart from this, in order to encourage and develop democracy in the CEECs, the EU introduced some new instruments like the PHARE programme, and to reinforce political developments it worked in close relations with them to improve issues related to democracy as well as human rights regimes.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ A. Inotai, “The CEECs: From the Association Agreements to Full Membership?”, in, J.Redmond. G.G.Rosenthal. (eds), 1998, op.cit., p.159.

3.1.2 Economic Factors

Eastern enlargement is “unique” because it constitutes an opportunity for Europe in terms of “*economic prosperity*” it presents to Europe. With more than 100 million new citizens from countries experiencing strong economic growth, the expanded Union increases economic and trading activity.²⁰⁷

The uniqueness of this enlargement also comes from the fact that, the EU’s relations with “wider Europe” is put on the stage, which constitutes an opportunity for “*the position of Europe in the world*”, because accession of new member states increases the economic and human potential of the Union, thus increasing its weight and influence on the international scene.²⁰⁸ In a world characterised by large economic blocs, the Union is said to have the possibility of becoming a key player due to its economic and geopolitical importance.²⁰⁹

One of the most important factors of uniqueness that this enlargement presents is “*the dual challenge it puts forward in front of the CEECs*”. It is not only because they have to make necessary progress and “*transform their economies*”, but also they try to realise their integration with the EU. The process of transforming their economies has been underway since 1990. Already before the revolutions had been completed, the EC had offered trade agreements to the front-runners of the democratic movements, Poland and Hungary.²¹⁰ It removed long-standing import quotas on a number of products, extended the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) and over the next few years concluded the Trade and Cooperation Agreements with Bulgaria, the former Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovenia. By 2001, the economies of Central Europe made significant progress in creating the institutions of a market economy and restructuring their industrial output towards the demand of EU markets.²¹¹

²⁰⁷ H. Grabbe. K. Hughes, 1998, op.cit., p.110.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ L.Friis, A.Murphy, 1999, op.cit., p.218.

²¹¹ A.H.Smith, “Central European Economies” , in, Central and South Eastern Europe V.2002. 2nd Edition, London: Europa Pub., p.14.

Nevertheless, these economies still have to overcome major problems to catch up with the EU. Together with these countries the “*European integration has been moving a head*” at a considerable pace in the existing European Union (single market, monetary union)²¹².

During the process of transforming their economies, the Visegrad-4 (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) and Slovenia tend to stand out with the more advanced economic transition they have made.²¹³ The Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) have been below the Visegrad countries, however, due to their rapid progress the distinctions between the two groups are growing finer. Ranked below the Baltic States are Romania and Bulgaria, although the gap between the two economies widened considerably in 1996.

As it is stated in the ‘Copenhagen economic criteria’, the EU has made competitiveness one of the key economic conditions for accession. In addition to a “functioning market economy”, successful applicants have to prove they have “the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union”. In its 2002 assessment of the accession countries progress, the Commission classified all of them except Romania as functioning market economies.²¹⁴ A brief look at past economic performance indicates that both the candidates and the EU have almost completely dismantled barriers to bilateral trade, West European companies have invested massively in the East European region, thousands of East European manufacturers are locked into pan-European supply networks.

One other challenge that this enlargement presents to the EU and the candidate states is related to the ‘large number of candidates applying for membership’, which also necessitates more stringent conditions of membership for the CEECs than those specified in previous enlargements. To give an example, because of the difficulty of

²¹² A.Stepniak. (ac.ed.) Enlargement of the EU to the East. Consequences for Prosperity and Employment in Europe. (Opinion on the Friedrich Ebert Foundation Report). First Edition- Dec. 2000, p.115.

²¹³ H.Grabbe. K.Hughes. Eastward Enlargement of the European Union. London: The Royal Institute International Affairs, 1997, p. 22.

²¹⁴ K.Barysch, H.Grabbe, “Who’s Ready for EU Enlargement?”, London: Center for European Reform, 2002, pp.11-12.

assessment of the acceding countries, which are large in number, for the first time in the history of the EU enlargement practice, the Commission has sent, in April 1996, an exhaustive global “*Questionnaire*” to all the applicant countries, involving very detailed, specific and great number of questions.²¹⁵ First, the Commission wanted to obtain general background information, such as data on demography, production, trade, employment, healthcare, economic growth etc. Secondly, for each sector falling within the activities of the EU, precise information was requested.²¹⁶ These questionnaires underlined the many gaps between the current situation in the CEECs and the criteria for accession set by the European Council at its summit in Copenhagen in June 1993.²¹⁷

The economies of the CEECs are also “*more agricultural*”. Thus, while Greece has the highest proportion (17.7 percent) of its workers engaged in agriculture among the EU-15 (Eurostat, 1999), the figure exceeds one-fifth in four of the applicant countries and is almost 40 percent in Romania.²¹⁸ Many of the CEECs have relatively large and inefficient farm sectors in which significant numbers of the domestic workforce are dependent upon farming, as in Poland, where 25 percent of labour force is involved in agriculture.²¹⁹ Furthermore, a recent world ranking of ‘competitiveness’ found the combined score of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to be some 27-percentage points behind that of Greece, Portugal and Spain taken together.²²⁰ However, although agriculture is important to some of these states, they are almost all industrial countries, which is also a greater contributor to GDP than in the EU.²²¹

It is possible to state that, the CEE enlargement is “unique” not only because of “*quantitative*” factors, i.e. the new members are “*more in number*”; almost doubling

²¹⁵ M.Maresceau. (ed), 1997, op.cit., p.17. (See also: M.Baun, 2000, op.cit. p.79.)

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ V.C.Price. A.Landau. R.G. Whitman (eds), The Enlargement of the European Union. Issues and Strategies. London: Routledge, 1999, op.cit., p.17.

²¹⁸ H.Ingham. M. Ingham, 2002, op.cit., p.11.

²¹⁹ A.Scott, “The Political Economy of enlargement”, in, F.Cameron (ed), The Future of Europe. Integration and Enlargement. London: Routledge, 2004, p.91.

²²⁰ S. Dominick, Narrowing the Structural Gap in Transition Economies, in, Sven Arnt, Heinz Handler and Dominick Salvatore (eds). 2000, pp.30-55.

²²¹ A.Mayhew, 1998, op.cit. p.182.

the 15 Member States, the population of the EU is increasing to more than 450 million people,²²² but also because of “*qualitative*” factors which point out the “*much poorer*”²²³ *situation of the CEECs compared with the European Union* and to the “*little experience of theirs in parliamentary democracy and market economy*”.²²⁴ This caused these countries to face the difficult challenge of building and consolidating new democratic institutions and political cultures. The enlargement process, therefore, must overcome a huge economic and political developmental gap between the EU and the applicant states. This gap not only poses a challenge for the applicants as they try to make the difficult transition to democracy and the market economy and to align their legislation and institutions with those of the EU, but also for the EU as it seeks to prepare both the candidate countries and itself for enlargement.

The economic challenges of the Eastern enlargement cast some adaptation problems for the EU, which has necessitated making arrangements on the budget. For instance, the CAP accounts for nearly half of total EU spending, which necessitates the accession states to support payments under the CAP as well as the EU member states.²²⁵ However, EU-15 was against increasing the budget and to cut payments to current beneficiaries in order to pay to farmers in the accession countries. Therefore, they agreed on a transition period of ten years (2004-13) during which direct support in accession countries would progressively be raised to EU-15 level.²²⁶ Although financial impact on the CAP arising from enlargement has been addressed, the long-term implications for the CAP remain uncertain. Another challenge for the EU is in the field of structural funds. With the Eastern enlargement, eight new member states that have an average GDP of less than 50 percent of the EU average have joined the EU. Accordingly, each of the CEECs will be eligible for support under the EU’s structural funds, principally the European Regional Development Fund, the European

²²² “Europe at the crossroads” (ECB)European Central Bank Home Page
http://www.ecb.int/key/03/sp031120_1.htm

²²³ The relationship between the highest and lowest income countries in the Union is 1.8, whereas for the CEECs the same ratio is 3.2. The associated countries are therefore, not only in income terms poorer on average than the poorest of the existing Member States, there are also large variations between them. See: A.Mayhew, 1998, op.cit., p.180.

²²⁴ A. Stepniak. (ac.ed.), 2000, op.cit., p.115.

²²⁵ A.Scott, 2004, op.cit., p.91.

²²⁶ Ibid.

Social Fund and also the Cohesion Fund. However, the outstanding immediate concern on the part of the EU surrounds the capacity of the CEECs both to administer this assistance and to provide domestic co-financing of programmes that are supported by the funds.²²⁷ Over the longer period, enlargement sets new challenges to the EU to achieve the degree of ‘economic and social cohesion’ to which it has long been committed.

Brennan points out the possibility of an enlarged and a ‘wider Europe’ and he suggests that, with this enlargement a new European order will be created, not just in Western Europe but across the whole European continent; for it will have an impact not only on the actual and potential members of the EU, but also on the Russian Federation, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and Turkey, the EU will no more possess a Western European character; it will be much more diverse and its political and economic core will gradually move closer to Central Europe.²²⁸

Price and Landau state their opinions on the difference of this enlargement concerning its “wider Europe” dimension as stated in the initial paragraphs of this chapter. They suggest that, this enlargement is different in two different ways²²⁹; the first is that the enlargement is taking place in a context of “*accelerated globalisation pressures, further multilateral trade negotiations in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and more liberalisation on all fronts*”, which raises the pressure for structural economic change to an unprecedented level. The second is that “*public opinion, which was virtually absent from previous enlargements, is today a much more important factor*”. Euroscepticism has become fashionable, making it difficult for Western Europe to meet all the exceptional challenges that enlargement implies.

Finally, it is possible to say that this enlargement process, due to introducing comprehensive conditions related to economic and political transformation and cultural adaptation, (as explained throughout the paragraphs above) , on the part of the CEECs, the EU and also the member countries, involves much more adjustment

²²⁷ A.Scott, 2004, op.cit., p.92.

²²⁸ I.Brennan, “The Challenge of the East”, in, Sakwa, R. Stevens, A, 2000, op.cit., p.162.

²²⁹ V.C.Price. A.Landau. R.G. Whitman (eds), 1999, pp.11,12.

than in the past and because of this necessity it may be named as “unique” and described as an ‘*adaptive*’ strategy²³⁰. This adaptive process contrasts with previous enlargements, in which the burden of adjustment fell almost exclusively on the applicant countries.

3.2 COPENHAGEN EUROPEAN COUNCIL

After the historic events of the late 1980s and early 1990s, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of communism, and the end of Soviet domination, one of the first decisions of the CEE was to turn to the West for admission to the ‘Euro-Atlantic’ framework, in particular through membership of the EU and NATO. The EU was quick to offer financial assistance in 1989 through the PHARE programme, subsequently extended to all the CEECs, and to sign ‘association’ agreements (Europe Agreements) with them from 1991 onwards. The preamble of the agreements recognised membership as the wish of the associated states, without affirming it as the aim of the EU. Hesitations on the EU side concerning Eastern enlargement persisted in the early 1990s, with attention focused on other political priorities such as the creation of the single market, the negotiation of the Maastricht Treaty, and the preparation for the EFTA enlargement which brought Austria, Sweden and Finland into the EU in 1994. However, in June 1993, a historic step was taken at the Copenhagen, when the EU leaders stated that the associated countries of the CEE could become members of the EU.

The uniqueness of the Copenhagen European Council in June 1993 comes from the fact that it was a turning point for the ambiguity in the EU towards the accession of the CEECs into the Union. Acting on the Commission’s Report, “Towards a Closer Association with the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe”, the Council set down the basis for developing future relations.²³¹ However, deciding upon accepting other applicants on this occasion was a much more difficult task than in the case of the

²³⁰ J. Redmond, “The Enlargement of the European Union”, in S. Croft et. al. The Enlargement of Europe. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999, p.56.

²³¹ C.Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.201.

EFTA countries, as in the short run admitting any of them would involve net costs for the existing members as stated in the previous section.

It was therefore necessary to have some criteria, which would help to keep the costs and difficulties within manageable bounds.²³² The EU's policy towards accession of the CEECs became clearer, when the Heads of Government, at the Copenhagen European Council in June 1993 offered the strict conditionality that "the associated countries in CEE that so desire should become members of the EU as soon as they are able to assume the obligations of membership by satisfying the economic and political conditions".²³³

The Copenhagen European Council spelled out for the first time the conditions for membership, which have become known as the 'Copenhagen Criteria'. The Copenhagen Criteria²³⁴ set standards for countries aspiring EU membership:

1. Stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for, and protection of minorities.
2. The existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union.
3. The ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.
4. The capacity of the EU to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration, which indicates the fact that membership and incorporation must proceed only in line with the EU's ability to incorporate new member states.

The "*political criterion*" seemed to be very broad, and cannot be defined in a clear manner since the analysis of the maturity of democracy; respect for human and minority rights seems to be very difficult.²³⁵ These conditions were a kind of admissibility test proposed and applied by the Commission in Agenda 2000, on the basis of which, the Commission considered that progress has still to be made in a number of applicant states (only Slovakia did not satisfy this criteria).²³⁶ The "*economic criterion*" is also vague and open to interpretation. The Commission,

²³² A.M, El-Agraa, *The European Union. Economics and Policies*, Sixth Edition. England: Pearson Education, 2001, p. 552.

²³³ W. Kok, 2003, op.cit. p.23.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ H. Arıkan, 2003, op.cit., p.33.

