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# Enlargement

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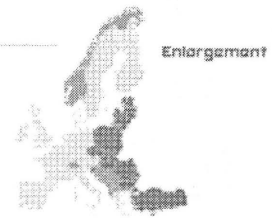
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WEEKLY NEWS  
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Welcome to Enlargement Weekly. This weekly bulletin provides an overview of where European Union enlargement has got to, who's doing what in the EU, in the institutions and candidate countries, and how the main challenges are being met.

As a hectic 2002 comes to an end, the next edition of Enlargement Weekly, which will be published on Monday 16th December will be the last for this year. Hopefully it will end on a high note, with the details of an historic conclusion to the European Council in Copenhagen, that sets the seal on the Union's fifth enlargement. Enlargement Weekly will then be back in the New Year.

DG Enlargement Information Team.

### ONE MORE LAP BEFORE COPENHAGEN

The Copenhagen countdown is coming to an end. On 12-13 December, the heads of state or government of the 15 European Union member states will convene in Copenhagen where - according to the Danish Presidency - "It seems that the European Council can complete the enlargement negotiations with ten countries: Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia."

The agenda for the European Council meeting will concentrate on enlargement. In addition to formalising the conclusion of accession negotiations, it is also scheduled to agree a "package" for Bulgaria and Romania, so as to strengthen their membership prospects. This will consist of detailed roadmaps for the negotiations and increased pre-accession support. And the Council will decide on the next phase of Turkey's candidature: "Turkey's accession will take place in accordance with the same principles and criteria as are applied to the other candidate countries", says the Presidency.

"The forthcoming European Council meeting has a decisive role to play in rounding off the Danish Presidency", Denmark's Minister for European Affairs, Bertel Haarder, told the European Parliament plenary in Brussels on December 4. "After an autumn where negotiations on accession - and on very difficult issues - have been proceeding at a rapid pace, we are now nearing the decision which will set the seal on the reunification of the European continent: the conclusion of accession negotiations with the first group of candidate countries with a view to their admission on 1 May 2004."

The final, decisive negotiations with these ten countries are now under way. The Presidency has presented a negotiating package for each of the candidate countries over recent days, representing the Presidency's effort to resolve the final issues in the negotiations. And "the Presidency hopes that these packages will clear the way for the actual negotiations to be completed before the European Council meets in Copenhagen", said Haarder.

The Presidency is making no secret of the fact that the concluding negotiations are difficult. "But with the right willingness to compromise on the part of both present and future Member States, I am convinced that we shall achieve a successful outcome", Haarder said.

The heads of state and government of the candidate countries are also invited to Copenhagen, and will have meetings in the margins with their colleagues from the EU member states.

The General Affairs Council in Brussels on December 10 will fine-tune the Copenhagen accession decisions, on the basis of the discussions that the Presidency has been holding with the ten candidates concerned. The Presidency believes its package - which has not yet been endorsed by the member states - is broadly acceptable to most of the candidates. It predicted on December 6 that six candidate countries can accept it now - on condition that Copenhagen endorse the deals. Two other countries still want a bigger lump sum in budgetary compensation and two others have unsatisfied demands on quotas, direct payments and lump sum payments.

The Presidency says it has made no major changes during the last week to its improved offer of late November: four countries that would not have benefited financially on the previous calculations (the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Slovenia and Malta) are being offered an additional € 300 million altogether under the revised Presidency deal, and some quotas (but not milk or sugar) have been raised by small amounts, where candidates have provided figures that justify it. And the Presidency is prepared to extend its offer of a topping-up of direct payments at national level - by using up to 20% of EU rural development funds - so that it could be tweaked to a 20% average across the first three years, to allow up to 25% to be used in 2004, 20% in 2005 and 15% in 2006.

But some member states have objected. They say they cannot approve the financial package before the General Affairs Council, and that the Presidency has gone beyond the absolute limit. The Presidency was resigned by December 6 to leaving the financial package for final resolution only at Copenhagen. But it still hopes member states will approve everything else at the General Affairs Council.

European Commission President Romano Prodi said last week that the Commission "fully supports the Danish Presidency in its efforts to reach a compromise" on all the outstanding matters. He disagreed with member states that have complained that the offer is too generous. "Like the President of the Council, Mr Rasmussen, I consider that a reasonable offer should be made -- an offer that allows the candidate countries to defend the Copenhagen outcome before public opinion in their own countries."

