

The candidate countries' foreign policies on the eve of enlargement

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Part I: Enlargement, CFSP and the foreign policies of the candidates

The European Union is preparing for its fifth enlargement. It seems as if it will be the one which will include the most new members and is likely to considerably alter the Union as we know it today. The Commission opinions and the rhythm of the enlargement negotiations point to an enlargement which could include as many as ten out of the thirteen official candidates, leaving out Turkey and, most likely, Romania and Bulgaria.

Such an enlargement will modify the international environment of the Union. Economic integration, legal harmonisation and political convergence amongst the new member states are likely to extend the area of stability and prosperity that the EU has consolidated. At the same time, the external border of the Union will move eastwards, bringing in new neighbours and new concerns. This will considerably affect the foreign policy of the European Union since it will fundamentally alter the geopolitical context of the wider Europe (Hill 2000).

Enlargement is arguably one of the key strategies of European Foreign Policy (EFP). It is the one which has had, and will have, the largest impact in the European regional context. Moreover, it is unlikely that it will decline in importance after the next wave of accessions: some of the candidates will remain outside as prospective members, and additional European countries, particularly in the Western Balkans, see membership as a mid to long-term goal.

The international capabilities and interests of the EC/EU have evolved and changed over the years. This has been the result of three main processes. Firstly, the institutional and political internal evolution and its external projection (for example,

the external effects of the internal market programme or the Common Agriculture Policy, the birth of European Political Co-operation, the Treaty of Maastricht...). Secondly the changes in the external environment of the Union (like the fall of the Soviet bloc, the disintegration of Yugoslavia etc.). And lastly, the accession of new members with new interests and areas of expertise.

This chapter focuses on that third area of change following the next enlargement. Previous enlargements of the EC/EU have shown the importance of this factor, the more so the more a co-operation in external affairs had developed. The first 'EFTA enlargement' (United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark) of the EC took place very shortly after European Political Co-operation (EPC) was put in place: the new members contributed to the consolidation of an external *acquis* from the very beginning. The accession of Greece in 1981 outlined the importance of reaching a certain degree of convergence in foreign policy matters if the Community were to be taken into account in the international political arena. Greek dissent was attenuated after the second Mediterranean enlargement, which included Spain and Portugal, two countries which were soon to become active in a more consolidated EPC (Regelsberger, 1989). These countries brought both new expertise and links with areas outside Europe (Latin America, Africa) and particular concerns (Western Sahara, East Timor) (Barbé, 96L; Santos Neves, 1996). The second 'EFTA enlargement' (Austria, Finland and Sweden), which took place once a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) had been created by the Maastricht Treaty, reinforced some of the external concerns of the European Union, giving birth to initiatives such as the Northern dimension.

Thus, a good knowledge of the foreign policy priorities and strengths of the current candidate countries before accession will help to explain their likely behaviour within EPC/CFSP once they become members. This chapter begins by contextualising this study within our knowledge of European Foreign Policy. It then proceeds to make a general survey of the common characteristics of the foreign policies of the candidate countries and the context of those policies. After this overview we analyse the strengths and priorities of the candidates' foreign policies:

firstly, the geographical priorities, secondly, the thematic fields of expertise. The chapter concludes with five hypotheses about the impact and evolution of CFSP and the national foreign policies of the new members after enlargement.

Member states and European Foreign Policy

Despite the trend towards institutionalisation and the consolidation of some common foreign policy instruments, the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union still is, by and large, in the hands of the member states. Even if we add to our analysis the Foreign Relations of the European Communities and other external aspects of the EU activity, European Foreign Policy remains “a collective enterprise through which national actors conduct partly common, and partly separate, international actions” (Hill and Wallace, 1996: 5) rather than a single centrally designed policy. Joint decision making at the EU level “is basically a bargaining process between the governments of the member states wherein the involvement of supranational bodies such as the European Commission and the European Parliament is very limited”(Soetendorp, 1999:7).

The candidates for the next enlargement of the European Union are mostly small countries². Poland alone resists such a definition, and even Poland, once it becomes a member of the European Union, is likely to be a “second-rank state”(Soetendorp, 1999) in the context of CFSP, compared with countries such as France or the United Kingdom. The ability of each of the candidates to influence European Foreign Policy overall once they become member states is likely to be limited. However, the practice of European Foreign Policy (EFP) has provided us with examples where smaller members of the European Union have been able to place an issue of their interest on the common agenda and decisively to shape the common decisions: Greece and the issue of Cypriot membership, Portugal and East Timor, Finland and the Northern Dimension.

In fact, European Foreign Policy provides the member states with opportunities to “promote and enhance their national interests within a wider

framework” (Cameron, 1999: 96), and those opportunities are especially appreciated by smaller states and other states which have a relatively small chance to have an impact on the international scene, such as the candidate countries. After all “part of the very rationale of the EC/EU was and is to get away from power politics to allow small states an opportunity for action and influence they otherwise would not have if all business was conducted on an inter-states basis” (Archer and Nugent, 2002: 6).