²³⁶ C.Hillion, 2004, op.cit., p.19.

through Agenda 2000, found out that Hungary and Poland came closest to meeting them, while the Czech Republic and Slovenia were not far behind. It was also felt that Estonia, while meeting the first criterion, would need to make progress to fulfil the second. Considering the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia, they could be in a position to satisfy all the conditions of membership in the medium term.²³⁷ The “*third criterion*” implies that the new members should take over the policies and rules of the EU (the *acquis*), implement, and enforce them effectively. Accession negotiations concern mainly the third criterion, that applicants must accept the *acquis communautaire* in full.²³⁸ However, as a “unique” application for CEECs, it is worth noting that, when the EFTA countries were being considered for membership, there was no real question as to whether they fully met the appropriate criteria, with the exception of the issues of political neutrality.²³⁹ The question was merely whether they were willing to accept the conditions of joining, and in the case of Norway and Switzerland, the answer was negative since they had already aligned themselves with internal market *acquis* through their membership of the EEA²⁴⁰ Now, since there had been real concerns over whether the Union could cope with the particular applicants, “it has become necessary to spell out the criteria for membership much more explicitly”.²⁴¹ The “*fourth criterion*” has established the question of the EU’s capacity, as regards admissions, which imply that accepting new members to the EU would depend partly upon the state of the EU’s preparedness for such an enlargement.²⁴² The weakness in this criterion is that, it could be manipulated, or to be applied more strictly to some countries than to others so as to delay or reject some applicants simply on the grounds that the EU is not prepared for their membership.²⁴³ According to Grabbe, the fourth criteria, which reflects member-state anxieties about the impact that enlargement might have on EU institutions and policies because of the increase in numbers and diversity, apart from the specific problems that CEE members might bring in, is a condition for

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ The *acquis* is composed of 31 chapters, each of which focuses on a specific sector or issue area.

²³⁹ A.M, El-Agraa, 2001, op.cit. p.548.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ A.M, El-Agraa, 2001, op.cit., pp.548,549.

²⁴² H. Arıkan, 2003, op.cit., p.35.

²⁴³ Ibid.

enlargement, whereas the others are conditions for entry.²⁴⁴ Inclusion of the fourth criteria also shows that, enlargement becomes an “adaptive process” for both the candidates and the EU and that it aims to reconcile deepening and widening of the EU.

3.2.1 Conditionality

Pridham defines ‘Conditionality’ as the ‘most resonant and deliberate effort to determine from outside the course and outcome of regime change’, which is achieved by specifying conditions or even pre-conditions for support, involving either promise of material aid or political opportunities.²⁴⁵ Through conditionality, therefore, the EU may exercise more immediate pressures than is sometimes supposed by those who argue that European integration can only have long-term effects on the consolidation process.²⁴⁶ Likewise, the CEECs “conditionality principle” had been invoked as a pre-condition for the initiation of the accession process. According to Glenn, given the unequal power relationship resulting from the conditionality principle, it might be tempting to see enlargement as a one-way process of imitation, in which applicants simply adopt European laws and regulations.²⁴⁷ What Friis and Murphy argue is that, precisely by offering accession as the light at the end of the long transformation-tunnel, the EU hoped to dampen the desire to join the EU immediately.²⁴⁸

Since 1993, with the Copenhagen European Council, “conditionality” has become central to the enlargement process and invoked as a pre-condition for the initiation of the accession process, which depended upon meeting the Copenhagen criteria. According to the criteria, applicant states are to change their domestic policies and institutions to bring them into line with the EU requirements. Conditionality necessitates acceding states making changes in their democratic systems in order to

²⁴⁴ H. Grabbe, 2003, op.cit., p.255.

²⁴⁵ G.Pridham, A.Agh (eds). Prospects for Democratic Consolidation in East-Central Europe. New York: Manchester University, 2001, p.70. For more information see: Cini, Michelle (ed), European Union Politics. New York: Oxford University Press: 2003, pp.216-219.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ J. K. Glenn, 2003, op.cit., p.220.

²⁴⁸ L. Friis. A. Murphy., 1999, op.cit., p.222.

make them function properly, having a functioning market economy in order to cope with the competitive pressures and adhering to the aims of political, economic and monetary union. Therefore, the Eastern enlargement is distinctive because of the transformations occurring simultaneously within the post-Communist states, and because of the character of the new EU, after 1993. Nevertheless, the conditionality of the accession process had a remarkable success since it enabled the applicant countries to accelerate their reforms in the decade that followed the promise in Copenhagen.²⁴⁹

What real or direct proof is there that conditionality works? Here, the process over satisfying political conditions for membership is a sustained one with a series of closely timed stages through which applicant countries have to fulfil. Based on the Copenhagen criteria of 1993, these have included the Commission's Avis on accession applications (July 1997), the Accession Partnerships (1998) and the annual Commission reports on progress by candidate countries. It is made quite clear that satisfying political and economic criteria is an absolute pre-condition for eventual membership and that problems here may delay that event.²⁵⁰

One year after the Copenhagen European Council, in June 1994, the "Corfu European Council" called on the Commission to prepare a strategy paper on how the CEECs be integrated to the EU's policy process, the results of which were forwarded to the Essen European Council that decided to give a further impetus to the enlargement process by defining a comprehensive 'pre-accession strategy'.²⁵¹ It was for the first time in the Union's history that such a formula was applied. In this Council, it was recalled that the Copenhagen Conclusions and the Europe Agreements (will be discussed below in detail) constituted the framework for deepening relations with the associated countries and for creating a context to enable these countries to meet the Copenhagen Conditions.²⁵²

²⁴⁹ G.Avery, "The Enlargement Negotiations", in, F.Cameron, 2004, op.cit.,p.38.

²⁵⁰ G.Pridham, A.Agh, 2001, p. 71.

²⁵¹ M.A.Gaudissart. A.Sinnaeve, "The Role of the White Paper in the Preparation of the Eastern Enlargement", in, M. Maresceau, 1997, op.cit., p.42.

²⁵² M.Cremona (ed), 2003, op.cit., p.14.

3.2.2 The Europe Agreements (EAs)

In August 1990, the Commission proposed to the Council that second generation agreements had to be negotiated with Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, and eventually with other countries.²⁵³ (See Table 3.2.2) These agreements were later called the ‘Europe Agreements’, seeking economic and political integration through association. They aimed primarily at helping the CEECs, in their transition by establishing a new economic relationship with the EU and with provisions on accession of these countries to the EU. The EAs were conceived as frameworks within which the CEECs could be prepared for accession.²⁵⁴ The EAs were different to many of the past Association Agreements (See table 3.2.2) in that they had a political, cultural as well as an economic and trade dimension.²⁵⁵ According to the Commission’s proposal, these agreements would build upon a common framework consisting of six elements: political dialogue, free trade and freedom of movement, economic cooperation, cultural cooperation, financial cooperation and institutions of association to provide for consultation and joint decision-making at different levels.²⁵⁶ They indicated examples of conditionality, such as containment of a commitment to pluralistic democracy based on the rule of law and the market economy and a recognition that the CEECs wished to become members of the EU.²⁵⁷

²⁵³ M.Cesar, 1999, op.cit., p.16.

²⁵⁴ N.Hopkinson, 1994, op.cit., p.2.

²⁵⁵ I.Barnes. P. Barnes. The Enlarged European Union. London: Longman, 1995, p.402.

²⁵⁶ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.32.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

Table 3.2.2 Europe Agreements signed with the 10 CEECs

Country	Europe Agreement signed	Europe Agreement came into force
Hungary	December 1991	February 1994
Poland	December 1991	February 1994
Bulgaria	March 1993	February 1995
Czech Republic	October 1993	February 1995
Romania	February 1993	February 1995
Slovak Republic	October 1993	February 1995
Estonia	June 1995	February 1998
Latvia	June 1995	February 1998
Lithuania	June 1995	February 1998
Slovenia	June 1996	February 1998

Source: European Commission. European Union Enlargement. A Historic Opportunity. Directorate General for Enlargement. Information and Interinstitutional Relations Unit: Brussels. p.7.

Because they were “mixed” agreements including some provisions that were the responsibility of the EC and others of the member states, they required ratification by both national parliaments and the EP before they could take effect²⁵⁸. The ten Europe Agreements all had similar structure but they tailored to the needs and conditions of individual CEECs.²⁵⁹

The Europe Agreements marked a qualitative change in relations between the EC and the CEECs, establishing closer economic links and an institutional framework for political cooperation. Nevertheless, although they contained a reference to the possibility of eventual membership, they did not promise full membership, nor did they rule it out: rather they left this crucial question in ambiguity.²⁶⁰ Primarily due to their restrictiveness on the trade and movement of people and the absence of a clear link to accession, the governments of the CEECs were generally disappointed with the agreements.²⁶¹ Some experts also criticised the bilateral character of the agreements, which they argued not only gave the CEECs less leverage in their

²⁵⁸ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.33.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ A. H., Price, The International Politics of East Central Europe. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996, pp.199-200.

²⁶¹ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.35.

negotiations with the EC but also failed to promote the development of cooperation among the CEECs that a more multilateral approach would have promoted.²⁶²

In spite of the aim they targeted at, the EAs could not be satisfactory in meeting the demands of the CEECs for a concrete and a guiding documentation of their road towards full integration through membership, instead, they appeared to be aimed mainly at protecting the EC against the perceived economic threats posed by the CEECs.

3.2.3 The Structured Dialogue

The Structured Dialogue was agreed at the Copenhagen Council 1993 making the discussion of issues ranging from cooperation in the fields of energy, environment, transport, and science and technology to Justice and Home Affairs and Common Foreign and Security Policy.²⁶³ These structured meetings, taking place particularly at ministerial level, although do not have legislative capacity, have a great symbolic and psychological significance and above all, they allow the associated CEECs to become progressively involved in the various EU policies and to get acquainted with them.²⁶⁴

However, since the structured dialogue lacked real decision-making powers and a clear focus, it was sometimes referred to as ‘unstructured monologue’ and were given relatively little attention by Western politicians.²⁶⁵ It is acknowledged to have had some utility in the process of resolving the disputes between Slovenia and Italy.²⁶⁶ In other words, it only served as a multilateral forum that brought together the policy-makers in order to exchange views. Its importance was that it covered the all policy areas of the EU rather than focusing only on economic and financial issues.

²⁶² M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.36.

²⁶³ M. Maresceau, 1997, op.cit., p.10.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ H. Grabbe. K. Hughes, 1998, op.cit., p.38.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

3.3 ESSEN EUROPEAN COUNCIL: TOWARDS AN ENLARGEMENT STRATEGY

The December 1994 Essen European Council took full account of the EU's Eastern enlargement. The question was no longer if the CEECs would become members of the EU but when and how.²⁶⁷ In addition to this, the condition of "good neighbourly relations" was added to the requirements, which the associated countries had to satisfy in order to be eligible for membership.²⁶⁸

With the Essen European Council, we see the emergence of a "pre-accession strategy". For the CEEC, it can be considered the first real concrete step towards enlargement. The core of the Essen strategy in the Essen documents themselves is described as 'to provide a route plan for the associated countries in order to get prepared for integration into the Union's internal market *acquis*', which would be supported by the Union's PHARE programme to develop on an indicative basis into an enhanced medium-term financial instrument.²⁶⁹

According to Mayhew, there were several reasons for the Union to prepare such a proposal, the most important of which may be 'to bring the completely politically charged debate down to the working level'.²⁷⁰ Although the ultimate decision on accession is always a political decision, this decision was unlikely to be taken, if the hard practical work of the detailed preparation for accession to the internal market of the Union had not been accomplished.²⁷¹ For this reason, it was important to accelerate the preparation of accession in both the associated countries and the Union.²⁷²

²⁶⁷ J. Redmond. G.G.Rosenthal, 1998, op.cit., p.158.

²⁶⁸ M. Maresceau. (ed), 1997, op.cit., p.9.

²⁶⁹ A. Mayhew, 1998, op.cit., pp. 164-165.

²⁷⁰ A. Mayhew, 1998, op.cit., p.165.

²⁷¹ L. Friis. A. Murphy, 1999, op.cit., p.230.

²⁷² Ibid.

The Essen strategy then had six main building blocks.²⁷³ Central is the preparation of the associated countries to join the internal market of the Union; around which there is the promotion of economic integration of the associated countries with the Union, cooperation between the associated countries themselves, cooperation in a series of areas incorporating all three pillars of the Maastricht Treaty and the development of assistance to these countries.²⁷⁴ This essentially economic strategy is supported politically by an extensive multilateral political dialogue.²⁷⁵

3.3.1 The Phare Programme

The EU's biggest support for economic and democratic reform in the candidate countries in preparation for EU entry began in 1989, when the Union created the so-called PHARE (Poland and Hungary Aid for Economic Reconstruction) programme initially for the benefit of Poland and Hungary, the first countries to free themselves from communism.²⁷⁶ It was subsequently joined by two other programmes: ISPA (Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession), which supports the development of infrastructure, and SAPARD (Support for Agriculture and Rural Development), which helps the newcomers modernise their agriculture.²⁷⁷ Together these programmes provide €3 billion a year to help adapt to European Union membership.²⁷⁸

The concentration area of PHARE was mainly about the projects helping to ensure that the newcomers have the administrative ability to meet the rights and obligations of membership.²⁷⁹ The idea is, first, to make sure that they have the ability to make good use of the financial assistance the EU provides to increase growth and jobs, and second, to enable them to apply EU rules fully and correctly.²⁸⁰ It also supports investment in infrastructure projects, encourages the creation of a market economy,

²⁷³ A. Mayhew, 1998, *op.cit.*, p.165.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁶ The European Commission Website at the European Union Web site

<http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/publications/booklets/move/41/en.doc>. *op.cit.*, p.8.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

covers agricultural restructuring, regional development and investment in human and intellectual capital.²⁸¹

3.3.2 Pre-Accession Strategy

The enlargement strategy entails two essential elements the first of which is “*a pre-accession strategy*” for each of the 10 CEECs, along with significant pre-accession aid to help those countries to incorporate the Community *acquis* as early as possible before their accession.²⁸² The second element is the “*accession negotiations*”, which would begin with all those countries that meet the political criteria.²⁸³ Accession negotiations, which define the conditions for accession for each candidate country, were initiated in 1998 or 2000 (See Table 3.5), depending on the country.²⁸⁴ They have been the key element of pre-accession strategy, setting out the short term and medium term priorities.

