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English ▾

EUROPA > European Commission > Enlargement > Library > Enlargement Weekly

Contact | Search

What's new? | Site map | Index | FAQ

<< HOME

ALL ABOUT...

Enlargement

Candidate countries

Negotiations

Financial assistance

Communication strategy

USEFUL INFORMATION

Who does what?

Public opinion

Events

Library

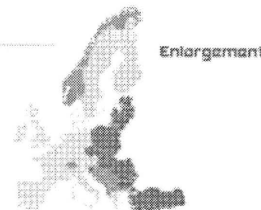
Research Bulletin

Links

>> E.U in the world

PRESS CORNER

Enlargement Weekly - 07 October 2003



WEEKLY NEWS
Newsletter arc
Subscribe

- ▣ [Acceding states sit as equals at IGC](#)
- ▣ [Enlarging Europe's transport networks "will boost growth"](#)
- ▣ [Work needed on discrimination in future member states](#)
- ▣ [Strengthening European industry after accession](#)
- ▣ [Solana salutes Poland - and enlists its aid](#)

- ▣ [Enlargement Mini-Briefs](#)
- ▣ [Enlargement agenda](#)

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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.

ACCEDING STATES SIT AS EQUALS AT IGC

The European Union's Inter-Governmental Conference opened in Rome last weekend - and also marked the first formal EU session where the acceding states took a full part. The IGC, which is tasked with agreeing a Constitutional Treaty for the enlarged Union, met at the level of heads of state and government, and started its examination of the draft Constitution drawn up by the Convention on the future of Europe over the last sixteen months.

The Italian Presidency is aiming to conclude the work before the end of this year, so as to allow European citizens to vote in the European Parliamentary elections of June 2004 with a clear picture of the Union's new institutional architecture.

The Presidency describes the European Constitution as "a fundamental component in the process of European integration", which "will give the enlarged Europe strength, effectiveness and dynamism and allow it to become a factor for stability and solidarity on the world scene".

The draft on which the 25 states - and Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey as observers - are to discuss over the coming months is already the subject of broad agreement. But there are some vital issues likely to be discussed, mainly relating to the balance between the EU institutions and the EU member states. So national voting rights, how the EU Presidency should operate in the future, and how many Commissioners should be appointed have acquired major importance in the debates.

None of these issues were resolved at the meeting in Rome - which was more of a ceremonial exercise to launch the intensive series of discussions that will now take place, largely between foreign affairs ministers.

ENLARGING EUROPE'S TRANSPORT NETWORKS "WILL BOOST GROWTH"

Boosting the competitiveness of the enlarged European Union is the

underlying motivation for European Commission proposals last week for enlarging Europe's transport networks. It proposed a series of priority projects costing €220 billion - including the extension of the major routes to the future member states.

The list includes the rail links from Lyon and Trieste to Koper, Ljubljana, Budapest and the Ukrainian border, from Paris to Vienna and Bratislava, the Athens-Sofia-Budapest-Vienna-Prague-Nurnberg-Dresden route, the "Rail Baltica" line linking Warsaw-Kaunas-Riga-Tallinn, and the Gdansk-Warsaw-Brno-Bratislava route, with branches to Katowice and Zilina and Nove Misto. The motorway from Igoumenitsa and Patra via Athens, with its links to Sofia and Budapest, and branches towards Bucharest and Constanza, is due for completion by 2010, as is the motorway linking Gdansk-Brno-Bratislava-Vienna. And work on the Rhine/Meuse-Main-Danube inland waterway route is also given high priority, including the cross-border section from Vienna to Bratislava, the section between Palkovicovo and Mohacs, and dealing with bottlenecks in Romania and Bulgaria. Proposals for "motorways of the sea" include links between the Baltic Sea member states and member states in central Europe, connections from the Adriatic Sea to the Ionian Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean, including Cyprus, and connections from south-west Europe to Malta and south-east Europe.

"The trans-European networks are a motor and precondition for Europe's economic development and cohesion", said European Transport Commissioner Loyola de Palacio. New rules and structures were also proposed to attract more funding to the priority projects.

This "should help to make enlargement a success and provide the Union with a new opportunity to reduce congestion and encourage inter-modality", said de Palacio. The proposal follows up the report earlier this year by the High-Level Group on the TEN-T chaired by Karel Van Miert, and is part of the European growth initiative designed to mobilise new investment in the trans-European networks and in research, development and innovation in order to boost the competitiveness of the Union.

