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Enlargement Weekly

441.015 A

3 June 2002

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. [\[Previous issues\]](#)

Articles this week

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COMMISSION VIEWS ON FUTURE OF EUROPE TAKE ACCOUNT OF ENLARGEMENT

The European Commission adopted its "Communication on the Project for the European Union" on 22 May, setting out its overall vision for the European Union of the future. This is the first paper the Commission has addressed to the Convention on the Future of Europe, which is now preparing the ground for the new EU treaty, which will govern the enlarged Union. The Commission's paper calls for more effective EU structures that can respond better to citizens' demands and expectations, and for the role of the Union to be substantially strengthened in three major areas: better mechanisms to steer the European economy; a genuine European capacity to enhance security and freedom of citizens; and a forceful foreign and security policy.

The Commission believes it needs to play a stronger role in co-ordinating national economic and budgetary policies in view of enlargement: "The sheer number of Member States and the

increased heterogeneity calls for more rigour compared to the current system. Nation governments should be prohibited from engaging in free-riding budgetary behaviour", explained when it presented its proposal. "Moreover, in an enlarged Union where the split euro-area and non euro-area member states will be almost equal and where a large number of non euro-area members will be facing convergence challenges, it would be appropriate to envisage the possibility for formal Council decisions that regard the € area only". So to achieve that in an EU framework, the Commission is proposing the creation of an appropriate Ecof Council formation.

It is also proposing common border controls with a common immigration and asylum policy. For improving security and rights of the people the Commission says the Union should assume a more significant role in areas such as external border control, the fight against organised crime and terrorism, and co-operation in penal and civil law. A system based on common norms and financial solidarity should improve external border control, leading over time to a common European Border Guard. The Commission says that while voluntary co-operation can achieve progress, the need for binding legislation should be examined for the statute of immigrants within the European Union or a European regime for dealing with asylum seekers. It urges that all legislation on justice and home affairs should be proposed by the Commission, adopted by co-decision by the EU Council of Ministers and the European Parliament, and controlled by the Court of Justice.

European Commission President Romano Prodi said: "The enlarged Union will need a stronger Commission to initiate policy proposals, a Council that is able to decide, and a European Parliament with increased powers in the legislative and budgetary process. We inherited highly original institutional architecture from the founding fathers of the Union. We now have the political responsibility to give effective structures to the European leaders of the future".

He told the European Parliament the same day that the Convention's main aim should be to put forward an ambitious proposal that for the first time sketches out a constitutional framework for a united, democratic Europe - a Europe that can provide the right answers to the new expectations of Europe's citizens, a Europe that can manage enlargement and play the role that befits it in the world". He went on: "Our continent's unification is at hand and we must stand to account. Enlargement demands we define more clearly what we want to do in a Union of 25 or more states". To find joint solutions to the joint problems of uncontrolled and illegal immigration, international crime, and terrorism, he said, the Commission is proposing common asylum and immigration policy, joint action on border controls and closer co-operation among police forces. "Our long-term goal must be to set up common border controls and an integrated European police force to combat terrorism and organised crime."

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- For full text of the Commission contribution, see web site of Debate on the future of Europe, at http://europa.eu.int/futurum/documents/offtext/com220502_en.pdf
- For questions and answers on the Commission's paper, see the web site at http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=MEMO/02/103/0|RAPID&lg=EN&

MALTA MEETING FOCUSES ON TRADE AND THE CANDIDATES

European Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy met candidate countries' ministers to discuss trade aspects of enlargement on 31 May-1 June. The meeting, in Malta, focused on building co-operation on World Trade Organisation issues and the trade aspects of enlargement. Discussions covered areas where candidate countries need to increase their efforts for alignment to the EU acquis, in the run-up to the Commission's regular reports in October. Other trade-related regional issues were discussed, such as trade liberalisation initiatives with the Western Balkans, the evolution of economic relations with Russia and other CIS states and relations with the Mediterranean countries.

The series of meetings began in Brussels in October 1998 and continued in Budapest (November 1999), Warsaw (July 2000) and Ljubljana (May 2001). This is likely to be the last

meeting before the accession negotiations are completed with some of the candidate countries, and it provided an opportunity for ministers to address final questions to be tackled before enlargement becomes a reality. Lamy also held bilateral discussions with ministers from several candidates.

The Conference allowed ministers to take stock of negotiations and identify priorities for the Doha Development Agenda, which was launched at the fourth WTO Ministerial last year. The previous EU-candidate countries ministerial achieved a high level of co-operation in the run-up to Doha, and this time ministers exchanged information on how to take this co-operation to the next stage - what the Commission sees as an important alliance-building exercise as the Doha negotiations pick up speed. The EU and candidate countries are committed to the new round of multilateral trade negotiations, and have agreed to work together towards the shared objective.

On the eve of the visit, the Commissioner said: "This meeting offers a valuable opportunity to speak with one voice on trade matters. Now that the Doha Development Agenda is gaining momentum we need to send a strong signal of our commitment to the multilateral agenda".

Via the association agreements the candidates have already established with the EU, the industrial products have had virtually free access to the EU since the beginning of 1995, with restrictions in some sensitive sectors, such as agriculture and textiles. The trade relations that central and eastern European countries have enjoyed with the EU since the fall of the Berlin wall have contributed to the development of their national economies. The 26% increase in EU trade with the 13 candidate countries in the first half of 2000 confirms a trend observed since 1999, according to figures released just before the meeting. The EU trade surplus with the candidates increased in the same proportions (26%), rising to € 14.65 billion in the first half of 2000. During these six months, EU exports to the candidate countries rose from € 55.5 billion to € 70 billion, while imports rose from € 43.9 billion to € 55.4 billion.