The pre-accession strategy has played a twofold role: on the one hand, it has guided the candidate countries to make their economic and political systems, foreign and security policies converge towards the EU norms, with considerable financial aid, on the other hand, it has provided leverage for the EU to influence political and economic developments in the candidate countries.²⁸⁵

The main theme of the pre-accession strategy is the emphasis that it put on the EU’s commitment to the associated countries with the implicit message that all the countries included in the pre-accession strategy would become members of the EU.²⁸⁶

However, the pre-accession strategy approved at Essen has been criticised for being one-sided, for being developed relatively slowly, for focusing on criteria for the

²⁸¹ H. Arıkan, 2003, op.cit., p.39.

²⁸² http://www.infoeuropa.org/catala/Ampliacio/but_amp/en/01_hu/cont.htm op.cit., p.7.

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ H. Arıkan, 2003, op.cit., p.30.

²⁸⁶ H. Arıkan, 2003, op.cit., p.37.

CEECs rather than on necessary changes on the EU side, and for not setting out a clear timetable or sequence of priorities or milestones.²⁸⁷

Concerning the ‘classical method’, Grabbe criticises the accession process arguing that it is based on the model for previous enlargements, rather than being designed specifically to assist and encourage transition economies, because of which, the structure of incentives and constraints that it imposes on economic and regulatory policies may be inappropriate for countries facing acute development and/or reconstruction problems.²⁸⁸

Nevertheless, various agreements established between the CEECs and the EU represent a strong commitment to enlargement and some detailed processes for moving towards negotiations.²⁸⁹

The four main elements of the pre-accession strategy until the publication of Agenda 2000 were the PHARE Programme, the Europe Agreements, the Single Market White Paper and the Structured Dialogue.

3.3.3 The Single Market White Paper

The Single Market White Paper, which is prepared by the Commission in June 1995, provides both a conceptual framework for the definition and delineation of the internal *acquis* and a detailed list of all the relevant legislation and policies in different sectors.²⁹⁰ For this reason, its aim is alignment with the internal market rather than full accession, which will involve acceptance of the whole *acquis communautaire*.²⁹¹ It identifies the key measures in each sector of the internal market and suggests an arrangement to approximate the legislation of the associate countries with the EU’s and provide for technical assistance. Despite the fact that it

²⁸⁷ H.Grabbe. K.Hughes, 1997, op.cit., p. 4.

²⁸⁸ H. Grabbe, “The Implications of EU Enlargement”, in, S.White. J.Batt. G.P.Lewis. (eds) Developments in Central and Eastern European Politics. -3-. Durham: Duke Un. Press, 2003, p.263.

²⁸⁹ H. Grabbe. K. Hughes, 1998, op.cit., p.29

²⁹⁰ C.Preston, 1997, op.cit., p.202.

²⁹¹ For details see: M. Maresceau. (ed), 1997, op.cit., pp.41-71.

is not a legally binding instrument, the significance of the White Paper is that it created much more coherence and consistency to the pre-accession phase than before.²⁹²

According to Inotai²⁹³, unfortunately, the White Paper follows the EU tradition by making accession dependent on the ability of the associated countries and not on mutual adjustments. There was no indication as to how applicants should evolve from their present status toward full membership, or how the EU would support this process. Moreover, for political reasons, a clear timetable was not offered.

3.4 MADRID EUROPEAN COUNCIL: FROM PRE-ACCESSION TOWARDS AN EASTERN ENLARGEMENT POLICY

The Madrid Summit in December 1995 moved a step closer to enlargement since it agreed to begin the ‘preparatory phase of accession negotiations’ with the CEECs, Malta and Cyprus six months after the end of IGC. It could therefore refer to an enlargement calendar for the first time: accession negotiations could start six months after the satisfactory conclusion of the intergovernmental conference to reform the treaties.²⁹⁴ It requested for Commission to prepare its Opinions on the applications for membership of the associated countries and look at the impact of enlargement on the policies of the Union, to undertake a detailed analyses of the effects of enlargement on EU policies, particularly agriculture and structural policies, and to submit a communication on the future financial framework of the Union as from 31 December 1999.²⁹⁵ It stated later that the Council will make the necessary decisions for launching the accession negotiations. It also added that ‘all membership applications would be treated on their own merits’.²⁹⁶

Madrid European Council highlighted the importance of not only of incorporating the Community *acquis* into national legislation, but also of ensuring that they are

²⁹² A. Inotai, 1998, op.cit., p.161.

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ J.I.Torreblanca, 2003, op.cit., p.39.

²⁹⁵ A.Mayhew, 1998, op.cit., p.173.

²⁹⁶ L.Friis. A. Murphy, 1999, op.cit., p 223.

actually applied through the appropriate administrative and judicial structures; which is usually referred to as the “Madrid Criteria”.²⁹⁷

EU responded positively to the desire of economically backward countries demand for accession mainly because of political and security considerations. In the Madrid European Council, enlargement was defined as, both a ‘political necessity and a historic opportunity’ for Europe, because it would ensure the stability and security of the continent and would thus offer both the applicant states and the current members of the Union new prospects of economic growth and general well-being.²⁹⁸ Madrid European Council marked the beginning of a strategic review of EU’s enlargement strategy, which constituted an important step on the road towards an “adaptive” enlargement.

3.5 AGENDA 2000 and LUXEMBOURG EUROPEAN COUNCIL : TOWARDS ACCESSION

The Amsterdam European Council of June 1997 marked the successful conclusion of the IGC and opened the way for launching the enlargement process and accession negotiations.²⁹⁹

Although the Treaty of Amsterdam made significant advances on social and employment issues, it failed to agree the necessary institutional changes for enlargement and postponed more extensive reforms on such issues to yet another IGC in 2000, it simply allowed the process of enlargement to continue to move into the stage of opening of accession negotiations.³⁰⁰

Therefore, the EU opened the way for accession being aware of the institutional problems that might hinder the further implementation of this process, even

²⁹⁷ http://www.infoeuropa.org/catala/Ampliacio/but_amp/en/01_hu/cont.htm op.cit., p.7.

²⁹⁸ M.Cesar, 1999, op.cit., p.18. Madrid European Council Presidency Conclusions, Madrid, 15-16 December 1995.

²⁹⁹ For detailed information see: Andrew Moravscik. Kalypso Nicolaidis, “Explaining the Treaty of Amsterdam: Interests, Influence, Institutions”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol.37, (1), 1999, pp. 59-85.

³⁰⁰ L. Friis. A. Murphy, 1999, op.cit., p.224.

including post-accession transition. The Commission, in particular, in the appendices to “*Agenda 2000*”, on 16 July 1997, set out its opinion on the applications of the ten CEECs³⁰¹ that “*negotiations with five CEECs* (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovenia and Estonia) (See Table 3.5), with which the European Council decided to convene bilateral intergovernmental conferences in the spring of 1998, *could begin immediately, whilst other candidates* (Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Bulgaria) *would move towards membership with the aid of a strengthened pre-accession strategy*”³⁰² in particular through an analytical examination of the Union’s *acquis* and this preparation would be (then) discussed at ministerial level bilateral meetings with the member states of the Union ”.³⁰³

The 1200-page document of *Agenda 2000* consisted of three main parts: an analyses of existing EU policies, particularly on the CAP and the Structural and Cohesion Funds, and proposals for their reform; a paper on enlargement, which included a review of the Opinions and a proposed strategy for beginning accession negotiations; and a proposed budgetary and financial framework for the EU for the 2000-2006 period.³⁰⁴ The ‘overriding goal of *Agenda 2000*’ was to prepare the EU for enlargement. In its recommendation, the Commission opted for an “accession in waves” strategy that differentiated among the applicants on the basis of an objective assessment of their preparedness for negotiations and membership.³⁰⁵ To help prepare the CEECs for membership, the Commission proposed developing a “*reinforced pre-accession strategy*”, which would consist of additional financial support beyond the PHARE aid, with two new pre-accession aid instruments targeted at the specific objectives of agriculture reform (CAP) and infrastructure development (Structural and Cohesion Funds).³⁰⁶ The centrepiece of enhanced pre-accession strategy would be the bilateral Accession Partnerships, which the European Council instructed the Commission to prepare for each country by March 1998.³⁰⁷ They

³⁰¹ The 10 CEECs: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

³⁰² L. Friis. A. Murphy, 1999, op.cit., p.225.

³⁰³ A.M, El-Agraa, 2001, op.cit., p.548.

³⁰⁴ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., pp.81-82.

³⁰⁵ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p. 82.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p. 92.

were updated for the first time in 1999 and for a second time in January 2002, for Bulgaria and Romania, a third update took place in spring 2003.³⁰⁸ They provide an assessment of the priority areas in which the candidate country needs to make progress in order to prepare for accession and outlines the ways in which the PHARE Programme will support such accession preparations.³⁰⁹

In *Agenda 2000*, while the timetable of the opening of the negotiations was more or less confirmed, there was no real indication of a date for accession. Reading between the lines, it was obvious that, *Agenda 2000* was constructed around an assumption of accession taking place at the beginning of 2003.³¹⁰ It was also not very clear on many areas where tense negotiations were to be expected in the Council of Ministers in Brussels. An example was the lack of clarity on the transition processes in the Structural Funds, as some regions were graduated out to make room for the new Member States.³¹¹

³⁰⁸ Delegation of European Commission to Turkey Web Site
<http://www.deltur.cec.eu.int>

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ A. Mayhew, 1998, op.cit, p.361.

³¹¹ Ibid.

Table 3.5 Applications for membership in the European Union

COUNTRY	Association Agreements Signed on	Accession Application Submitted on	Accession Negotiations opened	Signing of Treaty of Accession	Date of Accession
Bulgaria	01 Mar. 1993	14 Dec.1995	15 Feb.2000	16 April 2003	Target date 2007
Czech Republic	06 Oct.1993	17 Jan.1996	31Mar.1998	16 April 2003	1 May 2004
Estonia	12 June 1995	27 Nov.1995	31Mar.1998	16 April 2003	1 May 2004
Hungary	16 Dec.1991	31 Mar.1994	31 Mar.1998	16 April 2003	1 May 2004
Latvia	12 June1995	27 Oct.1995	15 Feb.2000	16 April 2003	1 May 2004
Lithuania	12 June 1995	12 Dec.1995	15 Feb.2000	16 April 2003	1 May 2004
Poland	16 Dec.1991	5 Apr. 1994	31 Mar.1998	16 April 2003	1 May 2004
Romania	08 Feb.1993	22 June 1995	15 Feb. 2000	16 April 2003	Target date 2007
Slovakia	06 Oct.1993	27 June 1995	15 Feb.2000	16 April 2003	1 May 2004
Slovenia	10 June 1996	10 June 1996	31 Mar.1998	16 April 2003	1 May 2004

Source: 1. Cini, Michelle (ed), European Union Politics. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 213.

2. <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement>

Six months later, at the Luxembourg European Council, in December 1997, the Commission’s selection was essentially endorsed and it was emphasized that “*all the applicant countries were to be included in the enlargement process from the start, although more active negotiations were to be confined to the first five.*”³¹²

The Luxembourg European Council encompasses three sections³¹³, the first of which is the ‘*European Conference*’ bringing together the CEECs aspiring to join the EU to

³¹² B. Steunenberg. "Enlargement and Institutional Reform in the European Union: Separate or Connected Issues?", in, Constitutional Political Economy,12, 351-370. Netherlands: Kluwer Academic, 2001, p.357.

³¹³ European Commission Booklet. European Union Enlargement. A Historic Opportunity. Directorate General for Enlargement. Information and Interinstitutional Relations Unit: Brussels. p. 11.

discuss the issues of common interest such as foreign and security policy, justice and home affairs, regional cooperation and economic matters. The second is the ‘*Accession Process*’, which is an evolutive and inclusive process in the sense that all these countries are destined to join the EU on the basis of the same criteria. It includes a pre-accession strategy, the accession negotiations, a so-called ‘screening’³¹⁴ of European Community legislation, and a review procedure. The third is the ‘*Accession Negotiations*’ process, which determines the conditions under which each candidate country will join the EU.

Several number of EU games were (potentially) affecting the Luxembourg decision. Friis suggests that, in a situation where the EU faced so many question marks, it was simply in the interest of the Commission not to contribute further to overload.³¹⁵ This could be achieved by limiting the actual number of countries in the first negotiation round. However, were the EU open negotiations with all applicants at the same time, the EU could end up with an unmanageable process in terms of finalising its institutional reform before enlargement and hence ending up with a more diluted EU.³¹⁶ In reality, by framing the selection of the candidates as a purely objective exercise, the Commission was not putting all cards on the table. If it had referred to the ‘overload and manageability problem’, it would have pulled the carpet from under the very ‘objective-frame’ which would assure the small enlargement opening which was deemed necessary.³¹⁷

Finally, a compromise was reached on the actual question of ‘how many applicants should be invited to the negotiation table’³¹⁸. It was agreed to launch enlargement as a ‘comprehensive, inclusive and ongoing process’, to take place in stages.³¹⁹ With the suggestion of new Prodi Commission, it was, then, approved in ‘1999 Helsinki

³¹⁴ It is an analytical examination of the Union *acquis* conducted by the Commission with the 10 CEECs, aiming to help the countries concerned to increase their understanding of the rules that underpin the EU and identify more clearly which issues they need to address as they adopt and implement the *acquis communautaire*. See: European Commission. European Union Enlargement. A Historic Opportunity. op.cit., pp.12,13.

³¹⁵ L.Friis, “The End of the Beginning of Eastern Enlargement”, in European Integration Online Papers (EIOP) Vol.2, (7), 1998, pp.8-9. See: <http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/1998-007a.htm>

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ L.Friis. A. Murphy, 1999, op.cit., p.225.