Meanwhile, the Presidency and the European Commission may meet candidates on the fringes of the General Affairs Council - to discuss detailed bilateral questions ranging from state aids or cabotage to lynx hunting, and even including quotas. There are up to 100 such bilateral issues, the Presidency points out, and they need to be resolved before Copenhagen.

#### **LIFE BEYOND COPENHAGEN**

The Presidency is also looking beyond Copenhagen. There are to be complex formal processes for completing this wave of enlargement, for how the EU will function after enlargement, and how it will adapt itself in the intermediate period between the first accessions and the renewal of the European Parliament and the European Commission.

"After the conclusion of the negotiations, the accession treaty, a 6,000-page tome, must also be completed", the Presidency points out. This will require endorsement by the European Parliament early next year, so that it can be signed in Athens in April 2003. Then, after due ratification in member states and candidate countries, the new member states can join on May 1 2004.

The Presidency's thinking is that the new member states will then each immediately nominate one Commissioner, to be added to the current college, but without portfolio, until a new Commission is inaugurated - probably in early November 2004. "We owe it to the forthcoming member states not to postpone the accession longer than is absolutely necessary", said Bertel Haarder, Danish minister for European affairs, last week - stressing that this may mean some additional transitional arrangements, particularly for the additional Commissioners.

But the Presidency hopes for "the Parliament's understanding for the situation in which the Commission will find itself in the period between the new member states' accession and the inauguration of the new Commission" - and that the Parliament will agree that, for the period between accession and the inauguration of a new Commission, the Commissioners from the new countries will not be subject to hearings and approval by the Parliament. "In this way we can avoid prejudicing the decision to be taken by the new Parliament on the new Commission".

It would also be very difficult politically for the new member states to accept that the Commissioners whom they nominate should have to be approved by a Parliament in which they are not yet represented by voting members, he pointed out. "And with this solution, we would also avoid prejudicing the choice by the Commission President-designate of candidates to make up the new Commission."

The suggestion raised in the European Parliament to bring the elections forward from June 2004 to an earlier date such as 9 May "is not a realistic option", for reasons of EU law, the Presidency insists - although Haarder told the Parliament last week he personally liked the idea.

"The institutional questions are important to address now. This is a necessary part of the entire enlargement process. Questions concerning the voting rights of individual countries in the Council and their representation in the European Parliament are necessary aspects of the accession Treaty. There is already a need now to lay down clear provisions for the transition period. It is a question of introducing primary legislation in line with the Treaty".

On the question of the new member states' full participation in the forthcoming Intergovernmental Conference - which will reform the EU Treaty - the European Council has defined a clear position, says the Presidency: "We cannot refrain from giving the new member states a vote in the negotiations that will shape both their future and our common future. It would be wrong of us to do anything different."

The Copenhagen Council will also be looking at how the Council itself will function after enlargement. The Presidency will present an initial report on its reflections on question such as the use of languages, and reform of the way the Presidency operates. The Presidency's report sets out three models which the Presidency might follow in future, and includes consideration of an increased role for the High Representative and of an elected President of the European Council. But it is not intended that the Copenhagen Council should take a decision on those models. These discussions will continue into the future: the deliberations on structuring the future EU Presidency go on under the auspices of the incoming Greek EU Presidency in the first half of 2003, and the Convention on the Future of Europe will also come up with views.

#### **WARNINGS OF WORK STILL TO BE DONE**

"The deal is not yet done. The final round of negotiations is far from being

concluded", European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen said in Vienna last week. At present, the positions of the member states and of the acceding countries "are not compatible", and "severe gaps have to be bridged" before Copenhagen, he said: "If somebody believes that the Copenhagen European Council will be an event where we can celebrate and nothing else - I must tell him, that he is wrong".

The Commissioner said he did not expect the final compromise before Copenhagen, and "in order to get it, a lot of political courage and strong leadership is required". But he was confident nonetheless of a successful outcome: "I am firmly convinced that we will master the most difficult piece of the negotiations - the so-called end game - in time for Copenhagen", he asserted.

In addition to the final details of negotiations, he reminded his audience that to achieve success, a range of other problems have to be solved - even if they are not problems caused by enlargement. "New challenges and risks emerged due to the opening up of borders, the significant welfare gap and the process of system transformation as such. Most of these new risks remain at the centre of current public debate: illegal migration, illegal employment, growing international organised crime, unfair conditions of competition, corruption".