WORK NEEDED ON DISCRIMINATION IN FUTURE MEMBER STATES

Some progress has been made on protection against racial discrimination in employment in the future member states, but there is still a lot to do in tackling racial and ethnic discrimination outside the workplace - in education, social protection, housing, and access to goods and services. That's the conclusion of a study released last week by the European Commission, "Equality, Diversity and Enlargement".

EU anti-discrimination rules must be in place before accession, the Commission insisted as it released the report. "The current and future members of the European Union must send out a strong signal on the defence of fundamental human rights," said Anna Diamantopoulou, Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs. So the future member states must act vigorously to combat discrimination "on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation", she said. She hoped the monitoring reports due to be released this autumn "will show continued progress on these issues within candidate countries."

STRENGTHENING EUROPEAN INDUSTRY AFTER ACCESSION

European industry - and particularly manufacturing industry - "is having to cope with sweeping changes, including the introduction of the euro and enlargement." And it merits fuller support from the European Union so that it prospers after accession, according to a report adopted last week by the European Parliament's industry committee.

The report, on industrial policy in an enlarged Europe, will be debated in plenary session later this month.

"Given the scale of enlargement and the striking difference between the

industrial fabric of the EU of 15 Member States and that of the applicant countries, industrial policy must be addressed as a matter of urgency, so that the potential to be derived from expanding the European market to include millions of new consumers, workers and entrepreneurs can be realised to the full, whilst ensuring that the inevitable and necessary adjustments and restructuring are handled to the best possible effect", it says.

The Parliament's economic affairs committee also takes a bullish view in its input to the report: enlargement "will be a major source of opportunities for industry in the new and existing member states alike; it should make a positive contribution to the overall EU industrial policy", it said. And it noted that accession countries' industry "has undergone significant restructuring and modernisation in the last decade", so there is every reason to expect enlargement "to make a positive contribution to industrial competitiveness".

Europe's industrial policy should promote the development of new sectors with high potential, but should also cover "sound management of the more traditional sectors", the industry committee will tell the Parliament plenary session. Regular and thorough monitoring "will make it possible to anticipate restructuring and thus, in good time, to establish programmes to reconvert industrial areas, bringing together all the parties concerned, with a view to fashioning a forward-looking concept of industrial policy in an enlarged Europe", it recommends.

The committee input to the discussion also includes a warning about the risks from taking the wrong approach to the challenge: "Strategies for economic development based on the competitive advantage of social dumping, particularly with regard to wages, will prove to be a hindrance for sound economic development".

SOLANA SALUTES POLAND - AND ENLISTS ITS AID

"Poland has now arrived where she has always belonged: in a Europe where people live in freedom, with their fundamental rights being guaranteed by governments they have elected freely", Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, said in his acceptance speech last week of an Doctorate Honoris Causa in Social Science from the University of Wroclaw - one of the oldest universities of central Europe, as Solana pointed out.

And, he went on, during its 300 years of existence, "the University of Wroclaw has also witnessed much of the chaos and turmoil this period of history held for this part of Europe. Throughout these years, Poland fought hard for its rightful place in Europe. The names of the students of this university are among those who fought for Polish independence in the 19th century. Poland fought Nazism courageously during WWII, and no European will ever forget the struggle for independence and democracy led by the Solidarity movement." Now, said Solana, "This university has successfully reconciled its German and Polish roots and has undertaken to actively support the idea of the intellectual, cultural and political unity of Europe" - in the same way as Poland itself "has decided to join its European neighbours' efforts to build a shared future."

Now, Poland will have a part to play, Solana suggested, in one of the EU's major upcoming challenges: "Beyond its borders, the renewed Union faces the task of formulating a coherent framework for its foreign and security policy". Enlargement will reinforce the EU's role in the international community, he insisted, and the Union's first strategic objective "should be to promote a ring of well governed countries to the East of the European Union (from the Balkans to the Caucasus) and on the borders of the Mediterranean, with whom we can enjoy close and co-operative relations".

Noting that enlargement will "dramatically change" the eastern border of the Union, which will be to a great part formed by the Polish border with Belarus and the Ukraine, Solana called this "a historic step for the entire European continent and a unique opportunity to strengthen co-operation with its neighbours to the east". And, he pointed out, "The history of your country is a

sobering reminder that secure borders, good neighbourly relations and a peaceful geo-economic environment are the best guarantee for a society to thrive in peace and security." He said he looked forward to Poland becoming a bridge between the enlarged EU and its neighbours to the east.