This chapter focuses on the bottom-up side of the relationship between the European Union and its member states (Bulmer and Lequesne, 2002) in the particular field of foreign policy. Our central idea is that an analysis of the preferences and areas of expertise of the candidates before enlargement can help us to predict what sort of influence they will try to exert once they become members. This approach implies that we expect some degree of continuity in the foreign policies of the new members and that we foresee that those new members will act, by and large, in a similar way to current member states, at least in the early period of membership.

Our approach in this chapter, based on the projection (uploading) of member states’ interests and preferences, will need to be complemented by the study of the other direction of influence, the top-down approach, known as the Europeanisation of national foreign policies (Bulmer and Burch, 2000; Boerzel, 2002). We have defined elsewhere, largely drawing on Torreblanca’s definition (Torreblanca, 2001), Europeanisation of a foreign policy as “the process of foreign policy change at the national level originated by the adaptation pressures and the new opportunities generated by the European integration process”(Vaquer i Fanés, 2002).

Foreign policy analysts are now in the privileged position of being able to elaborate a set of hypotheses that with luck will soon be able to be tested against the facts. In this study we construct a series of hypotheses concerning the aspects of the candidates’ foreign policies which we anticipate they will attempt to project onto the EU’s CFSP. These expectations are based on our findings about the foreign policies of those countries, but also on our understanding of the CFSP, the way in which it operates, the capacity of the member states to defend their interests or the extent to which those interests are modified by the very fact of being a member of the EU.

Foreign policies in a context of transition

In the last 12 years the foreign policies of the ten candidate countries included in this study have undergone major transformations. The majority have completely new foreign policy approaches as the result of a number of changes in their own domestic context as well as in their international environment. There have been five major factors, all of them closely connected, which have affected some or all of the candidates' foreign policies: new borders, the end or crisis of the bloc to which they were aligned, global transformations, changes in the European scenario and their own internal transformations.

Compared with the situation in 1989, all of the Central and Eastern European candidates (CEE) have changed borders, neighbours or both. Only Hungary and Poland existed in their current shape, and they have been faced with an entirely new set of neighbours (with the exception of Austria for Hungary). The rest of the Central and Eastern European Candidates have recently acquired statehood, and have very little tradition of independent foreign policy making (with the partial exception of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, to the extent that they have kept some of the assets of Czechoslovak foreign policy). The consolidation of a new statehood, of often disputed borders and of relationships with new neighbours has been a top priority for the foreign policies of all those prospective member states. The difficult question of national minorities also arose both internally and externally, but it started to lose relevance as relationships with adjacent countries improved and democracy was consolidated. Nevertheless, a very strong sub-regional perspective and deep concern about their immediate neighbours is a characteristic common to the foreign policies of all the CEE candidates.

A second element which has affected the foreign policies of these countries over the last decade is the end of the blocs in which their foreign policies were inserted. The end of the Soviet bloc and its institutions, the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, as well as the

disappearance of the Soviet Union, which was a privileged bilateral partner for all the countries in the bloc, left the foreign policies of Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia in a situation of relative disorientation, particularly as privileged partnerships with other countries sympathetic to the Soviet Union (Cuba, Vietnam, Syria,...) also lost interest. They had to reorient the basic lines of their foreign policy. Malta and Cyprus, both members of the Non Aligned Movement, witnessed the erosion of this group due to the internal turmoil faced by some its prominent members (such as Algeria or Yugoslavia) or international isolation (such as Cuba, Zimbabwe or Iraq) while the movement lost momentum on the international scene. Malta and Cyprus have come to accept the need to abandon the Non Aligned Movement in order to enter the European Union³, whereas Slovenia has never tried to follow the path of Yugoslavia in the Movement.

The change in the network of alliances is merely a reflection of a wider transformation in the global context. The nineties have witnessed three parallel processes in the global sphere: the consolidation of American military and political hegemony, the process of globalisation and the regionalisation of world politics. The candidate countries are mostly small and none of them has the political or economic capacity to resist these processes. Indeed, they mostly identified these processes at large with their 'normalisation' as members of the international community, and more specifically of the selected club of developed European economies. By and large, American hegemony is a lot less threatening to them than that of closer powers (Russia, Germany). They participate keenly in the United Nations and in numerous international initiatives.

The European context has also changed. The CEE candidates have been active in the institutions of which they already had membership (OSCE) and in those now open to them (such as the Council of Europe). Membership of NATO (except for Malta and Cyprus, who have neutrality dispositions in their constitutions) and especially of the European Union have become priorities of their foreign policies. The enlargement strategies of the Western institutions shaped the candidates' foreign policies to an important extent. But at the same time, accession to the EU (and to

NATO) is viewed as instrumental for other crucial foreign policy objectives: to secure its position vis-à-vis Turkey in the case of Cyprus, to ensure national independence and security for the Baltic States, to detach themselves from the Balkan turmoil for Slovenia.