It was not correct to attribute these risks to the enlargement process, he insisted. "All these problems exist. But they do not exist because of enlargement; they exist because of the dramatic changes in the European landscape in 1989-90". But he said that enlargement "is the only way to address and to solve these problems" - through establishing common rules, defending common values, and creating prosperity and equal chances and opportunities on both sides of the former Iron Curtain. "Enlargement is not the problem, it is the solution", he said.

#### **MORE DEBATE ON TURKEY'S ACCESSION PROSPECTS**

Danish foreign affairs minister Per Stig Møller visited Turkey on 2 December, and met the chairman of the AK Party, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Prime Minister Gül and minister for foreign affairs Yâkış. He said afterwards: "It is most encouraging that the new Turkish government is determined to continue the reform process. The reforms carried out in Turkey over the last year have been impressive. These major changes are inspired by Turkey's desire to join the EU and the European ideals. The Chairman gave me details about his nine-point programme. We are encouraged by these plans, as they address some key issues." He also took the opportunity to stress that "Turkey is a candidate country to the European Union. This was agreed upon in Helsinki in 1999". But he said it was still too early to say exactly what the decision will be in Copenhagen.

Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen planned to meet Mr. Erdogan in Copenhagen on Monday 9 December. He said he expected the AK leader to present an account of the further measures to be taken to reform Turkish society.

European Commission President Romano Prodi also added his voice to the support for Turkey's progress - "in particular in the light of contacts Commissioner Verheugen and I have had recently with the leader of the AK Party, Mr Erdogan". Since the Helsinki European Council, the Commission regards Turkey as a candidate on an equal footing with other candidate countries, and therefore subject to the same assessment criteria, he insisted. Assessing the new government's legislative programme he said: "It plans to present several series of legislative measures, and even constitutional amendments, to Parliament in order to bolster democracy and human rights in Turkey. The European Union must encourage this process. It is in our interest that a great partner such as Turkey, whose role is enormously important strategically, politically and economically, should reinforce its institutions, improve the quality of its democratic life and commit itself to the values and principles we share." He conceded, however, that "before we take

an irreversible step, we must be sure that Turkey meets all the conditions fully, as we have in the case of the other candidate countries."

And speaking last week of prospects for a Cyprus settlement, European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen said: "The new Turkish government shows an encouraging and promising attitude".

Meanwhile, the European Parliament foreign affairs committee debated Turkey last week, in the light of the report from MEP Joost Lagendijk (Greens/European Free Alliance) on the visit by a European Parliament delegation to Ankara on 25-26 November. "This visit enabled us to meet the new Turkish government and learn more about its political programme", said Lagendijk.

MEPs discussed the question of setting a date for the start of accession negotiations at the Copenhagen summit. Andrew Duff (ELDR) of the UK, who was a member of the delegation, called on the summit to put forward a clear timetable for opening negotiations with Turkey, provided that the Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş agreed to negotiate on the basis of the proposals made by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. But Michael Gahler (EPP) of Germany thought that the emphasis should be on meeting the accession criteria rather than on setting a date.

Part of the debate focused on the role of the army in Turkey. Ioannis Souladakis (Socialists) of Greece argued that Turkey should amend its constitution in order to distribute military and civilian roles differently. Philippe Morillon (EPP) of France pointed out that the EU had always insisted on pre-conditions for negotiations, namely a reduction in the role of the army, respect for human rights and a settlement of the Cyprus question. "But we are not seeing any real progress", he claimed. And Arie Oostlander (EPP) of the Netherlands claimed that, given the power of the military, "the civil authorities are only a façade"; security concerns took clear precedence over respect for human rights, he said. But Catherine Lalumière (Socialists) of France emphasised that in Turkey it was the army that safeguarded the secular nature of the state. If the role of the army were limited this could work to the advantage of militant Islam, she said: "At Copenhagen a sufficiently strong political signal must be sent out so as not to 'break the spirit' of reform in Turkey. It would be unwise to say 'no' to all Turkey's demands". Michael Gahler however remarked that "if reduced influence of the army leads to an increase in militant Islam, Turkey must stay outside the Union".

#### **ENSURING LINKS WITH NEW NEIGHBOURS**

The expectations over the Copenhagen summit delivering EU enlargement are also driving a process of intense reflection on what happens beyond the future EU's borders - as leading European Commission figures demonstrated last week.

"It is important that Europe as a whole benefits from stability and welfare", said European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen. "We need an architecture of Europe's security arrangements that is not too fragmented". He said it was in the interests of the EU that future EU members in central and Eastern Europe will be joining NATO, following NATO's Prague summit in November. And the countries bordering the Western Balkans - Slovenia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria - "have a special role to play", he said. "We hope that their EU membership will have an integrating and stabilising effect on the entire region". He also looked forward to the time when Romania, as an EU member state, will be able to exert a positive influence beyond the Balkans, for example, on Moldova.