European Council’, that ‘all the applicants’ be considered actively for membership and to be admitted when they are ‘ready’, which de facto means the EU would open ‘accession negotiations’ with all the applicants.³²⁰

In its first regular progress Reports issued on November 4, 1998, the Commission praised the reform efforts made by the second group of countries yet nevertheless restated its view that none was ready to begin accession negotiations.³²¹ However, it singled out Latvia for special praise; it also praised the progress made by Lithuania and Slovakia.

Held about one year after the Luxembourg European Council, on 15-16 June 1998, the “Cardiff European Council” has been a confirmation of the decisions taken at the Luxembourg European Council and the launching of the accession process.³²²

“The Berlin European Council” in March 1999 reached an overall agreement on Agenda 2000, adopted the financial perspective for 2000-2006 and agreed on the creation of two pre-accession instruments (structural and agricultural) and established a financial framework for these instruments and decided to double pre-accession aid from 2000.³²³

The European Commission issued its second set of Reports on progress towards accession by each of the candidate countries as a Composite Paper on 13 October 1999 highlighting the success of enlargement process and its speeded up momentum.³²⁴ The Commission proposed a series of recommendations in this report aiming at keeping up speed without sacrificing quality of the enlargement process. It also emphasized the greater awareness of the EU about the strategic dimensions of the EU enlargement after the crisis in Kosovo.³²⁵ It puts forward the enlargement

³²⁰ A.M, El-Agraa, 2001, op.cit., p.548. For detailed information see also: European Commission. European Union Enlargement. A Historic Opportunity, op. cit., pp. 17,18.

³²¹ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.119.

³²² E.Erkoçak, 2000, op.cit.,p. 120, in, Cardiff European Council Presidency Conclusions, 15-16 June 1998. See: <http://europa.eu.int/council/off/conclu/June98>.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., pp.124-125.

³²⁵ Ibid.

process to achieve and promote continental peace and stability as well as democracy and the rule of law, growth and the foundations of prosperity throughout Europe.

3.6 HELSINKI EUROPEAN COUNCIL

Helsinki European Council of 10-11 December 1999 “expanded the scope for enlargement” and decided to take necessary steps for the CEE enlargement to occur, especially for ensuring stability and prosperity in Europe. With this enlargement it has almost entirely been a matter of looking eastwards.³²⁶

This Council stressed the need for the candidate countries to share the values and objectives of the EU as set out in the Treaties of Rome, Maastricht and Amsterdam. It reiterated that compliance with the political criteria set by the Copenhagen European Council was a precondition for the opening of accession negotiations and it decided on a basis of a recommendation of the European Commission, to open formal accession negotiations with the five further candidate countries of the Eastern Europe; Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovak Republic.³²⁷ Accession negotiations with these countries were formally opened on 15 February 2000 (See table 3.5).

Helsinki added a ‘good-neighbour’ criterion to the list of accession conditions, the underlying idea being not to import conflicts into the Union. Regional cooperation and ‘good-neighbourliness’ thereby became an important prerequisite to membership although enforced with varying strictness.³²⁸

With the first annual reports due in November 1998, after Luxembourg, the second group of countries launched a furious campaign to accelerate their reforms and convince the EU of their preparedness for negotiations. As a result of these efforts, and of the rethinking of enlargement strategy motivated by the Kosovo War, the EU made the historic decision at its Helsinki European Council and put an end to the

³²⁶ A.M, El-Agraa, 2001, op.cit., p.548

³²⁷ European Commission. European Union Enlargement. A Historic Opportunity. op.cit., p. 9.

³²⁸ C.Hillion, 2004, op.cit.,p.17.

Union's division between the Luxembourg group and the remaining countries in the region and adopted a 'regatta' approach to the membership applications: admission would be granted in order of readiness, with the Commission's annual Regular Reports providing an audit of the progress of each aspirant member.³²⁹

When viewed from the Copenhagen till Feira European Council 2000, there is another factor of uniqueness, which toughens the entry requirements for the CEECs. This is the demand of the EU that "the CEECs should effectively implement the EU rules". The Copenhagen European Council made no mention of implementation or of the need of the then applicant countries to have implementing capacity.³³⁰ The first mention came at the Madrid European Council in 1995 in a single sentence that merely stated that the candidates should adjust their administrative structures.³³¹ The Luxembourg European Council of December 1997 stipulated that 'incorporation of the *acquis* into the legislation is necessary, but not in itself sufficient; it will also be necessary to ensure that it is actually applied'.³³² The Helsinki European Council of December 1999, went further by declaring that 'progress in negotiations must go hand in hand with progress in incorporating the *acquis* into legislation and actually implementing and enforcing it'.³³³ The most distinct statement about the importance of implementation and enforcement came at the Feira European Council of June 2000, which stated that 'in addition to finding solutions to negotiating issues, progress in the negotiations depends on incorporation by candidate States of the *acquis* in national legislation and especially on their capacity to effectively implement and enforce it'.³³⁴

³²⁹ W. Wallace, "Enlarging the European Union- An Overview", in, C. Ross. (ed) Perspectives on the Enlargement of the EU. Boston: Brill, 2002, p. 17.

³³⁰ M.Cremona, 2003, op.cit., p.45.

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Ibid.

3.7 NICE EUROPEAN COUNCIL

Held in December 2000, the European Council in Nice eliminated the final obstacles to enlargement and established a clear process for the accession negotiations.³³⁵

The Nice IGC approved the necessary institutional reforms for enlargement and found it likely that new members would be admitted from 2004³³⁶, however, it did not guarantee any continued momentum towards integration and it therefore called for yet another IGC in 2004, initially at least to deal with the issues of the powers of the EU and the Member States.³³⁷ The negotiations at Nice were confused, bad tempered. The member states were reluctant to contemplate a reduced size for the Commission in advance of enlargement and to accept any significant extension of QMV.³³⁸ Although a number of institutional changes were agreed, including the number of Commissioners to be 27, and MEPs 700, the changes did nothing to improve transparency in the Union.³³⁹ Instead, Nice revealed the divisions between Europe's leaders about the kind of Union they desire.³⁴⁰ In particular, it showed the Franco-German couple, always in a marriage of convenience, is increasingly living separately.³⁴¹

The rejection of the Nice Treaty in the Irish referendum of June 7, 2001 was seen by many as creating serious delays to the whole process of enlargement.³⁴² The reasons for the rejection included wariness of the institutional arrangements under Nice, as well as usual Irish concerns over its military neutrality.³⁴³ The Heads of State or Government were agreed that Nice ratification process would continue so that the Union is in a position to welcome new Member States from the end of 2002. While

³³⁵ http://www.infoeuropa.org/catala/Ampliacio/but_amp/en/01_hu/cont.htm op.cit., p.7.

³³⁶ H.Ingham. M. Ingham, 2002, op.cit., p.15.

³³⁷ C.Hillion, 2004, op.cit., p.36.

³³⁸ F.Cameron, 2004, op.cit., p.7.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ H.Grabbe "What Comes After Nice", London: Centre for European Reform, 2000, p.1. (See: <http://www.cer.org.uk>)

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² C.Hillion, 2004, op.cit., p.37.

³⁴³ Ibid.

supporting their conclusions, they echoed their willingness to help the Irish Government find a way forward.

Just one year after Nice, ‘Göteborg European Council’, held in December 2001, declared that negotiations with the countries that are best prepared to become members would conclude before the end of 2002, enabling these countries to participate in the European Parliament elections in 2004 as members.³⁴⁴ The overall process of enlargement was qualified by the Council at Laeken as “*irreversible*”.³⁴⁵ Not only do the decisions taken in Göteborg by the Heads of the State and Government of the member states confirm that the enlargement would take place, but they also indicate that it would take place shortly.³⁴⁶

Like the Helsinki, the “Laeken European Council” in December 2001, decided that ‘up to ten’ of the candidate states might be ready to conclude negotiations by the end of 2002 so as to be able to accede by 2004.³⁴⁷ The agenda set at Laeken addressed long-standing institutional problems for the Convention on the Future of Europe to consider, such as a better division and definition of competence in the EU; simplification of the Union’s instruments; more democracy, transparency and efficiency in the EU; and the aim of a Constitution for European citizens’.³⁴⁸ However, it did not pay sufficient attention to the qualitative changes that enlargement would bring.

Valéry Giscard d’Estaing presented a “*draft constitutional treaty*” to the European Council at its meeting in Thessalonica on 19-20 June 2003.³⁴⁹ The Presidency conclusions noted that this marked the completion of the Convention’s tasks, as set out at Laeken, although the definitive version of the draft treaty was eventually

³⁴⁴ H.Ingham. M. Ingham, 2002, op.cit., p.15.

³⁴⁵ “Explaining Enlargement”. A Progress Report on the Commission Strategy for Enlargement , March 2002.

³⁴⁶ http://www.infoeuropa.org/catala/Ampliacio/but_amp/en/01_hu/cont.htm op.cit., p.7.

³⁴⁷ M.Cremona, 2003, op.cit., p.6.

³⁴⁸ H.Grabbe, “Preparing the EU for 2004” London: Center for European Reform, 2001, pp.1-2. (See: <http://www.cer.org.uk>)

³⁴⁹ D. Allen “The Convention and the Draft Constitutional Treaty”, in, F.Cameron, 2004, op.cit., pp.25-27.

completed only on 15 July.³⁵⁰ The draft constitution would create a Union with a single legal personality founded upon a single treaty. It contains some major changes to the EU's institutional and procedural arrangements and some more modest changes to the EU's competences. Giscard sees the draft treaty as successfully responding to two major requests from the European Council: for the European system to be clarified and simplified; for the creation of new tools to develop further all aspects of the Union which he took to mean the traditional Community policy areas plus CFSP and JHA.³⁵¹

3.8 COPENHAGEN EUROPEAN COUNCIL

Held on 12-13 December 2002, the Copenhagen European Council authorised that, the eight CEECs had completed their negotiations and were ready to join.³⁵² Of the five Central European countries that started negotiations in February 2000, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia caught up with the front-runners (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Slovenia) relatively quickly, having opened most of the chapters in negotiations and made rapid progress in preparations. However, two other candidate countries, Bulgaria and Romania, were unable to conclude their negotiations on time, and their membership has been rescheduled for 2007.³⁵³ As it had proposed on 9 October in its Strategy Paper and as requested by the European Council in Brussels on 24-25 October, the European Commission presented roadmaps for Bulgaria and Romania to support the efforts of these two candidate countries to achieve their objective of joining the European Union in 2007.³⁵⁴ The purpose of the roadmaps is to indicate the main steps that they need to take to be ready for membership. They identify in detail the tasks ahead, with a particular emphasis on administrative and judicial capacity necessary to implement the *acquis* and on economic reform.³⁵⁵ To support these efforts, the Commission has also proposed a considerable progressive increase in the European Union's financial assistance.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² The European Union web site, http://europe.int/pol/enlarg/overview_en.htm

³⁵³ H. Grabbe, 2003, *op.cit.*, p.256.

³⁵⁴ The European Commission Website at the European Union Web site <http://europa.eu.int>

³⁵⁵ Ibid.

This Council underlined that enlargement presents an important opportunity to take forward relations with neighbouring countries based on shared political and economic values.³⁵⁶ It expressed the need to strengthen after enlargement relations with Russia and the wish to enhance relations with Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus and Southern Mediterranean countries based on long-term approach promoting political and economic reforms, sustainable developments and trade³⁵⁷.

To sum up, the process of the fifth enlargement of the EU started at the Luxembourg European Council and developed at a high speed in order to include the CEECs after having had a separation lasting more than four decades. The member states of the European Union and the candidates for membership agreed in Copenhagen on 13 December 2002 for the admission of ten new member states to the Union. The Accession Treaty was signed in Athens on April 16th 2003³⁵⁸, and eventually this effort on both sides resulted in the eight countries of Central and Eastern Europe officially joining the European Union, on May 1, 2004. Bulgaria and Romania, on the other hand, will be joining the EU in 2007.

When it comes to the “uniqueness” dimension of the Eastern enlargement, comparisons with the previous enlargements indicate that, first of all, it shows differences in terms of the opportunities it presents to the EU, the member states and the candidate countries, since the enlargement means for all “a new historic and moral dimension”, “political stability”, “economic prosperity”, “a more important position in the world”, “cultural diversity”. Other than the opportunities, it presents certain differences as well. One of the differences concerns the challenges it presents to the EU and the member states; such as the deepening and widening issues, and the enhanced European integration related to security and monetary issues. The second difference is the different pre-accession strategies adopted by the

³⁵⁶ A. De Castro Carpeño, “Wider Europe- New Neighbourhood: A new Framework for Relations Between the Enlarged European Union and its Eastern Neighbours”, in, The New European Architecture in the 21st Century: Promoting Regional Cooperation in the Wider Black-Sea Area: The BSEC Case: Milos Island, International Centre for Black Sea Studies, 3-7 Sep., 2003, p.3.

³⁵⁷ A. De Castro Carpeño, 2003, op.cit., p.3.

³⁵⁸ The European Commission Website at the European Union Web site http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/negotiations/accession_process.htm

EU to be applied to the CEECs before becoming members of the EU. The third difference concerns the EU's relations with "wider Europe", making enlargement a continuing process towards West Balkans and re-establishing relations with all and its Eastern neighbours.

To make an analyses about the principles of the classical method and their implementation in the CEECs , it can be stated that the classical method imposes limits on the degree of diversity that is acceptable to present EU members. Since it has been based on the model for previous enlargements, rather than being designed specifically to assist and encourage transition economies, the structure of incentives and constraints that it imposes on economic and regulatory policies have been inappropriate for countries facing acute development or reconstruction problems.