Finally, perhaps the most crucial factor in shaping the foreign policies of a majority of those countries has been their internal transformation. At the political level, democratisation and newly gained sovereignty and independence have been the main motors of change in foreign policy. Difficult economic reform has also been a factor in shaping foreign policy, particularly as it has absorbed considerable effort and resources leaving relatively little left for grand foreign policy designs in distant areas. The military transformation and the need to change not only the technical and organisational structures, but also the mentality of their armed forces, has also been important in the last decade.

The candidates' foreign policies in the eve of enlargement

All these processes have shaped the policies of the candidate states over the last dozen years. If the first half of the nineties were years of reconstruction (or creation from scratch) of the foreign policy structures and of 'normalisation' of the international status of the country, the second half of the nineties and the start of this century have witnessed a convergence of foreign policy objectives. The two main objectives of the foreign policies of the candidates are integration into the Euro-Atlantic network of institutions, and good relationships with neighbouring countries in a context of sub-regional stability.

The first objective, integration into the Western institutions, is largely seen as one process with several stages. Accession to NATO and to the EU are "two sides of the same coin"⁴, whereas the accession to other institutions (Council of Europe, World Trade Organisation, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) is perceived as part of this integration. The CEE candidates perceive all

those institutions as representative of a system of values to which they adhere, and “the least thing they want to do is choose between NATO and the EU”.

NATO is preparing to decide about its new wave of enlargement in Prague in autumn 2002⁵, a process which is now seen as “inevitable” (Croft, 2002). This wave will include some, if not all, of the CEE candidates that are also likely to enter the EU in the next enlargement, and which are not yet members. Membership of the OECD is already a fact for Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. When it takes place, accession to the European Union will complete the achievement of their goal of integration into the Western European bloc. This being their most important foreign policy objective at this time, there will certainly be a new set of foreign policy objectives that shall operate from the moment of enlargement.

The candidates are already preparing to adapt their foreign policies to the post-admission situation. An important tool for this adaptation has been the political dialogue established between the EU and the candidates. In the field of CFSP this dialogue has consisted of several elements: the Associated Countries Network (which is basically an information sharing mechanism), the alignment with EU declarations (about 250 to 280 per year), the meetings with the Troika, the participation in some of the working groups, and consultations at ambassadorial level. On the whole, the dialogue has been criticised for being relatively empty, involving only statements from both sides, and avoiding the issues upon which there might be dissent. In the majority of cases, the candidates have had little difficulty in associating themselves with declarations that concerned them very little. And yet, some of the participants in that dialogue in Brussels, the CFSP contact points in the candidates’ missions in Brussels, when directly asked, argue that, despite its shortcomings, the political dialogue has been useful in informing them how the CFSP works and enabling them to prepare for the moment of enlargement.

One striking point is that, due to political dialogue and an extended pre-accession period, many of the changes derived from the adaptations to the institutional structures and common practices of the European Union have already taken place. Europeanisation before accession will probably mean that changes will be

less noticeable at the precise moment of enlargement than one would have expected. Europeanisation will be simply the last of a series of major impacts on the foreign policies of those member states, and be realised almost in a continuum with other processes which have taken place over the past years (normalisation of relations with the neighbour states, democratisation, etc.). The redefinition of the foreign policy objectives has already started taking place in some of the candidate countries, taking into account the EU *acquis* and the need to conform to the EU compromises.

Part II: Interests and expertise

Geographical priorities

Each enlargement of the European Union has changed the geographical priorities of the Union, if nothing else as a result of changes in the external borders of the Union. Geographical proximity or adjacency are obvious reasons to pay particular attention to an area. But other links are also important: historical / colonial (such as those linking Britain with South Asia), economic (for instance dependence on the Persian Gulf's oil), commercial (with Korea or Japan), etc. Some of those links are connected with the member states specific history and traditional ties with the rest of the world. So what is the legacy of the last years in the foreign policy of the candidates in the different areas of European interest?

Eastern Europe

Eastern Europe will certainly be an area of renewed European interest as, with the accession of the Central European countries, it becomes the new external border of the Union. Being direct neighbours with new countries will not be the only effect of enlargement: the Eastern European countries have already started demonstrating their unease with an enlargement process that excludes them⁶. Two countries in that region

are crucial to the foreign policies of certain candidate countries: Belarus and the Ukraine. Moldova, in the same region, is not quoted as a main policy priority by any of the ten candidates included in this study, but as Romanian membership approaches, the interest of the Union [in Moldova] is likely to grow.