And because enlargement brings the EU much closer to Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, "(o)ne of the strategic questions for the future therefore is to build up the closest possible relations with these new neighbours. We have no interest in becoming a Fortress Europe. On the contrary, we would want our neighbours to enjoy the benefits of enlargement -- political stability and economic success in particular. We do not want new division lines Europe. To this end, we need more ties, more common interests, more co-operation, in



all areas", the Commissioner said.

But "this does not mean joining the EU, at least not for the foreseeable future. It means finding ways to achieve the same positive results we experienced with the enlargement preparations without putting the question of EU membership on the table.... Enlargement will certainly help us to find the right answers as to how to master this challenge", said Verheugen.

European Commission President Romano Prodi went even further. "We should open up the prospect of the Balkan countries' accession", he said last week. He also spoke of "a new system of relations between the enlarged EU and an encircling band of friendly countries stretching from the Maghreb to Russia". But he recognised that the EU must be able to answer people in the present member states who are already starting to ask "Where does Europe stop?".

Since "clearly we cannot keep on enlarging indefinitely, taking in every country that might apply to join", because of the need to maintain the EU's internal equilibrium and cohesiveness, with other countries the EU should "establish special relations under a broad proximity policy". Prodi suggested an approach based on "a broader idea of 'belonging' that will anchor stability and security, both inside and outside our borders". This, he said, could consist of a framework for "co-operation with our neighbours where we could share everything but institutions. And the economic basis for this joint political venture could be an inclusive common European economic space".

## **Enlargement news in brief**

### *European Parliament backs enlargement priority in 2003 work programme*

The European Parliament gave its support on December 5 to the European Commission's work programme for 2003 - with its insistence on making a priority of preparing for enlargement. Parliament also underlined the necessity for the Commission to monitor the enlargement process until accession of new member states. And MEPs welcomed the proposal to reassess relations with the enlarged Union's neighbours and, in particular, the priority given to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and the improvement of relations with the countries of south-east Europe and other countries, such as Russia, Ukraine and Moldova.

### *EU helps Czechs fight illegal drugs*

A long term European Union-funded project to tackle illegal drugs through Czech-Austrian co-operation was formally concluded on December 6. The project, with € 750,000 of EU money from the Phare twinning project, also benefited from Czech government funding. Austrian experts seconded to the Czech Republic have helped transfer know-how and best practices, and are leaving behind them a fully operational national centre for monitoring illegal drugs in the Czech Republic. It has enhanced co-operation between the Czech police, customs and the national drugs monitoring centre. And the project also improved co-ordination of drug policy, not only between the different ministries concerned, but also within and between the regions, assisting regional drug co-ordinators to fulfil their new tasks after the administrative reforms in the Czech Republic. As a direct result of the project, the Czech national monitoring centre has been invited to join the European drug monitoring agency in Lisbon with observer status in January 2003.

### *European bishops call for "hope, trust and solidarity" in enlargement*

The accession of ten new member states to the European Union represents "a moment of transformation in our continent's history. It will constitute a profoundly significant step towards a closer union and a new order through which Europeans of every nationality, culture and belief will be able to fulfil

their hopes and can contribute to the authentic common good. For us therefore, this is not the 'enlargement' but the 'Europeanisation' of the European Union", according to a statement on the accession of new member states to the European Union by the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community, in the run-up to the European Council in Copenhagen.

"Inspired by the Gospel, and in order to meet the imminent challenge of integrating ten new Member States into this community, we commend to our political leaders and all current and future citizens of the European Union hope, trust and, above all, solidarity", the bishops said. They look forward to the debate in the European Convention - "the first occasion on which representatives of both the current and the new member states have been invited to co-determine the future of the European Union" - as an opportunity to define "the values and objectives of our common project. With hope, trust and solidarity, we as Bishops undertake to continue supporting and contributing creatively to that project and we encourage all believers and citizens to share in this common endeavour".