Retaining the core of the classical method while responding to new levels of diversity has been a challenging experience for both the EU and for the newly acceded member states. In relation to the first principle of "administering the *acquis*", the candidate countries agreed to adopt the entire *acquis* with only a few transitional phase-ins, such as those pertaining to the sale of land and the movement of persons. Regarding the second principle, in granting a transition period to the accession countries, sometimes-longer time frame is given during which compliance with EU legislative obligations are achieved. Concerning the third principle , most of the new member states and accession candidates have had to develop institutions, norms and policies in a very short period and without the benefit of a long prior accumulation of appropriate institutions, norms and policies. As a result they confronted not only the complex task of implementing the *acquis* but the even more difficult task of creating, without the normal long period enjoyed by earlier members, new regulatory institutions and policies in a variety of economic areas. The fourth principle concerning the institutional integration proved to be the most challenging of all for the existing members, mainly because incrementalism resulted in an ever increasing gap between deepening and widening of the EU. The EU has continuously widened, but has not deepened itself sufficiently. Another example to the 'incremental adaptation' principle is the limited Amsterdam reforms on the

institutional front. The fifth principle concerning the EU's preference to negotiate with the states which already have close relationships with each other has been severely tested since the EU extended its borders towards the East by including the CEECs. With regards to the sixth principle, existing member states use enlargement to pursue their own interests, we have seen that all the CEECs have brought their problems with them in economic, political and social terms while entering the EU.

4. IMPLICATIONS OF THE EASTERN ENLARGEMENT

Most analysts expect that the process of further enlargement would extend beyond the current decade; indeed, it might well continue until at least 2015. It is therefore not particularly easy to talk of the situation ‘after enlargement’, since there will be a series of events that will stretch over to some 20 years.

As stated in the Introduction, enlarging the EU eastwards is a long and complex process bringing with it major political, economic and security implications. Much more diversity in economic circumstances and political goals as well as the increase in numbers are only some of the issues that the enlarged EU will have to cope with. It will take a number of years for these changes to be realised since the joining date of the applicants are not the same; however, the cumulative effect will be a fundamental change in the EU’s functioning, and possibly in its capacities as well.

The Eastern enlargement of the EU will have certain “implications for its neighbours”, for itself and for the acceding countries as well. They can be grouped in three categories, as “security implications”, “political implications” and “economic implications”. After 2004, *“the impact of the uniqueness of the Eastern enlargement”* continued it has brought forth the issue of further deepening of the EU. There is the question whether the EU will choose to deepen with the further East and Mediterranean neighbours or rather than incorporating them into the EU, it will choose only to build peaceful relations with them through ENP (European Neighbourhood Policy). The second alternative seems to be more probable when the EU’s strong interest in having stable and prosperous neighbours is thought of. Pertaining to this, the EU’s relationship with Russia and its ENP are mentioned in the following paragraphs, as *“a factor of uniqueness”*, which has started to be talked along with the CEE enlargement.

4.1 SECURITY IMPLICATIONS OF THE EASTERN ENLARGEMENT

To talk about the “security implications” of Eastern enlargement of the EU on its neighbours, one can start with Russia. Many Central and Eastern Europeans still have first-hand memories of political and cultural oppression, economic dependence and the invasion of several countries by Soviet tanks.³⁵⁹ In particular, the three Baltic States harbour instinctive suspicions about Russian motivations in forging a closer relationship with the EU. The EU made improvements in minority rights a key part of the accession criteria, for those countries and negotiated transit arrangements with Russia and special visa regime for the people living in the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad, sandwiched between Poland, Lithuania and the Baltic Sea.³⁶⁰ Grabbe points out that, on the one hand, remaining suspicions and these animosities among the new member states may take the EU’s relationship with Russia more complicated, since the new member states want the EU to take a tougher and more united line on Russia, making more demands rather than offering favours as Italy and France tend to do.³⁶¹ On the other hand, the new members have a clear interest in the EU getting on well with its largest neighbours, and their familiarity with the Russians may help the EU in creating more effective external policies towards its east.

According to Grabbe, ‘new foreign and security policy capacity’ would have concrete effects for Russia in causing greater isolation for its border regions and some negative unintended consequences concerning its border and visa policies in the “Schengen” area.³⁶² Europe has to establish a close relationship with Russia and Ukraine and for strategic reasons the EU should provide these countries with large aid through free trade agreements, openness to immigration and so on since the EU may include these countries through some new enlargements in the future.³⁶³

³⁵⁹ H.Grabbe, 2004, op.cit.,p.67.

³⁶⁰ H.Grabbe, 2004, op.cit.,p.68.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² Ibid.

³⁶³ “The Future of the European Union”, January 6, 2005, p.7, in, <http://www.freeworldacademy.com/globalleader/agendacont.htm>

Similar to Grabbe's explanation, Whitman also thinks that enlargement complicates the relationship with Russia, which is not yet reconciled to the Union's arrival on its borders.³⁶⁴ According to Stützele, with a view to enhancing security, and stability in Europe, maintaining an intensive dialogue with Russia and explaining to it the cooperative character of alliance are of particular significance.³⁶⁵ Russia should recognise and accept that in order to build stable foreign relations, a stable European neighbourhood is necessary.³⁶⁶

When looked at the issue from Moscow, enlargement is considered as the extension of the EU as a natural process of European integration, driven by the genuine and understandable economic, social and political interests of the European nations and transitional entities.³⁶⁷ However, Russia is also aware that especially with the Easter enlargement, European integration, covering more and more countries of the former Soviet empire, has become a powerful centre of gravity deeply affecting Russian national interest and foreign policy.³⁶⁸ In 10 years, with another dozen states joining the EU, as much as 60 percent of Russian foreign trade may be connected to the EU. The extension of the EU to the nations neighbouring Russia may create many economic, social and political problems for Moscow.³⁶⁹

Harris states that, developing a policy for EU relations with Russia should be more straightforward because the world's largest country does not see itself as a future EU member.³⁷⁰ From the perspective of the EU, Russia is too large and culturally and politically distinctive to be ever part of the EU. The EU differentiated between the CEECs and Russia and offered Russia separate aid programme TACIS (Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States), rather than EAs and the prospect of future membership.³⁷¹ The EU developed "Common Strategies" toward Russia, which was adopted by the European Council at June 1999 Cologne Summit.

³⁶⁴ R. Whitman, "European Union Enlargement", in, The World Today, Vol 60, (4), April 2004, p.11.

³⁶⁵ W. Stützele, 2001, op.cit., p.33.

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ Alexei G.Arbatov, "The Russian View of the Enlargement of the EU and NATO", in , "The New Security Dimensions- Europe After the NATO and EU Enlargements", 2001, p.37.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

³⁷⁰ G.Harris "The Wider Europe", in, F.Cameron, 2000, op.cit., p.111.

³⁷¹ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p. 234.

They focused on the development of long-term bilateral relationships across a range of foreign and economic policy areas and sought to promote the building of democratic institutions and legal structures.³⁷² A report presented in 2002 in Moscow by the Committee for ‘Russia in a United Europe’ proposed an agreement on establishing a special association between the Russian Federation and the EU.³⁷³ Without implying any Russian aspiration to join the EU, it would enable the partners to work together for sustainable economic development and cooperation in security matters whilst promoting the further development of democracy in Russia. According to the Summit taking place under the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Russia on 10 May 2005 in Moscow, the aim was to adopt a package of four road maps to create four common EU-Russia spaces in the fields of the economy, freedom, security and justice, external security, research and education (including cultural aspects).³⁷⁴

To sum up, a Europe without Russia cannot be peaceful, undivided and democratic. If Russia remains on the outside, it will be a destabilising presence for the Baltic countries, for Ukraine and the Caucasus and for Western interest in Central and South-Eastern Europe.³⁷⁵ Lippert claims that the interdependence between the EU and Russia will be highlighted and accelerated with the accession of the 10 countries from the CEE.³⁷⁶ In line with the qualities of a model and magnet, which Hill describes as the “regional pacifier”, the EU will be the most powerful actor and provider for a pan-European economic and social area.³⁷⁷

As mentioned before in Chapter 3, the CEE enlargement is “*unique*” in terms of “boundaries and identities” of Europe as well. Concerning the borders of Europe, Eastward enlargement, according to Sjurson, will contribute to drawing up new

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ G.Harris “The Wider Europe”, in, F.Cameron, 2000, op.cit., p.111

³⁷⁴ The European Union Web site www.europa.eu.int/externalrelations

³⁷⁵ I.H.Daalder, J.M.Golgeier, “Putting Europe First”, in, *Survival*, Vol.43, (1), Spring 2001, pp.71-91, See: p.83.

³⁷⁶ Barbara Lippert “Enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe as a Foreign and Security Policy”, in, Balfour, Rosa. Greco, Ettore (eds) *The International Role of the European Union*. Rome: Italian Military Centre for Strategic Studies, 2003, p.193.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

institutional, political and economic boundaries in Europe.³⁷⁸ The EU will find itself in the front line of the on-going process of redefining the structures of the international system after the end of the cold war.³⁷⁹ The idea that enlargement is simply a matter of moving the borders of the West further East will not necessarily be helpful.³⁸⁰ There is a risk that the new borders of the EU will be more fragile than they have previously been. There may also be disappointment among those that would remain outside. Dealing with this issue will be one of the principle tasks of the EU's external policies.³⁸¹

In order to deal with the border issue, on 15 April and 30 September 2002, the Council, together with 10 European states, came together and reflected their views on the concept of "Wider Europe". A more operational step came when the Council adopted conclusions on the "New Neighbours Initiative" on 19 November 2002 regarding the Eastern European neighbours. It was established due to the need for the EU to formulate an ambitious long-term and integrated approach towards all the countries.³⁸² The goal is to help ensure greater stability and prosperity at and beyond the new borders of the Union, with the objective of promoting democratic and economic reforms, sustainable development and trade.³⁸³ The initiative would be based on a differentiated approach considering each country's distinct political and economic situation, potential and aims. Besides this, the development of relations with the countries concerned would depend on their implementation of further reforms and their willingness to respect international commitments and common values of democracy, the rule of law and human rights.³⁸⁴

The Commission adopted the "Communication on Wider Europe-Neighbourhood: a new framework for relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours" on 11 March 2003.³⁸⁵ In its Communication, the Commission followed the wider approach

³⁷⁸ K.Henderson, 1999, op.cit., p.46.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ Ibid.

³⁸² A. De Castro Carpeno, 2003, op.cit., p.2.

³⁸³ Ibid.

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ A. De Castro Carpeno, 2003, op.cit., p.8.

of the Copenhagen European Council and considered means to enhance relations with Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, and the southern Mediterranean countries. It offered what the EU calls “progressivity”: those countries that are making good progress in reforms, particularly on the economic side, would be offered improved EU market access and deeper cooperation with the EU in areas ranging from investment promotion to crisis prevention.³⁸⁶

The new members are struggling to prepare their borders for the requirements of the Schengen regime, even though they cannot expect to join the Schengen area until 2006 at the earliest. In its ‘Wider Europe’ proposal, the Commission opens up the prospect of visa-travel between the EU and neighbouring countries but only in the long term.³⁸⁷ In the meantime, the EU needs to speed up existing visa processes. It could start up by moving to a system of appointments for visa interviews, granting more multiple-entry visas, reducing the price of a Schengen visa, issuing visas at the border and finding innovative solutions for local cross-border traffic.³⁸⁸

This initiative considers the relations with the Eastern European countries (Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus) and the Southern Mediterranean Countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria and Tunisia).³⁸⁹ In principle, the Eastern European countries and the Southern Mediterranean countries are on an equal basis regarding the implementation of this initiative. However, the Southern Mediterranean countries already have the Barcelona Process with a potential for development and therefore the initiative contribution will be less innovative.³⁹⁰ On the contrary, the Eastern European countries do not have structured framework for relations and the initiative could play a fundamental role with its full potential to enhance the current relations. However, the Eastern ENP partners, notably Ukraine and Moldova, have tended to interpret the ENP as an attempt by the EU member states to stop any further eastward

³⁸⁶ J.Batt, “The EU’s New Borderland” London: Centre for European Reform: Working Paper Oct. 2003, p.30. (See also pp.31-35).

³⁸⁷ J.Batt, 2003, op.cit., p.50.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ A. De Castro Carpeno, 2003, op.cit., p.8.

³⁹⁰ A. De Castro Carpeno, 2003, op.cit., p.4.

enlargement.³⁹¹ Indeed, they may not have been mistaken by this view, since the aim of the EU seems to develop a zone of prosperity and a friendly neighbourhood with whom it enjoys close, peaceful and co-operative relations. The EU does not seem to consider these states to have the prospect of eventual membership; rather, it offers the ENP to these states as an alternative to EU membership.

The EU, for Grabbe, has not yet developed a policy for dealing with the gaps between the main candidates for EU membership and the left-outs, nor does it yet have a strategy for integrating the wider Europe into its zone of stability and prosperity.³⁹² However, the EU is feeling increasingly responsible for the countries on its new borders. The Union will have to consider its role as a development agency after enlargement, as the countries on its periphery are likely to experience widening gaps with their neighbours.³⁹³ The EU will have to consider additional measures to help countries that cannot join for many years and it will have to start with Bulgaria and Romania, as these countries are neither included fully in the group of countries moving rapidly towards accession, nor in EU policies for the Balkans.³⁹⁴ In the longer term, a more comprehensive development policy will be needed if the EU is to be effective in stabilizing the region surrounding its enlarged borders.³⁹⁵

To talk about the “*security implications*” of Eastern enlargement of the EU other than its effects concerning Russia, Grabbe and Hughes argue that, it will increase divergences between member states’ foreign policy interests, making it even more difficult for them to form coherent joint policies and these problems could drive the EU further towards introducing ‘flexibility’ into CFSP get around them.³⁹⁶

However, the danger is that flexibility could weaken the formation of a common policy and reduce the global weight of EU external positions because these would

³⁹¹ “The Challenges of the European Neighbourhood Policy”, Report of the Conference, by Istituto Affari Internazionali, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome, 26-27 Nov.2004, p.4. See: <http://www.cer.org.uk>

³⁹² H.Grabbe, 2003, op.cit., pp. 264-65.