Belarus is a topic of concern for its immediate neighbours Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, which share a 1200km-long border with it. Belarus as an important priority in the foreign policy of these three countries, Lithuania in particular. The EU has had a relatively confrontational approach to the Lukashenko regime, which has actually reinforced his orientation towards Russia (Davidonis, 2001). The direct neighbours of Belarus, by contrast, prefer a permanent engagement and dialogue, and try to maintain cordial relations. This has meant, for instance, that none of these three countries joined the Common position of the Council on 9 July 1998, barring high Belarusian officials from visiting EU member states. However they did align themselves with the EU declarations on the last two elections processes.

The impact of enlargement on Belarus is likely to have two sides: an increase in the concern about the situation of Belarus, a country which, according to a Baltic diplomat, ranks “at the same level as Zimbabwe”⁷ in the minds of many EU and member states officials, and a more pragmatic and co-operative approach, which has already started with the project of delimitation and sealing of the borders between the candidates and Belarus. The candidates directly neighbouring Belarus have proposed other forms of co-operation such as transborder regional agreements⁸ and a permanent engagement and dialogue. They feel that there is a double standard, very tough with Lukashenka’s regime, but a comparatively mild approach to similarly undemocratic leaders in more remote areas such as Central Asia.

Another country in the region to which most candidates pay great attention is the Ukraine. The candidates perceive themselves as better informed and better equipped to understand the Ukraine, its internal development and its process of transition because of their own historical experience, their linguistic abilities and their current links and exchanges. The Commission itself has already used the expertise of the Central European candidates and has consulted them when designing some of her

proposals⁹. Generally the concerned countries (including the direct neighbours Poland, Slovakia and Hungary, but also the Baltic States and the Czech Republic) have shown no sharp disagreement with the Common Strategy towards the Ukraine, but they expect to be able to contribute to the EU policy with their links and knowledge of the country. More than a clear change in direction, the candidates seem to hope for a more intensive and generous involvement with the Ukraine, which is seen as a potentially attractive market for many of them, and perceived as a key to the stability of the whole of Eastern Europe.

The candidates are nowadays more politically than economically committed to the Ukraine. They have relatively little capacity to influence matters from an economic point of view, and only Poland and Hungary are significant trade partners for the Ukraine¹⁰. The only candidate that throughout the nineties was amongst the top investors in the Ukraine was Cyprus, the seventh largest investor with 5.1% of the 1992-1999 total (USA Embassy in Kiev, 2000). The Union as a whole will have a bigger leverage upon the Ukraine and greater possibilities to influence its evolution than any of the candidates, even Poland. The candidates hope to use their expertise and privileged links to shape the EU – Ukraine relationship.

Russia

Russia is a matter of particular concern for most of the candidates, and relations with Russia are an important part of their foreign policy agenda. The grievances and historical traumas that weighed heavily on the relations of the Central and Eastern European candidates with Russia in the first years of independence have slowly become less and less of an issue. On the eve of accession, the problems of ensuring stability in Russia, dealing with their energy dependency on it, and trying to exploit their comparative advantages in order to recover the lost export markets are most prominent in the heads of policy makers from Tallinn to Ljubljana. The very accessions to the EU and NATO neutralise most of the concerns of the candidates in relation to Russia. Accession will therefore be the opportunity for many of them to have a more ambitious (and probably friendlier) policy towards Russia.

Unlike in the case of Belarus, the EU hardly needs to be convinced of the need to have a coherent policy towards Russia, including a permanent dialogue. Moreover, the level of consultation and dialogue between the EU and Russia is, in some fields, higher than that with the candidates themselves. Again the candidates perceive themselves as being better suited to understand the situation in Russia than their Western counterparts.

To the general concern about Russia and the awareness of the possibilities it provides in economic terms, some candidates add more specific concerns. The Baltic States, for instance, are keen on maintaining a regional approach to an area such as the Baltic instead of just dealing with the whole of Russia. Lithuania and Poland will completely surround the enclave of Kaliningrad, with all the problems in terms of transit, visas, etc, that this will bring. Cyprus has long been a friendly partner of Russia (Brewin, 2000:220-221)¹¹, keeping its position amongst the top 5-10 investors throughout the nineties until it reached the top investor position in the first half of 2001 (*Pravda*, 6 June 2001). This meant, for instance, that it could not support the EU declaration about Freedom of the Media in Russia in 2001.

The Western Balkans

The Balkans, and in concrete the Western Balkans (Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, FYROM and Albania), have been the area in which the candidates felt for some time less represented by the EU actions and the one area in which they have been most critical of the EU policy. This has changed with the launching of the Stabilisation and Association Process for the region. All Central European candidates quote the Balkans as a subject of main concern. Two of them, Slovenia and Hungary, have direct borders with the area; ethnic Slovak and Hungarians live there, particularly in the Vojvodina; all of them have, to an important extent, been involved in the Peace Keeping operations or other related military activities (like de-mining); and the region has been a preferential target for the development co-operation projects of countries like Poland or the Czech Republic.