Enlargement Mini-Briefs

- The European Commission rejected suggestions on September 30 that enlargement is going to be "a rough ride" from May 2004. There may be some teething problems, but the enlargement has been well prepared, said the Commission. The suggestions of disruption came in a report from Burson-Marsteller released last week, "Big bang and aftershocks", which predicted a "lowering of ambition" as new member states, already facing a struggle to meet existing EU norms, try to rein in EU ambitions for further legislation.
- "Small and medium-sized enterprises are the backbone of economic development in Europe. They are the key to generating growth, competitiveness and jobs throughout the enlarged EU. Now more than ever, we need to step up our efforts to create a business-friendly environment, reduce bureaucracy, and ensure that laws and regulations do not impose an unnecessary burden on enterprises" said Enterprise and Information Society Commissioner Erkki Liikanen at last week's conference in Tallinn on shaping competitive and dynamic enterprises in an enlarged Europe.
- After a meeting in Brussels last week between European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen and Turkey's foreign affairs minister and deputy prime minister Abdullah Gül, the two of them inaugurated an exhibition of modern Turkish paintings and sculpture, which will decorate the Commissioner's office for the next six months. Verheugen said afterwards there had been "important progress" in a "very promising period" which was "very satisfactory", with a government committed to reform for its own sake rather than as an undesirable side-effect of applying to join the EU, and he predicted that the upcoming regular report would give a "positive and encouraging signal". And Gül expressed optimism because "what we are doing in Turkey is appreciated here". On Cyprus, Verheugen added a reminder of the "opportunity to resume talks and find a solution based on Kofi Annan's plan". The Commissioner was insistent that a solution to Cyprus should be sought before accession, rather than wait until after any EU decision at the end of 2004 on opening negotiations with Turkey.
- The transport ministers of Cyprus and Malta told MEPs last week that vessels sailing under the flag of their countries would comply with all international and EU maritime safety legislation by 1 May 2004, the day they join the European Union. Kyriakos Kazamias of Cyprus and Censu Galea of Malta reassured MEPs that their governments were doing everything possible to see that all safety and employment regulations were met in the near future.

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.

(note: now that acceding states take part in Council meetings and EP and ESC plenaries, these will from now on be listed in this calendar)

Date	Event
October 2003	
Wednesday 1 - Thursday 9	■ EU Committee of the Regions presentation of Prague, Hungarian and other regions, Brussels

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|-----------------------------|--|
| Monday 6 -
Tuesday 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ EU-Malta joint parliamentary committee meets, Malta |
| Tuesday 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ EU Ecofin Council, Luxembourg ■ European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen takes part in European Parliament budgetary control committee hearing on EU transit system and enlargement, Brussels ■ Adrian Nastase, prime minister of Romania, visits Brussels ■ EU Council of Ministers working group on enlargement meets, Brussels |
| Tuesday 7 -
Wednesday 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Meeting of the liaison officers of central and eastern European countries, Cyprus, Malta, Turkey and the European Court of Auditors, Luxembourg |
| Wednesday 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ European Parliament debate on upcoming EU summit, which will in particular discuss management of the EU's external borders; Brussels ■ EU Council of Ministers working group on central and south-east Europe meets, Brussels ■ South West UK seminar on current and future perspectives of EU enlargement, Brussels |
| Wednesday 8 -
Thursday 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ European External Relations Commissioner Chris Patten visits Poland ■ European Parliament plenary session, Brussels ■ European Development Commission Poul Nielsen visits Slovakia |
| Thursday 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Latvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga addresses the European Parliament plenary, Brussels ■ European Parliament budget committee adopts its resolutions on the EU's 2004 budget, Brussels ■ EU Council of Ministers working group on the Western Balkans meets, Brussels |
| Thursday 9 -
Friday 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ European Development Commission Poul Nielsen visits Slovakia and Serbia and Montenegro ■ EU Telecommunications, Transport and Energy Council, Luxembourg ■ European Justice and Home Affairs Commissioner Antonio Vitorino visits Bulgaria ■ European Conference on enlargement, industrial relations and the right to work, Modena |
| Friday 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ David Byrne, European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection visits Bulgaria |
| Monday 13-
Tuesday 14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ EU General Affairs and External Relations Council, Luxembourg ■ EU Agriculture Council, Luxembourg |
| Thursday 16 -
Friday 17 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extraordinary European Council, Brussels ■ European Transport Commissioner Loyola de Palacio visits Turkey ■ EU summit will discuss relaunching the European economy and managing the EU's external borders, Brussels |
| Friday 17 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Franz Fischler, European Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries visits the Czech Republic |
| Sunday 19 -
Wednesday 22 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ OLAF Anti-Fraud Communicators Network training seminar for anti-fraud communicators in candidate countries, Bucharest |
| Monday 20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Viviane Reding, European Commissioner in |