### Enlargement Mini-Briefs

- The European Parliament approved a budgetary proposal on December 5 allowing transfers from 2002 to 2003 within the European Union budget to pay for the extra administrative costs of enlargement.
- "Enlargement is not finished in Copenhagen", said European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen last week. "The present round will be completed only when Romania and Bulgaria join. The decision to prepare these two countries for full membership, taken 1999 in Helsinki, was far-sighted and a clear strategic choice. We need these countries if we want to achieve stability in the south-east of Europe. Both countries contribute already now a lot to this goal".
- According to the Danish Presidency's package, the net costs of enlargement for the EU 15 expressed in percentage of the EU GDP would be around 0.015 % in 2004, 0.033% of GDP in 2005 and 0.047% in 2006.
- Presenting the annual report of the European Court of Auditors for 2001 to the European Parliament on 4 December, its President, Juan Manuel Fabra Vallés, highlighted delays in the implementation of pre-accession aid to the EU candidate countries. He drew particular attention to "the case of the Sapard programme, where only 9,2 % of the appropriations were disbursed. What is more, only € 1 million were received by the final beneficiaries of this programme." If the pace of implementation does not pick up, appropriations will have to be cancelled in 2003, he warned. The Commission must continue its effort to clear the accounts by cancelling those commitments which can no longer be implemented, he counselled.

### Agenda

See also the new "Enlargement events calendar" on the DG Enlargement web site at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/events/calendar.htm>. This gives a run-down of public events related to the enlargement of the EU taking place in all current and future member states.

Date	Event
<b>December</b>	
Monday 9th- Tuesday 10th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Meeting of the European Economic and Social Committee EU-Romania joint co-operation committee, Brussels.</li> <li>■ European Union General Affairs and External Relations Council will discuss preparations for the</li> </ul>

- European Council in Copenhagen, enlargement, and the use of languages in an enlarged Union.
  - Negotiations at ministerial level with the candidate countries - with the hope that negotiations with some of the candidates can be closed; Brussels
- Tuesday 10th
  - EU-Estonia joint parliamentary committee, Brussels
  - European Parliament press conference on enlargement and crossborder regions by Joachim Wuermeling (EPP-ED, D) and Paul Rübzig (EPP-ED, A)
- Wednesday 11th
  - European Parliament President Pat Cox visits Warsaw
  - European Transport Commissioner Loyola de Palacio receives Lithuanian economy minister Petras Cesna
  - European Budget Commissioner Michael Schreyer meets Romania European affairs minister Hildegard Puwak, Bucharest
  - European Economic and Social Committee Plenary discusses draft opinions on the impact of the enlargement of the European Union on the single market and on economic and social consequences of the enlargement in the candidate countries
- Thursday 12th
  - European Budget Commissioner Michael Schreyer addresses heads of supreme audit institutions of the candidate countries, Bucharest
- Thursday 12th, Friday 13th
  - Copenhagen European Council - enlargement may be on the agenda again, taking account of the aim of concluding accession negotiations by the end of the year.
  - European Court of Auditors meeting with heads of the supreme audit institutions of the candidate countries, Bucharest
  - OECD conference on governance and partnerships in transition economies, Český Krumlov, Czech Republic
  - European Budget Commissioner Michael Schreyer visits Romania
  - European Council in Copenhagen aims to complete the first stage of the enlargement process by concluding accession negotiations with Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia. EU member states will be invited by the Presidency to endorse the result of the negotiations, including, if necessary, any additional agreements reached in the margins of the Copenhagen European Council. On Bulgaria and Romania the Council will be invited to conclude that the objective is to welcome them as members of the European Union in 2007. Conclusions will also be sought on Turkey.
- Sunday 22nd
  - Presidential elections, Lithuania (second round on January 5, 2003)
- January 2003**
- Details tbc
  - Presidential elections, Czech Republic
- Sunday 5th
  - Lithuanian Presidential elections
- February 2003**
- 9th and 16th
  - Presidential, elections, Cyprus



24th                   ■ Commissioner Erkki Liikanen visit Hungary

### March 2003

Sunday 2nd           ■ Estonian national election

Wednesday 5th       ■ Parliamentary elections, Estonia

### April 2003

Saturday 12th        ■ Referendum in Hungary on EU accession

Wednesday 16th      ■ Signature of the Accession Treaty, Athens

### May 2003

### June 2003

Friday 6th and Saturday 7th   ■ Referendum on the accession treaty, Slovakia

Sunday 15th and Monday 16th   ■ Referendum on the accession treaty, Czech Republic

### July/August 2003

Details tbc           ■ Presidential elections (elected by the parliament), Latvia

### 2004

#### May 2004

Saturday 1st         ■ Entry into force of the accession treaty (according to conclusions of General Affairs Council, 18.11.02)

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