Slovenia is of course the country which can bring the most specialised expertise in many areas, from reform of the judicial system to the technical aspects of economic reform. Slovenia has important trade links with the region, and will actually have to renounce her free trade agreements with other parts of former Yugoslavia. She is also the first foreign investor in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With the four Visegrad candidates, Slovenia is likely to join Austria, Italy and Greece in their efforts to keep the EU continually engaged in the region.

South-East Europe and Turkey

The Eastern Balkan countries (Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey), if left out from the first wave of enlargement, will have the highest position in the EU external relations pyramid after it takes place. None of the candidates has particularly strong concerns about or conflicts with Romania or Bulgaria. The main issue to note is the large Hungarian minority in Romania, concentrated in Transylvania, a topic which strained Hungarian/Romanian relations shortly after the fall of the Communist regimes in both countries. Relations have improved since, but Hungary is likely to keep a vigilant eye on the treatment of minorities in Romania.

On the contrary, relations with Turkey will certainly be seriously affected when Cyprus becomes a member State, particularly if it does so before an agreement with the authorities of the Northern part of the island is reached. The accession of Cyprus could be a catalyst for the problem and help to broker a solution (Baier-Allen, 1999; Diez, 2002), but it may also trigger a “predictable crisis” of unforeseen magnitude between Turkey and the European Union and/or within Turkey itself (Unal, 1999; Barkey and Gordon, 2001; Tsakonas, 2001).

The EU experience of the Greek influence and its capacity to shape the relationship with Turkey is an indication of the way in which the Cypriot membership could complicate the always difficult policy towards that country. Cypriot foreign policy was for years focused on seeking international support for coercive measures that would force Turkey to withdraw from the Northern part of the island, in

particular within those organisations in which it was a member including the Commonwealth, the Non Aligned Movement and the United Nations. However, in the nineties, the Greek Cypriot government used a more constructive approach and started to seek a negotiated solution. We should not directly assume that Cyprus will always adopt anti-Turkish positions once it becomes a member state, although Cypriot officials will certainly view European Foreign Policy as an instrument to gain leverage over Turkey.

Caucasus and Central Asia

The more Europe moves eastwards, the less it will be able to avoid the protracted conflicts that erupted at the end of the Soviet empire and which still have not found a solution. The conflicts in the Moldovan Transdniester, Abkhazia and Nagorno-Karabakh will probably rank high on the agenda of the CFSP, as will the security and stability of the transcaucasian republics. In these areas some of the candidates will bring much needed expertise. Polish and, to a lesser extent, Latvian diplomats and experts have been involved in most of the OSCE efforts and missions in the area¹². Czechoslovakia used to be a member of the Minsk group for the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and recently (11-12 May 2002) Prague hosted a new round of talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The Baltic countries have an important strength in that most of their senior civil servants, politicians, policemen, army officers, judges,... are highly familiar with not only the Russian language, but also the background and mentalities of the post-Soviet space. Already Latvian parliamentary co-operation with the three transcaucasian republics and Estonian co-operation with Georgia have been perceived as being significantly more successful than the (previous) efforts of Western experts, often unfamiliar with the environments in which they were working. Similarly, the EU will be better placed to play a larger role in Central Asia as officers from the Central and Eastern European candidate countries enter the CFSP machinery with their

knowledge of the region and their proficiency in Russian. This will be much needed in a time of renewed interest in the region.

Mediterranean

Much concern has been expressed in Southern Europe that the next enlargement could accentuate the tendency to concentrate on the problems of Eastern Europe with the correlated reduction in interest in the Mediterranean region. But the next wave of enlargement is likely to bring in two Mediterranean candidates which, despite their small size, have strong links in the area and a tradition of good relations with some of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries.

Malta has been an advocate of and a keen participant in all Pan-Mediterranean and Western Mediterranean initiatives (within the OSCE, the failed CSCM and 5+5 dialogue, the Euromediterranean partnership, etc.). It has traditionally had better links with Northern Africa than most EU member countries, and in particular it has a long tradition of good neighbourly relations with Libya. Malta is likely to align with the more pro-Arab positions in the Union. Cyprus is also intensively connected with many countries in the Eastern Mediterranean, keeps excellent political links with both Israel and the surrounding Arab countries and has been chosen by many multinational corporations as the location for their Middle East regional headquarters (Joseph, 1997: 123). It is geographically very close to the Middle East, and hopes to be able to put its experience in mediation amongst both parts of the conflict at the service of the EU¹³. Its privileged position was reinforced in May 2002, when Cyprus made a decisive contribution to European mediation efforts in the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis when it accepted to temporarily host 13 Palestinians whose deportation was a condition for Israeli withdrawal of the 38-day siege of the Bethlehem's Nativity Church. The EU warmly welcomed¹⁴ this contribution, which enabled one of the few successes of its efforts in the area.