- Monday 20- Tuesday 21 ■ charge of Education and Culture, visits Hungary
- Monday 20- Thursday 23 ■ Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council, Luxembourg
- Tuesday 21 ■ European Parliament plenary session, Strasbourg
- Wednesday 22 ■ European Parliament culture committee discusses enlargement and cultural diversity, Strasbourg
- Thursday 23 - Friday 24 ■ European Parliament foreign affairs committee discusses the "Wider Europe" dossier, Strasbourg
- Tuesday 28 ■ European Economic and Social Committee- Bulgaria meets, Bulgaria
- European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen visits Russia

November 2003

- Monday 3 - Tuesday 4 ■ European Economic and Social Committee-Turkey joint consultative committee, Brussels
- Tuesday 4th ■ 10th EU-Slovenia Joint Parliamentary Committee, Ljubljana
- Wednesday 5 ■ European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen presents monitoring reports on the acceding states and regular reports on Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey, European Parliament, Brussels
- European Economic and Social Committee-Poland/Lithuania/Estonia joint consultative committee meets, Brussels
- Thursday 6 ■ European Economic and Social Committee-Poland joint consultative committee, Brussels
- European Economic and Social Committee-Estonia joint consultative committee meets, Brussels
- Monday 10 - Tuesday 11 ■ 13th EU-Lithuania Joint Parliamentary Committee, Brussels
- Monday 17 - Tuesday 18 ■ European Parliament plenary discusses the "Wider Europe" dossier, Brussels
- European Economic and Social Committee-Romania joint consultative committee meets, Brussels
- Tuesday 18 ■ European Parliament intergroup for regional or minority languages discusses the accession of the new countries and the situation with regard to minority languages and protection of minorities, Brussels
- Thursday 20 - Friday 21 ■ European Economic and Social Committee and European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions conference on "industrial change in Europe: current situation, prospects, responsibilities", Brussels
- Monday 24 - Tuesday 25 ■ 20th EU-Poland Joint Parliamentary Committee, Brussels
- Thursday 27 - Friday 28 ■ 16th EU-Romania Joint Parliamentary Committee, Romania
- European Economic and Social Committee-Slovakia joint consultative committee meets, Brussels
- Thursday 27 ■ 20th EEA Joint Parliamentary Committee, Romania

December 2003

- Monday 1 -
 - Tuesday 2
 - Tuesday 2 -
 - Wednesday 3
 - Thursday 4 -
 - Friday 5
 - Thursday 11 -
 - Friday 12
- EU-European Economic Area joint parliamentary committee meets, Brussels
 - 12th EU-Estonia Joint Parliamentary Committee, Romania
 - 51st EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee, Romania
 - European Economic and Social Committee-Slovenia joint consultative committee meets, Rome
 - European Economic and Social Committee-Czech Republic joint consultative committee meets, Brussels

2004

Spring 2004

- European Economic and Social Committee-Hungary joint consultative committee meets, Brussels

February - March

- European Parliament debates Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey regular reports
- Designation of the Commissioners from the acceding states

April 2004

- European Parliament hearings of the Commissioners from the acceding states who will serve from May to November 2004
- European Commission Opinion on Croatia's accession

May 2004

- Saturday 1st
 - Monday 3 -
 - Thursday 6
- Entry into force of the accession treaty (according to conclusions of General Affairs Council, 18.11.02)
 - Accession of the ten new member states (subject to ratification)
 - Extraordinary session of the EP, as the observers from the 10 new member states become full members
 - Possible European Parliament informal vote of confirmation of the new Commissioners from the new member states

June 2004

- Thursday 10 -
 - Sunday 13
- Elections to the European Parliament in 25 member states.

July 2004

- Sunday 20
- Constituent session of the new European Parliament
 - Confirmation of the designated new President of the European Commission who will take up office from November 2004

September/October

- European Parliament hearings of the 25 designated Commissioners who will take up office

- October 25-28
- from November 2004.
 - European Parliament plenary session and confirmation of the new Commission, which will hold office from 1 November 2004 to October 31 2009.

ENLARGEMENT WEEKLY is prepared for the Information Unit of the Enlargement Directorate General of the European Commission. As part of its communication strategy on enlargement, the Commission makes this bulletin publicly available. Comments are welcome and should be addressed by e-mail to enlargement@cec.eu.int.

TOP ↗