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁶ H.Grabbe. K.Hughes, 1998, op. cit., p.116.

not be shared by all member states.³⁹⁷ Flexibility will be necessary to allow an enlarged EU to function, and it has the potential to work; but the question remains whether it will cause fragmentation of positions and make the EU look ineffective as an external actor.³⁹⁸

In parallel to the above paragraph, Sjursen claims that, the Eastern enlargement presents the CFSP with a number of challenges since ‘developing a cohesive foreign policy’ will be far more difficult with ten extra members.³⁹⁹ Because of their geographic location and different historical experiences, the new member states in CEE will bring new foreign policy perspectives and interests into the EU.⁴⁰⁰ Together with these also come new neighbours and different relations with ‘third states’. It not only raises questions about the CFSP’s ability to function effectively but also, by redefining the EU’s borders, it promises to introduce new issues and new tasks into the scope of the CFSP.⁴⁰¹

The new neighbours will be crucial in delivering internal and border security and ensuring that ‘immigration’ and ‘asylum’ issues do not dominate members’ domestic political agendas.⁴⁰² According to what José Manuel Barroso stated in his Lisbon talk, new security challenges, particularly ‘terrorism’ and ‘cross border crime’, make the construction of an area of freedom, security and justice all the more important.⁴⁰³ At this point, he points out the Commission’s crucial role in helping to create the conditions needed for the removal of internal borders, and the strengthening of the Union external borders through a set of policies on immigration, asylum and the integration of immigrants, which reflect core European values.⁴⁰⁴

The European Commission noted that, ‘through the process of enlargement, CFSP, its development cooperation and its external assistance programmes, the EU now

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

³⁹⁹ K.Henderson, 1999, op.cit., p.43.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ Helen Sjursen “Enlargement and the Common Foreign and Security Policy: transforming the EU’s external identity?”, in, K.Henderson (ed), *Back to Europe. CEE and EU*, London: UCL, 1999, p.37.

⁴⁰² R.Whitman, “European Union Enlargement”, in, *The World Today*, Vol 60 Number 4, April 2004, p.11.

⁴⁰³ José Manuel Barroso, “Building Europe’s Future”, Lisbon, 11 October 2004, p.4.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

seeks to project stability also beyond its borders'.⁴⁰⁵ According to Vachudova, the success of the EU's enlargement project will determine the success of the EU's CFSP.⁴⁰⁶ Cremona points out that, enlargement and in particular, the role of the EU in shaping the political evolution of Europe will continue as a centrally important issue for the CFSP for at least the next decade and probably beyond.⁴⁰⁷ Although CFSP has not been controversial in the accession of the CEECs, enlargement may still be seen as a challenge for the maturing CFSP, both in terms of its institutional capacity and in terms of its policy development.⁴⁰⁸ On the contrary, Mr. Nahtigal from Slovenia argued in the Plenary on 11 July 2002 that, the problem of efficiency of the CFSP has nothing to do with the CEE enlargement of the EU.⁴⁰⁹ As also pointed out by Jacques Delors, European foreign policy will be no more difficult with 27 members than it is with the 15 members and therefore it is not the enlargement that will cause problems.

Security concerns, stated by Sjursen, are mentioned as an important factor in motivating these states to join the EU in terms of achieving sufficient security guarantee vis-a-vis Russia. However, Sjursen also adds that there will be no particular desire on the part of the CEECs to strengthen European security and defence policy since they see the United States and the North Atlantic Organisation (NATO) as the most useful guarantors of security in Europe.⁴¹⁰ Price and Landau argue that although the fragmentary nature of the CFSP process to date ensures that the CEECs would not have to accept a substantial or clearly defined European common foreign policy, their inclusion might hinder further progress along these lines.⁴¹¹ If so, NATO will remain the primary focus for security policy concerns for the CEECs.⁴¹² The EU is still at the core of the economic and political reforms the

⁴⁰⁵ European Commission, "Communication from the Commission on Conflict Prevention", 11 May 2001, COM (2001) 211 final, at 5, in, Milada .A. Vachudova, 2003, op.cit., p.156.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ M. Cremona, "Enlargement and External Policy", in, M. Cremona, 2003, op.cit., p.198.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ F. Cameron. A. Primatarova, "Enlargement, CFSP and the Convention: The Role of the Accession States", in, Epin Working Paper No.5/June 2003, p.1. Available from: <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UNTC/UNPAN010517.pdf> and also from <http://www.ceps.be>

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹¹ V.C. Price, A. Landau, R.G. Whitman, 1999, op.cit., p.22.

⁴¹² Ibid.

CEECs need for their process of modernisation, but NATO is a key element for their military security.⁴¹³ Although during the 1960's and 70's, the EC attempted to distance itself from the United States, the latter constitutes to this day the guarantee for the military security of the European continent.⁴¹⁴

Consequently, enlargement to the CEE certainly promises to influence the content of the EU's external policies and raise important challenges in terms of how to manage relations with new neighbours, but it does not need to be seen as a threat to the continued functioning of the CFSP.⁴¹⁵ Indeed, the new members themselves have an interest in keeping the CFSP going.⁴¹⁶ CFSP should be seen as a post-accession issue and for this reason, it is a learning process, therefore, the CEECs will need time to Europeanise their national foreign policies with CFSP *acquis*.

4.2 ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE EASTERN ENLARGEMENT

Apart from the security implications of the Eastern enlargement, “*the economic implications*” of enlargement will be significant as well as a “bigger and more integrated market” lifting up economic growth for new and current members alike.⁴¹⁷ The newcomers stand to benefit from investments from the firms based in Western Europe and from access to EU funding for their regional and social development.⁴¹⁸ As Granaris also argues, the fifth enlargement of the EU is expected to lead to technological dissemination and economic growth, as well as a border-free and peaceful Europe, which will also reduce the gap between the poor and the rich countries of Europe and neutralise ethnic and other conflicts.⁴¹⁹ The size of the common market will increase from 370 million to roughly 470 million people; many of the barriers to trade and investment will disappear. Exchange of knowledge technology and new ideas will become easier; foreign competition will improve

⁴¹³ Ibid

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

⁴¹⁵ K.Henderson, 1999, op.cit., p.49.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

⁴¹⁷ The European Union Web site. See: http://www.europe.int/pol/enlarg/overview_en.htm, op.cit., p.1.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid.

⁴¹⁹ Nicholas V. Granaris , 1996, op.cit, p.295.

business transparency and corporate accountability; access to the common market will improve the attractiveness of the CEECs as a destination for foreign investment.

The radical economic and political reforms in Eastern Europe, including the Balkans and the former Soviet Union, will offer future opportunities for EU trade and investment and an improvement of all the economies involved.⁴²⁰ It seems that in an enlarged EU, trade creation will occur more than trade diversion, productivity will increase and socioeconomic inequalities will be reduced.⁴²¹ The EU will have a greater share of world trade, especially when it is forging closer links with its western and southern neighbours.⁴²² Enlargement will also make the EU an even bigger player in the World Trade Organisation and other trade related international bodies. The Union and its trading partners will need to take account of this new status.⁴²³

Apart from the economic gains, there will also be some negative economic consequences of the CEE enlargement. According to a research, only to a lesser degree, enlargement will positively affect the EU's growth, considering the economies of the candidate countries, which represent approximately 5% of that of the EU as a whole.⁴²⁴ Regarding the more optimistic growth perspectives for candidate countries, the EU's GDP would rise an accumulated yearly average of 0.7% after enlargement, which in growth would be distributed unequally among the different EU member states, Germany and Austria being the states that would most benefit.⁴²⁵ Therefore, the economic impact of enlargement is likely to be 'smaller', given the small size of the CEE economies.

Another negative consequence that Tang states is that, enlargement will transform the EU into an institution that is mainly concerned with 'overcoming gaps in

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

⁴²¹ Ibid.

⁴²² Directorate-General for Press and Communication, November 2003.

<http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/publications/booklets/move/41/en.doc>, op.cit., p. 14.

⁴²³ Ibid.

⁴²⁴ http://www.infoeuropa.org/catala/Ampliacio/but_amp/en/01_hu/cont.htm, op.cit., p.5.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

socioeconomic development'.⁴²⁶ Although the EU gains economic weight and increases its population by nearly a third, its average level of income will be reduced by much more than in all previous enlargements.⁴²⁷ In the Agenda 2000, the Commission has stressed that an enlargement by 10 CEECs will reduce the EU average GDP per capita by 16 percentage points.⁴²⁸ The low level of GDP poses a challenge to the system of cohesion policy as well, which has not been designed to cope with such large income gaps.⁴²⁹

When it comes to “unemployment”, in the short term, according to Khader, there is every reason to expect that it will worsen because of industrial restructuring and the expected delays in dynamising the private sector as generator of new unemployment, the levels of which are likely to remain above the Community average for the next ten years.⁴³⁰ However, related to the issue of unemployment, José Manuel Barroso, referring to the mid-term review of the Lisbon strategy, claims that, it will add fresh momentum to the process of reform that will lead to stronger competitiveness and ‘create employment’, because of which the mid-term review of the Lisbon is one of the first tasks on the Commission’s “to do” list.⁴³¹

The Eastern enlargement will also have considerable costs to ‘optimal economic growth’ on the part of the CEECs. According to the *EU Observer*, an English – language daily newspaper in Brussels: “Due to the large expenses involved, the new members will have to ask public or private financial institutions for money. Governments may also have to adopt economic measures, such as increasing taxes, to finance EU law implementation”.⁴³² Compliance with the EU regulations will also significantly affect the performance of the economies. The EU Commission expects

⁴²⁶ H. Tang, Winners and Losers of European Union Integration. Policy Issues for Central and Eastern Europe, Washington: The World Bank, 2000, pp.266-68.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

⁴³⁰ Khader, Bichara. 'Eastern Enlargement and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: A Win-Win Game?'. Paper 20: Feb, 2003. See: http://www.euromesco.net/euromesco/publi_artigo.asp

⁴³¹ José Manuel Barroso, “Building Europe’s Future”, Lisbon, 11 October 2004, op.cit., p.1

⁴³² M.L.Tupy, 2003, op.cit., p.2.

that the EU environmental legislation alone will cost between 2 and 3 percent of the CEECs annual GDP during the transition period of five to seven years.⁴³³

British commentator John O'Sullivan describes the 'disappointing nature of the accession' in the following way⁴³⁴: Under the EU accession package, the 10 new members are supposed to receive the headline figure of \$41 billion in adjustment subsidies. However, with the deduction of various dues and unforeseen items, the actual amount they will get is a mere \$10.6 billion over 2003-06. Their poor but rising economies will have to absorb job-killing regulations designed for much richer societies. All in all, the net economic benefits to the new members may be 'small to non-existent'.

'Banning the labour immigration' will compromise one of the EU's most fundamental principles, freedom of movement of labour, and thus condemn the CEECs to a second-class membership status for the near future. On a practical level, too, the CEECs will be prevented from softening the economic impact of EU accession by the export of a comparative labour force.⁴³⁵ Nevertheless, the Commission's study estimates that in the year 2009, the net accumulated flow of migrants will represent less than 1% of the working-age population within the EU-15.⁴³⁶

Rollo examines the possible future problems⁴³⁷ both from the EU's perspective and from the CEEC-10. On the EU side, the potential tax payer costs of unreformed 'CAP' and 'structural funds' generate one set of problems. The other issue, which may lead to significant problems, at least at a political level if not at an economic level, is 'migration', as stated above as well. On the side of the CEEC-10, the levels of financial transfers that might be generated by unreformed policies could cause macro-economic absorption problems. Secondly, adapting to EU competition and state aids policies might cause difficulties with domestic pressure groups which

⁴³³ Ibid.

⁴³⁴ M.L.Tupy, 2003, op.cit., p.3.

⁴³⁵ Ibid.

⁴³⁶ http://www.infoeuropa.org/catala/Ampliacio/but_amp/en/01_hu/cont.htm, op.cit., p.5.

⁴³⁷ M. Maresceau, 1997, op.cit., pp. 261-63.

might arise at a sectoral level. Thirdly, competitiveness of the CEEC-10 industries might be threatened by immediate and full application of environmental regulation and social protocol requirements, which are not sustainable at current levels of productivity and income.

Tupy discusses the ‘future costs of accession for the CEECs’ under three headings, some of which has been mentioned shortly in the above paragraph. They are; “common employment and social policy”, “environment” and “agriculture”.⁴³⁸ Overregulation of conditions of employment will diminish the comparative advantage that CEE workers enjoy over their more highly paid western counterparts.⁴³⁹ Western standards of food production will push many CEE producers out of business. That negative effect of accession will be further worsened by the unfair nature of EU agricultural subsidies.⁴⁴⁰ In 2006, an interesting opportunity will emerge when the Union’s budget for the next seven years will be discussed.⁴⁴¹ At that point, the CEECs should push to abolish the CAP, however, failing that, the CEECs should attempt to reform it.⁴⁴² With regard to the environment, the EU insists on standards wholly inappropriate to the current stage of CEE economic development.⁴⁴³ By doing so, the EU will contribute to the prolongation of economic problems in CEE. Together, those three chapters pose the most significant costs to the CEECs. Tupy notes that, the CEECs should opt for high-growth economic policies instead of attempting to maintain the current level of spending, which they cannot afford.⁴⁴⁴

By referring to the Constitution of the EU, Tupy points out that the CEECs should not blindly follow the lead of their Western counterparts since the Constitution will be a legally binding and an enforceable document, and all entitlements in it will have to be paid for.⁴⁴⁵ Thus, as they begin to participate in all formal EU Council

⁴³⁸ M.L.Tupy, 2003, op.cit., p.7.

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁴¹ M.L.Tupy, 2003, op.cit., p.17.

⁴⁴² Ibid.

⁴⁴³ M.L.Tupy, 2003, op.cit., p.7.

⁴⁴⁴ M.L.Tupy, 2003, op.cit., p.13.