But the Central European candidates also have important links with the area, including long-standing diplomatic and commercial ties with some of the Arab countries and with Israel. The relation with certain Arab countries contains both positive elements (traditional trade links, diplomatic links, student's exchanges,...) and

negative aspects -mainly the issue of debt, that has strained the relationship between CEECs and Arab countries since the eighties (Tovias, 2002). Relations with Israel became more intensive during the nineties with the signature of Free Trade Agreements by all Central European candidates, entering into force between 1997 (Czech Republic and Slovakia) and 1998 (Hungary, Poland and Slovenia). Therefore those countries may not have a clear stance for one side or another in the Arab-Israeli dispute, but are nevertheless likely to show an interest in events in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Transatlantic link

Relations with the United States have been a crucial part of the foreign policies of the former communist candidates since the fall of the Soviet bloc. Good relations with America were seen as a key asset in the integration in the network of Western organisations. In a time of intensive efforts to join both NATO and the EU, "the least thing [CEE Candidates] want to do is choose between Europe and the USA"¹⁵. This was the explanation, for instance, for their initially cautious reaction to the creation of the ESDP¹⁶. The candidates have expressed "a strong interest in keeping the EU-NATO link vital" (Khol, 2002: 27). Nowadays they still are very Atlanticist, but at the same time in favour of an EU military pillar, a position which could be compared to that of the Netherlands.

The CEE candidates cautiously avoid any open confrontation with the United States, and try to avoid positioning themselves in those issues (like the policy towards Iran or the Middle East conflict) on which the USA and the EU disagree. During the nineties the United States have pressured these countries to align with their position, and they have acquiesced. But as the political dialogue intensifies, three CEE candidates are already NATO members, and the EU enlargement seems closer, the candidates have started to pay more attention to the EU CFSP than to the foreign policy of the USA.

For example, the Czech Republic had been promoting the resolution condemning Cuban human rights abuses at the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva between 1999 and 2001¹⁷. In 2002, after consultations with the Belgian and Spanish presidency, and in view of the improvement of the EU-Cuba relationship, they decided to refrain from its promotion¹⁸. Another example is the reaction of the USA after the 11th September: when the EU Presidency offered its co-operation to fight international terrorism, the US government sent a list of 47 measures and asked the EU to take the candidates on board with the initiative. This is a good indication of the evolution from a more bilateral approach USA-candidates towards a perception of the candidates as closer and closer to the EU.

A third example in summer 2002 was the reaction of the candidates that are likely to form the first wave of enlargement to American pressure to sign bilateral treaties guaranteeing to the US that they would never accuse American nationals in the International Criminal Court. In contrast with Romania, the first country to sign such a treaty in order to increase its chances of becoming a NATO member, the candidates preferred to resist American pressures and in some cases, such as that of Slovakia, openly refused the request. At the same time, the irate reaction of senior European Officials, including the Commission's President, served as a warning to the candidates to EU enlargement to limit their divergence from European Foreign Policy.

Rest of the world

The main foreign policy interests of the candidates lie in the areas that we have already mentioned. None of them has strong colonial links with more remote areas of the world comparable to those of Belgium with Central Africa, Britain with South Asia or Spain with Latin America. Moreover, they mostly see their accession to the Union as the opportunity to start building those links from a stronger position, and in the main building from the EU political *acquis*. However, there are some links that the candidates value with certain extra-European areas. Some of them have a relatively

wide network of embassies covering many non-European countries, Poland and the Czech Republic in particular, and to a lesser extent Slovakia and Hungary.

Cyprus and Malta are members of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM) and of the Commonwealth. Cyprus in particular has good relations with countries such as India and Indonesia thanks to its links within the NAM¹⁹. It also has good relations with Iran, a country that it sees as the most effective counterweight to Turkey in the Moslem World and the Middle East. For the former Communist states, which had extensive relations with some Third World countries because of ideological affinity, the maintenance of such links in more recent years has not been easy. However, certain domains of foreign policy such as the scholarships policy have maintained the link²⁰, and when a development policy was initially put in place by Poland and the Czech Republic, the first non-European beneficiaries were states which had important links with the Soviet bloc. Certain links from the time of the Comecon have been maintained with the Central Asian republics, Mongolia, Vietnam, etc.

Other strengths and expertise

Development co-operation

None of the candidates had a fully-fledged development co-operation policy until the very late nineties, and in fact most of them have been and are recipients of development aid. As in the case of the Iberian enlargement, for most candidates accession will almost exactly coincide with the change from recipient to donor status, obviously conditioned by the modest financial possibilities of the candidates. At the moment they are in the process of concentrating their already existing efforts (scholarships, humanitarian aid, etc.) under one sole agency, in order to be ready to participate in the EU development policy.