⁴⁴⁵ M.L.Tupy, 2003, op.cit., p.16.

meetings, commitment, and working groups, the CEECs should focus on minimizing constitutional provisions that enshrine costly entitlements.⁴⁴⁶

It has been argued that, as long as the CEECs retain some autonomy and use it to adopt market-friendly reforms, they can help to move European economic reform forward by demonstrating that markets generate desirable outcomes.⁴⁴⁷ They can show the benefits of low taxation and prove that market solutions are in the long run more sustainable than public-sector monopolies.⁴⁴⁸ There is a possibility that the CEECs will be able to bring a new dynamic to Europe. It is to be hoped that they will be able to supply such policy competition before they themselves begin to suffer the consequences of an overbearing bureaucracy in Brussels.⁴⁴⁹ According to Grabbe, the EU has to consider carefully how best to help, because empirical evidence shows that it is normal for catch-up growth to be accompanied by widening regional disparities, since growth poles pull ahead of the rest of the country.⁴⁵⁰ The speed of catching up will also depend on the underlying health of their economies since most of them face major structural problems: their labour markets are not providing enough jobs, especially for young people; education systems do not give people the skills needed to succeed in a market economy; uncompetitive industries are still drawing on government resources.⁴⁵¹

To sum up, the EU membership will definitely help catching up to the EU income levels, on average, GDP increases by about 13% and the consumption by 15% in these countries.⁴⁵² These gains will mainly materialise from an efficient working of the internal market. The effect of the Customs Union, migration and the structural funds are more modest. Although these effects are significant, the CEECs are far away from comparable welfare levels to the EU.⁴⁵³ In that respect, EU accession is

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ M.L.Tupy, 2003, op.cit., p.17.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ H.Grabbe, 2004, op.cit., p.8.

⁴⁵¹ H.Grabbe, 2004, op.cit., p.10.

⁴⁵² A.M.Lejour, R.Nahuis, "EU Accession and the Catching Up of the Central and East European Countries", in, Deardorff, Alan.V (ed) The Past, Present and Future of the European Union.

Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillian, 2004, pp.156-57.

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

not sufficient, but it is a major step in the catching up process. The recent past has shown that cohesion funds have a minor effect on productivity in the receiving countries since they only raise productivity and economic growth by about 0.1 to 0.2% per year.⁴⁵⁴ Therefore, it would be more effective that countries put their human and financial efforts into facilitating the smooth functioning of the internal markets for goods, services and capital than into trying to increase transfers from Brussels towards CEE.⁴⁵⁵

Tupy notes that the CEECs still have much to do. Despite a decade of liberalisation, overall economic freedom in CEE lags behind that of prosperous industrial nations.⁴⁵⁶ However, thinking about the long term benefits, enlargement to the East appears to be a profitable investment.

In spite of all these negative factors, it is also claimed that the economic benefits of the common market may decrease many of the negative consequences of accession in the long-term, but the economic growth that the CEECs enjoy will be suboptimal.⁴⁵⁷

4.3 POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE EASTERN ENLARGEMENT

To mention the “*political implications*” of Eastern enlargement, Miles and Redmond suggest that, an enlarged Union with such “*diversity*” would bring together a new set of national interests, which might weaken the implementation of policy on a common and uniform basis.⁴⁵⁸ Arıkan notes that, the reconciliation of diversities and balancing of conflicting interests among the member states would become more difficult and thus might pose additional challenges for the future development of common policies in the EU and the integrity of the *acquis communautaire*.⁴⁵⁹ He believes that this enlargement will increase the economic, political and ideological

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁶ M.L.Tupy, 2003, op.cit., p.6.

⁴⁵⁷ M.L.Tupy, 2003, op.cit., p.2.

⁴⁵⁸ H. Arıkan, 2003, op.cit.p.16.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

diversity of the EU, which will generate a more heterogeneous and less cohesive structure with the possibility of causing a variety of conflicts in the development of the EU politics and its institutions.⁴⁶⁰

In spite of the heterogeneous structure of the EU that will come out in the future, Steunenberg claims that the preferences of the new member states and the EU-15 may become alike.⁴⁶¹ This may be the result of adaptations on the part of the new member states, which must adjust national regulations and policies to the *acquis communautaire*, and of current member states, which discover new ways of doing things through working with the new members.⁴⁶²

Zielonka argues that, the Eastern European countries integrating into the EU will not change the reality that their identities and interests will remain divergent, and national parliaments are bound to reflect them, which is what democracy is all about: representing various local interests.⁴⁶³ Different cultural norms and policy demands will appear on the European agenda, like the study of political parties and party systems, which is now showing some signs of unfamiliar challenges.⁴⁶⁴ However, the assertion of various national interests implies decision-making paralyses when viewed from the perspective of the Union, i.e. enlargement has increased the chances of democracy in Eastern Europe, but it will not necessarily enhance democracy within the Union itself.⁴⁶⁵ The Union will be under extra pressure to offer citizens meaningful forms of democratic control and participation.⁴⁶⁶ He adds that, behind most of the future democracy-related problems of the Union lie the challenges of modernization and globalisation and the EU's own peculiar institutional nature.⁴⁶⁷

To talk about the intended end-product of European integration, Zielonka makes a reference to the 1957 Treaty of Rome, which speaks of creating “an ever closer

⁴⁶⁰ H. Arıkan, 2003, op.cit.,p.29.

⁴⁶¹ B. Steunenberg, 2001, op.cit., p.360.

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ J. Zielonka, 2004, op.cit., p.33.

⁴⁶⁴ G.Pridham, 2003, op.cit., pp.288-89.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁷ J. Zielonka, 2004, op.cit., p.33

union”, the implication of which have not been specified due to political differences among member states.⁴⁶⁸ He draws our attention to the point that, until the current enlargement, there had been a belief that Europe had to aim at the creation of a federation or even a “United States of Europe”, which, even after the inclusion of “Euro-sceptical” Great Britain, had not changed.⁴⁶⁹ However, he claims that, after the Eastern enlargement, progress toward a pan-European state is likely to stop because with the inclusion of post-communist states it will be impossible for the Union to attain such basic state-like features as 1) concentration of power and a clear hierarchical structure; 2) relatively high socioeconomic homogeneity; 3) hard and fixed external borders; 4) overlap between legal, administrative, economic, and military regimes; 5) a centrally redistribution system; 6) a coherent military and police establishment; and 7) one single type of citizenship.⁴⁷⁰ These mean that, the enlarged Union, is likely to witness the interpenetration of various types of political units, leading to a pattern of governance resembling concentric circles, without a clear power centre of hierarchy.⁴⁷¹ Socio-economic discrepancies will persist; the Union’s external borders will be soft and changing rather than hard and fixed; a multiplicity of various overlapping military and police institutions will be the norm; diversity of types of citizenships will also probably prevail in the enlarged EU.⁴⁷² Zielonka suggests that this scenario can become a reality due to many complex reasons. Increased diversity may be an advantage for economic growth but it will obstruct state-building efforts.⁴⁷³ The new members will not want to give up their recently gained sovereignty and their watchword will be flexibility, not fusion or convergence.⁴⁷⁴ Maintaining tough border controls to the east and south will prove difficult for the new members; divided sovereignty along different functional and territorial lines is likely to be the norm and distinctions between EU members and their non-EU neighbours are likely to be more blurry than sharp.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁶⁸ J.Zielonka, 2004, op.cit., p.27.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁰ J.Zielonka, 2004, op.cit., p.28.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid.

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid.

However, according to Sedivy, it is an unfounded fear that the past experience of the CEECs with forced integration into the Soviet bloc, in combination with their newly, acquired sovereignty, would make them reluctant to accept deeper integration and the pooling of sovereignty within the EU.⁴⁷⁶ In reality, sovereignty is considered as a protection for smaller states against the dominance of larger states.⁴⁷⁷

On the other hand, these developments may have ‘positive effects’ rather than negative. First, a ‘loose, diversified, and flexible’ European polity will be better than a ‘homogenised and centralised’ one at coping with the challenges posed by interdependence in a world of rapid change.⁴⁷⁸ Second, the Westphalian concept of a ‘hard external border’ may not make sense in the age of globalisation. It is now generally acknowledged that borders open to trade profit the EU and its members more than would a protectionist policy of high tariffs and import quotas.⁴⁷⁹ Moreover, what do borders mean in an age of modern weapons and satellite intelligence technology? Most experts agree that improving police and security cooperation between countries is more efficient than having many border guards or buying expensive surveillance technology.⁴⁸⁰

Mayhew notes that the positive political effects of enlargement in the future will be significant, leading to an increase in the ‘power’ and ‘prestige’ of the Union in international arenas and in international negotiations.⁴⁸¹ While it is true that the addition to the Union is more in terms of population than in GDP or share of world trade, nevertheless, successful enlargement will enhance the Union’s influence with the other world trading and political blocks.⁴⁸²

Zielonka points out certain factors, which the EU should take into consideration for the betterment of the future of the EU in many areas. According to him, what is now

⁴⁷⁶ J. Sedivy, “The Impact of the New (Post-Communist) EU Member States on the CFSP”, in, CFSP Forum, Vol 1. (3), 2003, p.8. See also: www.fornet.info

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸ J.Zielonka, 2004, op.cit., p.28.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁸¹ A. Mayhew, 1998, op.cit., p.186.

⁴⁸² Ibid.

important is to adjust the new enlarged Union to the new international and domestic environment, which will require not only more Euros but also new concepts necessitating the Union to wake up from the dream of building a European super state and start thinking of ways to handle the emerging reality of a functionally neo-medieval political setting.⁴⁸³ He claims that, the Union should also try to rethink its ways of handling social and cultural cohesion. In other words, the enlarged Union will require not less but more cross-border solidarity, to say nothing of new ways to enhance democratic deliberation and participation.⁴⁸⁴ It is possible that enlargement will help push the EU to become more innovative in its handling of the challenges that go with life in post-modern and post-Soviet Europe and if such turns out to be the case, it might indeed prove to be the greatest benefit that enlargement has to offer.⁴⁸⁵

As Zielonka suggests, the inclusion of new states implies an increase in the already existing decision-making analyses in the EU. Even if there had been a consensus on the necessity of improving the democratic legitimacy of the institutions and strengthening their effectiveness with a view to enlargement, how this was to be achieved remained unanswered.

1996-1997 IGC focused on four key issues regarding institutional changes: extending the use of QMV, reweighing votes in the Council, improving the efficiency of the Commission, perhaps by reducing its size and changing the way in which Commissioners are selected and introducing greater flexibility in decision making by allowing some member states to proceed with further integration without the participation of all.⁴⁸⁶ For many, the Amsterdam Treaty brought the IGC to a somewhat disappointing conclusion.⁴⁸⁷ Despite having so often declared that institutional reform was an absolute priority before enlargement, they managed only to agree to postpone the effort to agree on it. As Declaration 23 attached to the

⁴⁸³ J.Zielonka, 2004, op.cit., p.34.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁶ M.Baun, 2000, op.cit., p.178.

⁴⁸⁷ G. Edwards, "Reforming the Union's Institutional Framework: A New Obligation", in, C.Hillion, 2004, op.cit.,pp.32-33.

Treaty put it, while the Treaty may have completed the institutional changes necessary for the accession of new member states, and opened the way for enlargement, it was hardly enough to ensure the democratic legitimacy and transparency of the Union and its institutions.⁴⁸⁸ What it did was to communalise much of the EU's third pillar, including common policies on immigration, asylum and visas, to incorporate the Schengen Agreement on the removal of internal border controls into the EU treaties in the area of CFSP, to create new common unit for foreign policy analysis and planning.⁴⁸⁹ Therefore, perhaps the main beneficiary of this Treaty was the EP, which gained an extension of codecision rights to a significant number of additional policy areas.⁴⁹⁰ In other words, the Treaty did not guarantee any continued momentum towards integration. It therefore called for yet another IGC in 2004, initially at least to deal with the issues of the powers of the EU and the member states, the status of the Charter on Fundamental Rights, the simplification of treaties.⁴⁹¹

In terms of the possible future 'institutional changes' of the CEE enlargement, it is definite that the Union's decision-making capacities critically depend on the 'voting' rules that are used and on the 'heterogeneity' of the preferences of the member-states. Mayhew states that, there is a profound worry that the "growing heterogeneity" of the Union will lead to 'policy paralyses'. With the fifth enlargement, it will be more difficult to get agreement on new policies or changes in existing policies when there are 27 Member States than when there are 15; and even with 15, the difficulties are already obvious.⁴⁹²

Mayhew suggests that, lack of agreement on policy combined with potential paralyses in the Council, if the 'national veto' is kept over a wide range of subjects, would lead to gradual disintegration of the Union.⁴⁹³ The 'Council Presidency' will become an even more inefficient institution with a larger number of small member

⁴⁸⁸ G. Edwards, 2004, op.cit.,p.36.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid.

⁴⁹² A. Mayhew, 1998, op.cit. p.328.

⁴⁹³ Ibid.

states.⁴⁹⁴ It is difficult to ensure consistency in the EU's external representation when leadership rotates every six months.⁴⁹⁵ Accession of more small states can also adversely affect the implementation capacity of the 'Commission' or the 'European Court of Justice' (ECJ), since the Commission, which have a shortage of personnel and finance, may be over-stretched and so will the Court, because the ECJ has to coordinate a wide range of issues as the Union expands.⁴⁹⁶

In parallel to the above stated Mayhew's idea, Steunenberg's research⁴⁹⁷ indicates that enlargement may have some effect on the possibility of "choosing a new policy". The probability of agreeing on a new policy, under unanimity rule, decreases from 10 percent to 5 percent. For qualified majority voting (QMV), however, this effect is hardly noticeable. The ability to set new policy decreases by less than 1 percent. This property of QMV will be called its "*enlargement resistant property*". Finally enlargement will hardly affect the magnitude of policy change. A more substantial change occurs when we focus on a change in voting rules: by moving from unanimity voting to QMV the magnitude of this index changes dramatically. It indicates that QMV allows for much more 'flexibility' than unanimity rule in both the current and an enlarged Union and according to Grabbe and Hughes⁴⁹⁸, QMV it is one way to solve the problem of decision-making in the EU. At individual level, because of enlargement, EU-15 will experience a drop in their power of about 70 percent.⁴⁹⁹ For QMV, a similar effect occurs, although of a smaller magnitude. Larger member-states will face a decrease in their power between 32 percent and 35 percent. Moreover, they will experience a more substantial decrease in their power than the smaller ones.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁴ K.Henderson, 1999, op.cit., p.45.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁶ Moosung Lee, "The Small State Enlargement of the EU: Dangers and Benefits", Perspectives on European Politics and Society, Leiden, The Netherlands, Vol. 5, (2), 2004, pp.339,40.