The most obvious strength of the CEE candidates in terms of development co-operation is the assistance in transition processes, from non-democratic to democratic regimes and especially from planned to free-market economies. Their

unique first-hand experience in such processes, combined with their knowledge of the systems from which countries come and the personal and administrative links gives them very valuable assets that could be useful to the EU development co-operation efforts in areas such as the Balkans, the former Soviet Union and other communist or former communist countries (Mongolia, Vietnam, Laos, etc.). The practice of the candidate countries that already have a development policy in place, such as Poland and the Czech Republic, shows the tendency to concentrate on these areas of expertise²¹ and on the countries with historical ties to the Soviet Bloc. The main recipients of Polish aid in 2000 were Bosnia-Herzegovina, Vietnam, Ukraine, Macedonia, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Yemen (Pol-Aid, 2001), those of Czech aid in 2001 the Ukraine, Vietnam, Mongolia, China and Bosnia-Herzegovina (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2002).

Security issues

The accession of “countries who take security seriously because they had to do without it in the past” (The Economist, 4 May 2002) will probably help to keep security issues high on the EU foreign policy agenda, particularly if some of them remain outside NATO. The candidates will not bring large military capabilities or expertise in crucial fields like intelligence or technology. However, some of them do have some expertise in very specific areas concerning international security that might prove useful to the EU as a whole.

The candidates’ participation in Peace Keeping efforts has been disproportionately important taking into account their relative size. All CEE candidates have significant participation in UN military endeavours, to levels well above their ranking in either population or economic terms. Some of them have highly valued specialised units which bring expertise in fields like de-mining (Slovenia) or chemical warfare (Czech Republic). Moreover, some of the candidates have been very active in the United Nations and in general in the international fora dealing with disarmament and arms control²².

Minorities

All of the CEE countries have seen the question of national minorities arise in their national arena with greater or lesser intensity in the first ten years after 1989. Some of them (Lithuania, Hungary, Slovenia), with relatively small minorities at home and concerned about their own minorities abroad, have adopted generous and 'exemplary' regulations which extensively protect the rights of minorities. Others had important minorities and the treatment of those minorities has been one of the main concerns they had to tackle in order to deflect criticism from the West, and to improve relations with their neighbours: Estonia and Latvia with Russian minorities, Slovakia with ethnic Hungarians, the Czech Republic with the Roma/Sinti. All of them can provide examples of accommodation of national minorities and of democratic ways of solving these issues, along with valuable expertise in the area. Cyprus, which has direct experience of refugees and displaced people, will have to face the question of political integration of a minority when a settlement for the status of the island is achieved.

Law of the Sea

When Cyprus and Malta become EU member states, the EU merchant fleet will be the largest in the world. Both countries have large merchant fleets: Malta has the fifth and Cyprus the sixth largest fleet by flag of registry²³. This has important consequences in terms of internal transport policy²⁴, but also affects the external interests of the Union. The international negotiations on the Law of the Sea is an area in which these two candidates will bring new interests, but also a valuable expertise. The accession of Cyprus and Malta will also extend the area of competence (and conflict) of the EU fisheries policy in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean, raising issues such as illegal fishing in Cypriot territorial waters (Tovias, 2002).

Conclusions

The new wave of enlargement of the European Union will have important consequences for the role that it can play on the world stage. These consequences are concerned with internal evolution, the change in size, territory and borders, and the inclusion of new members with their own priorities. Trying to anticipate some of these consequences may be a useful exercise to test our understanding of the way in which European Foreign Policy works and the way it relates to the foreign policies of the members state.

Thus, we want to conclude this chapter by proposing five hypotheses based on a comparative analysis of the foreign policies of the ten best placed candidates to the next wave of enlargement and on our knowledge of European Foreign Policy. The comparison between those hypotheses and the actual evolution of European Foreign Policy and of the policies of the new member states after enlargement will allow us to test the explanatory power of our assumptions about the relationship between national foreign policies and European Foreign Policy.

Hypothesis 1: enlargement will bring to the CFSP, at least in the initial stages, relatively minor changes compared to changes in other EU policies. The candidates will not, by and large, be dissenters within the framework of CFSP, and their attitude in that area will be mostly reactive, following the larger member states' interests. The main exceptions will be in terms of the policy towards Eastern and South Eastern Europe, and in particular the policy towards Turkey.

Hypothesis 2: the foreign policy of the EU will have a more intensive, more coherent and more effective policy towards the Eastern part of the continent. Some 'problematic' areas relatively neglected at present will become significantly more important on the EU foreign agenda: Belarus, Moldova, the Caucasus. South Eastern Europe, including the three candidates which have the least chance of accessing in the first wave (Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey) and the Western Balkans will probably be the regions which will attract most attention in European Foreign Policy.

Hypothesis 3: enlargement will bring few changes to the policies towards other areas of the world. The Maltese and Cypriot accessions, together with the links and interests of other candidates in the Mediterranean region, will probably compensate the renewed interest in the East, and Mediterranean policy will remain a high priority. Policies towards more distant regions are likely to be relatively unaffected by the new interests of the candidates, who will develop their strategies towards those areas keeping in mind the European Foreign Policy *acquis*.

Hypothesis 4: most of the candidate countries are relatively small. They are unlikely to have enough specialists and resources to cover all areas in depth and to participate substantially in all debates. They will instead specialise to a certain extent in a number of geographical and thematic priorities in which they have a particular expertise in order to have a stronger impact in CFSP.

Hypothesis 5: the foreign policies of the new members, having achieved their main goal of integration into the Western European institutions, will become more proactive and develop more global interests. Those interests will not be perceived in contradiction with, but as a logical consequence of, participation in European Foreign Policy. They will think more globally than they do now.

Notes

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² For a detailed discussion of the concept of 'small state' within the European Union see (Archer and Nugent 2002)

³ The Commission made it explicit in its opinion about Cyprus in 1993 that it should leave the Non Aligned Movement. Since the movement does not have formal institutions, this is interpreted as stopping attending their meetings, which they expect to do once they become members.

⁴ This and the following non attributed quotes come from the interviews held by the author with the diplomats responsible for CFSP at the candidate countries' missions to the European

Union on an anonymity base. The complete list of interviewees is included at the end of this chapter.

⁵ The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland became full members of NATO in March 1999. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia and Slovakia (together with Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Romania) have applied to become members.

⁶ For a complete study on the views of Eastern European politicians and senior civil servants about EU enlargement see (Light, White and Loewenhardt, 2000) and (Loewenhardt, Hill and Light, 2001).

⁷ See note 3.

⁸ For instance the Euroregions 'Nemunas' (created in 1998) with two Lithuanian counties and one Belarussian province, or the 'Land of Lakes' Euroregion (born in 2000) comprising border districts in Latvia, Lithuania and Belarus.

⁹ For instance Polish officers prepared some background materials for the last EU/Ukraine meetings and Polish, Czech, Slovak and Hungarian officers were consulted in the preparation of the EU Action Plan for the Ukraine concerning migration and border matters during the Swedish Presidency.

¹⁰ Well behind Germany and at a similar level as Italy (UN, Statistical Yearbook 2000)

¹¹ Recently friendly links between Cyprus and Russia have consolidated in several fields: the arrival of Russian residents (often attracted by the money-laundering facilities in the island) and tourists, the common Orthodox heritage (shown for instance in the sympathy for Serbia in 1999), important arms sales including T-80 tanks and S-300 missiles, etc.

¹² Poland has consolidated as the fifth contributor to OSCE in terms of human resources.

¹³ Already now the office of Mr. Moratinos, the EU special envoy to the Middle East, is in Cyprus.

¹⁴ The Spanish foreign Minister, who at the time represented the Presidency of the EU, expressed his 'deep indebtedness' to Cyprus for its 'swift and generous' contribution (EFE, 9 May 2002).

¹⁵ See note 3.

¹⁶ See the contributions in (Missiroli, 2002)

¹⁷ The first time it was presented jointly with Poland after extensive consultations with the USA. In 2001 the resolution was only very narrowly approved.

¹⁸ Uruguay promoted it this year, with the support of other Latin American countries, and the result was the break up of relationships with Cuba after harsh declarations of the Cuban leadership.

¹⁹ It is interesting that, for instance, Cyprus found it difficult to align with the EU Common Position on Zimbabwe, a country with which Cyprus had good relationships, and the decision to do so had to be taken at Cabinet level

²⁰ The list of the ten largest national groups of Polish scholarships awardees in 2000 reminds us of Soviet foreign Policy: Belarus, Kazakhstan, Vietnam, Bulgaria, Syria, Palestine, Albania, Libya, Yemen and Laos. (Pol-Aid, 2001)

²¹ Examples from Pol-Aid, the Polish development co-operation agency, projects in 2000 include support for local government in Serbia and Montenegro, Albania, Macedonia and Kosovo; stock exchange training course for Vietnam; seminars on small and medium enterprises in Belarus, ... Ibid.

²² Hungary led the failed initiative to draft a Biological Weapons Convention, Slovakia –that has an important experience in conversion of military industry –participates actively in the UN

disarmament programs, and the Czech Republic is active in international efforts against Chemical weapons proliferation and UN programs for the destruction of light weapons.

²³ As of 1 January, 2002. Source: US Department of Transportation

²⁴ After the disaster of the 'Erika', a supertanker of Maltese flag which sunk off the coast of Brittany, releasing tons of oil, France and the European Commission have been putting additional pressure on Malta on the Transport chapter, one of the tougher areas of the Maltese accession negotiations.

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