⁴⁹⁷ For details see: B. Steunenberg, 2001, op.cit., pp.358-59.

⁴⁹⁸ Heather Grabbe and Kirsty Hughes, "Redefining the European Union: Eastward Enlargement", Briefing Paper No:36, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, May 1999, in, <http://www.ciaonet.org>

⁴⁹⁹ B. Steunenberg, 2001, op.cit., pp.358-59.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid.

CONCLUSION

There has been a growing literature on EU Enlargement, including comparative studies of the four previous enlargements of the Union, their impact on policymaking and the costs/benefits of enlargement processes, but there has not been so much an analysis of the “specificity of the fifth enlargement” to include countries of Central and Eastern Europe. In this respect, this paper presents a comprehensive research, which discusses the uniqueness of the CEE enlargement together with pointing out the main issues in the previous enlargements. For these reasons, this study will shed a light on the future studies concerning the CEE enlargement and concomitant events, which have carved their names to the history by leaving a significant mark in the determination of the future of the EU.

The history of the enlargement process of the EU has witnessed the “*Classical Method of Enlargement*” which is guided by 6 principles and named by Christopher Preston. It takes its origins from the ‘Community Integration method’ in the 1940s and 1950s, based on ‘spillover effect’. The pure classical method lasted until the Eastern enlargement, after that the core remained with some modifications. It had also had some weaknesses. It insisted on the full acceptance of the *acquis communautaire*, permitted no permanent derogations or partial forms of membership, limited the possibilities for flexible or creative forms of integration. The cases of UK and Spain can set an example for this. When the six principles are viewed, we see that they have been modified in the past five enlargement rounds. According to **Principle 1**, ‘Applicants must accept the *acquis communautaire* in full. No permanent opt-outs are available’. This proved that some of the interests of the applicants are non-negotiable. An example for the old members is that; UK wanted special consideration for its wider trading links, Spain for fishing industry, Austria for Alpine transit and for the CEECS is that; they adopted the entire *acquis* with only a few transitional phase-ins, pertaining to the sale of land and movement of persons. **Principle 2** states that; ‘Accession negotiations focus exclusively on the

practicalities of the applicants taking on the *acquis*'. It is related to setting target dates for the removal of tariffs and quotas, and for legal harmonization and policy alignment. We also see that the transition period has been modified at times. For instance, Spain's 'sensitive' Mediterranean agricultural exports subjected to a seven-year transition (instead of 5 years); the CFP has seen transition periods stretched to ten years. According to **Principle 3**, 'The problems arising from the increased diversity of an enlarged Community are addressed by creating new policy instruments to overlay the existing ones rather than by a fundamental reform of the existing instruments' inadequacies'. Some examples for the old members are that; European Regional Development Fund (1975) was created as a response to the UK budget problem, rather than a serious attempt to address regional disparities in a Community framework. Mediterranean Programmes (1984) were integrated to compensate French, Italian and Greek farmers for the Iberian enlargement. Examples for the CEECs are that; the EC has added new policies especially in the 'cohesion' area. However, there is a debate within the EU about whether and how the whole cohesion policy area can be recast. Most of the new member states have had to develop institutions, norms and policies in a very short period and without the benefit of a longer period enjoyed by earlier members. According to **Principle 4**, 'New members are integrated into the EC's institutional structure on the basis of "limited incremental adaptation". This is the most challenging of all the principles because incrementalism resulted in an ever increasing gap between deepening and widening of the EU. The EU continuously widened / not deepened itself sufficiently. The **Principle 5** states that; 'The Community prefers to negotiate with groups of states that already have close relations with each other'. For the old members, this created economies of scale in negotiations since states like Portugal and Spain usually brought up similar issues for negotiation and presented few problems to the EC and were linked to more problematic candidates. However, this principle has come to an end with the Greek application. For the CEECs, this principle has been severely tested since the EU extended its borders towards the east by including the CEECs. When we come to **Principle 6**, it states that 'Existing member states use the enlargement process to pursue their own interests and collectively to externalise internal problems'. To give an example for the old members, Greece, for example,

received assistance through the Integrated Mediterranean Programmes in return for removing its block on Iberian enlargement. Old member states used enlargement to pursue their own interests and all the CEECs have brought their problems with them in economic, political and social terms while entering the EU.

As a result, the experience of the enlargement rounds has suggested that the core of the classical method of enlargement has continued in the Eastern enlargement. However, the diversity of the applicants and their level of economic development stretched to the limit the use of classical transition periods. The preoccupation of the EU with deepening and widening increased strains. It has been challenging for both the EU and for the Eastern European countries to respond to new levels of diversity and to keep the core of the classical method.

The CEE enlargement is the most specific one since the founding of the EC and has radically changed the political, economic and geographic nature of the Union. Just as there was no example for the path to follow after the fall of communism, there is no precedent for the Eastern enlargement of the Union. This adventure has been qualitatively and quantitatively different from all previous enlargements of the European Communities both in terms of the number of candidate countries and of the diversity of social, economic, and political conditions involved.

This enlargement caused Europe to change dramatically in the past decade. With the end of the cold war, the east-west divide ended, and new economic, political and military structures in Europe have subsequently developed. The European Community was replaced with the European Union, for which the incorporation of CEECs has become a major strategic goal.

During the period of transition, the CEECs have experienced dramatic changes in their political and economic systems, breaking with decades of communist rule and central planning. Reflecting their significant progress in building democracy and market economies, 10 CEECs have been invited to initiate negotiations to join the EU. The signing of the accession Treaty of Accession in Athens on 16 April 2003

effectively marked the ending of the negotiations process for the states that joined the Union on 1 May 2004. From then on, they were effectively members of the club although a monitoring process would continue in order to ensure that there was no backsliding in the implementation and enforcement of the *acquis communautaire*. After the inclusion of eight CEECs, the remaining two candidate countries, Bulgaria and Romania, are likely to join in 2007, providing they meet the required standards of readiness in time. The EU is committed to providing maximum support in this process.

As stated in Chapter 2, the Member states and the EU feared that the membership of the CEECs would bring certain problems with it. However, what is ironic is that, these fears also bear the solutions to the problems in it. For instance, one of their concerns was the “internal security of the EU” but they accepted that the integration of these transitional countries into a European structure would lessen the cost of new security challenges for the EU. The same is valid for the problem of “lack of democracy” in these countries. However, the European Parliament considered the recent enlargement process as an historic opportunity to ensure democracy, respect for human rights and the strengthening of common European values in Europe. It has been accepted that democracy can take decades to mature and it requires firmly rooted institutions, changes in cultural habits, and the rise of civil society. Therefore, enough time has to be given to the newly formed democracies to adapt themselves to this structure.

The “*uniqueness of the CEE enlargement*” comes from the fact that, it would not only require the involvement of the applicant states into the political, economic structure of the EU but also support the democratisation process and enhance security and stability throughout the European continent and stimulate economic growth in Europe by opening up markets, and thereby strengthen the EU’s role as an international actor. In this sense, it is understandable that the EU offers an enlargement strategy for the applicant countries, which is designed not only to minimise costs and risks associated with taking in poorer countries, but also to support their efforts to establish political, economic and social reforms.

The factors of “*uniqueness*” of the CEE enlargement can be categorised under two headings as the ‘political and security factors’ and ‘economic factors’. The first of the political and security factors is in terms of “*political stability*”. The fifth enlargement expands the zone of peace, encourages unity and stability in Europe, it is a unique opportunity to peacefully integrate minorities to resolve border conflicts. The second factor is in terms of “*deepening European construction*” since the CEE enlargement gives a new political and economic impetus to the process of European integration. (European integration process has advanced, in terms of its CFSP and EMU). The third factor is in terms of “*transition from communism to democracy and the market*”. According to Rollo it is the major issue separating this enlargement from the previous ones because there is a dual challenge of political transition and integration for the CEECs. The fourth factor is in terms of “*boundaries*”. Central Europe has borders with states that are truly East European, and their accession therefore leads the EU to share frontiers with states like Russia, Belarus, the Ukraine, Moldova, Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia and Turkey. Therefore, there has been a ‘*shifting of cultural boundaries*’ between Western and Central/Eastern Europe. The fifth factor is in terms of the “*Copenhagen Criteria*” since it has set prerequisites at the “starting of negotiations” and affected the “chances of joining”. The principle of “*Conditionality*” had been invoked as a pre-condition for the initiation of the accession negotiations process and thereafter. It was based on the Copenhagen criteria of 1993 and it was included in the Commission’s Avis on the applicant countries (July 1997), the Accession Partnerships (1998) and the annual Commission reports on progress by candidate countries. It is made quite clear that satisfying political and economic criteria is an absolute pre-condition for eventual membership and that problems here may delay that event. The sixth factor of uniqueness is in terms of “*a flexible and unpredictable EU*” because the accession criteria could be modified according to changing circumstances and the changing interests of the EU and the member countries. The seventh and the last factor is in terms of “*security*”. In the longer term, it could add new dimensions to EU external policy. However, the EU risks importing instability by admitting countries with unresolved internal or external

conflicts, like ethnic tensions or border disputes in the unstable areas of Europe, such as Western Balkans. Because of this, the EU has insisted that the applicant countries should solve their internal and external disputes prior to membership.

Regarding its “*economic uniqueness*” enlargement is an opportunity in terms of “*economic prosperity*”. The expanded Union increases economic and trading activity with more than 100 million new citizens from countries experiencing strong economic growth. It is a unique opportunity in terms of “*the position of Europe in the world*” because enlargement to the East increases its weight and influence on the international scene; it becomes a key player due to its economic and geopolitical importance. The second factor of uniqueness is in terms of “*transforming their economies*”. Enlargement is a dual challenge for the CEECs to make necessary progress to transform their economies and at the same time try to realise their integration with the EU. To facilitate their transition, the EU has offered aid instruments and programmes, concluded Europe Agreements which aimed at progressive economic and political integration of these countries with the EU and has adopted a new pre-accession strategy towards them. By 2001, the economies of Central Europe made significant progress in creating the institutions of a market economy and restructuring their industrial output towards the demand of EU markets. The third factor of uniqueness in terms of “*questionnaire*”. For the first time in the history of the EU enlargement practice, the Commission, in April 1996, sent an exhaustive global “Questionnaire” to all the applicant countries, involving very detailed, specific and great number of questions. It underlined the many gaps between the current situation in the CEECs and the criteria for accession set by the European Council at Copenhagen in June 1993. The fourth factor is in terms of “*More Agricultural*” states. Many CEECs have large and inefficient farm sectors where domestic workforce is dependent upon farming. Although agriculture is important to some of these states, they are almost all industrial countries, which is a greater contributor to GDP in their countries. The fifth factor is in terms of “*poor situation of the CEECs and little experience of theirs in parliamentary democracy and market economy*”. *This enlargement* not only poses a challenge for the

applicants as they try to make transition to democracy and the market economy and to align their legislation and institutions with those of the EU, but also for the EU as it seeks to prepare both the candidate countries and itself for enlargement. The sixth factor is in terms of “*accelerated globalisation pressures and more liberalisation on all fronts*” because they raise the pressure for structural economic change to an unprecedented level. The seventh and the last factor of uniqueness is in terms of “*public opinion to be a much more important factor today*”. Euroscepticism has become fashionable, making it difficult for Western Europe to meet all the exceptional challenges that enlargement implies. To sum up, this enlargement process, introduces comprehensive conditions related to economic, political transformation and cultural adaptation. It involves much more adjustment than in the past and because of this necessity it can be named as “*unique*” and described as an “*adaptive*” strategy, which exclusively places the burden of adjustment on the applicant countries.

The specificity of the fifth enlargement derives from all these challenges that it poses to the applicant countries and the Union but also to its neighbours.

Consequently, it can easily be accepted that the citizens of the EU are undergoing a difficult period. Their economies have been growing slowly, their external environment has become insecure and unstable, and their domestic political consensus has come under pressure from growing cultural and ethnic hostility.⁵⁰¹ Even if the European integration cannot solve these problems, it can help Europeans to address at least some of them.⁵⁰² In this sense, enlargement is a positive development for the old and the new member states. It should help to stabilize the EU’s eastern part, stimulate economic growth, and strengthen the Union’s international power.⁵⁰³

Some commentators argue that real integration can take place only between partners with the same values and traditions. For instance, Professor Huntington has

⁵⁰¹ J.Zielonka, 2004, op.cit., p.33

⁵⁰² J.Zielonka, 2004, op.cit., p.34.

⁵⁰³ Ibid.

suggested that Europe is split between two civilisations, which are divided fundamentally by religion, tradition and experience and therefore irreconcilable. However, it is this theory itself which is not reconcilable with the very aim of the EU, which foresees “Unity in diversity”, i.e. a Europe which is meaningful only with the differences of the countries that it is made up of. In addition, this theory would also disregard the fact that today Europe is involved in continuously evolving economic and political relationships.

One thing is sure that the 2004 enlargement may have been the biggest, but it is not the last enlargement of the EU. On the contrary, it is the start of an ongoing process that will fundamentally change the character of the Union. At the beginning of the 21st Century, it has been stressed once more and more powerfully with the CEE enlargement that, it is one of the most important ‘political necessities’ and ‘historical opportunities’ that the EU is facing since its establishment, because it will not only ensure the unification, stabilisation, security, economic growth and general well-being of the continent but also because it has opened the way to the future possible applicants in the Eastern part of the continent.

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