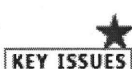
Exports mainly consisted of machinery and electrical equipment (33%), transport equipment (15%), chemical products (10%), textiles (8%) and base metals and articles (7%), while imports consisted of machinery and electrical equipment (26%), textiles (16%), transport equipment (13%), base metals and articles (11%) and agricultural products (5%). As in 1999, the EU's main trading partner among candidate countries in 2000 was Poland (accounting for 23.2% of EU exports to the region and 19.6% of EU imports), while Latvia remained the smallest importer of EU products (1.3% of EU exports). Cyprus and Malta were the smallest exporters (each accounting for 0.9% of total imports).

The prospects for trade are obviously enhanced in an enlarged single market, the Commission points out. And in addition, a single set of trade rules, a single tariff, and a single set of administrative procedures will apply not only across the existing member states but across the single market of the enlarged Union, simplifying dealings for third-country operators with Europe, and facilitating investment and trade. The Common External Tariff of the EU, which will be applied by acceding countries, is on average lower than national tariffs presently applied. Developing countries, enjoying preferential access to the EU, will find new markets in the acceding countries. And new members will also improve their access to the markets in developing countries through economic and trade co-operation.

- For background on the importance of enlargement for the EU's trade relations, see the DG Trade web site at http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/pdf/infpack_enlarg.pdf

ENLARGEMENT HIGH ON AGENDA OF RUSSIA-EU SUMMIT

The wide agenda for the Russia-EU summit in Moscow on 29 May also included plenty of attention to enlargement-related issues. The joint statement issued after the meeting noted: "The pending EU enlargement will open new prospects for our relations but at the same time will possibly create new problems, including in the sphere of trade, economic co-operation and human contacts. We agree to discuss more actively the essence of the Russian concerns



the framework of the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement."

And on the particular issue of Kaliningrad, it said: "Taking into account the legal and practical consequences of EU enlargement, Russia and the EU agreed to continue joint work with a view to reaching mutually acceptable solutions for the Kaliningrad region. This will be of key importance for the development of a strategic partnership between the Russian Federation and the European Union and for strengthening the atmosphere of good-neighbourliness and mutual understanding."

The so-called "Northern Dimension" also received attention: "We noted that the environmental aspects of the Russia-EU relations are taking concrete shape in particular in the Northern Dimension framework. We therefore aim at having the Northern Dimension Environment Partnership Fund operational as soon as possible." And in a reference to the difficulties on the fringes of the enlarged Europe, the summit concluded: "Russia and the EU will co-operate to resolve regional conflicts, including the Transdniestria issue in Moldova".

In a speech to the European Business Club in Moscow on the eve of the summit, European Commission President Romano Prodi said: "The 21st Century is turning out to be much more unpredictable than we imagined. New opportunities are opening up before us. Some relate to security, some go far beyond. But they all call for greater trust and greater stability. Within the EU for example, the ongoing construction of the single market, the elimination of internal borders and the introduction of the € have created prospects for stable economic development, prosperity and well-being that are unparalleled in this unpredictable world of ours. Those prospects will soon be shared by up to ten new Member States. The other candidate countries will follow in due course. Enlargement will abolish the artificial geographical divisions that marked our continent for fifty years."

"The establishment of the largest integrated market in the world, with 450 million consumers opens up opportunities undreamed of before", he went on. "In the past, the EU's stability and prosperity had a profound impact on our neighbours those neighbours who are now preparing to join the EU. The transformation of Vilnius, Tallin, Riga and Warsaw has been breathtaking. The Union of the future will not be inward looking. It will look outwards for its own sake and for that of its partners. We have no wish to see an exclusion syndrome developing on our eastern borders. Enlargement must not draw new dividing lines across our continent. We want our neighbours to be prosperous and stable."

"Among our neighbours, none is more important than Russia. We need to work together to maximise the benefits of enlargement: new markets, more investment. As our economic relations deepen, our exchanges of know-how, ideas and technology will develop. The EU needs Russia, and Russia needs the EU. And both Russia and the EU will benefit from enlargement." But he admitted that "this does not mean that everything will be simple. It is not always easy to reconcile the will to preserve sovereignty and maintain security with a desire for open borders. But we are determined to work hard to do just that".

And European External Relations Commissioner Chris Patten said at a European Business Club conference the same day: "It is not surprising that our economies are complementary nor that after enlargement the EU will account for as much as half of Russia's trade. It is a well-known fact that Switzerland is our second largest trading partner and that Canada is the US's largest. When all is said and done, one's neighbours are normally one's first customers and one's first supplier. In the case of Russia and EU, the sheer size of the economic potential and the enormous commercial importance of proximity are singularly impressive; but my point is that with Russia, it goes way beyond commercial relations. We share culture, history and tradition."

"The enlarged Union will take this a further step forward as we include countries which have maintained very close links with Russia going back decades and even centuries. Of our present member states only Finland can claim that. Some of our candidates were part of the USSR; and we shall have 1.5 million Russians actually living within our borders. The cultural impact on our relations will go far deeper than just trade. The enlarged EU will possess a



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enormous fund of knowledge about Russia, and contacts with it, which we must exploit."

"The Baltic will be a sea shared entirely between the EU and Russia. We have already create a special policy initiative that recognises that. The priorities which we have identified for the Northern Dimension reflect the new issues which now top our policy agenda. The special situation of Kaliningrad is a particular priority. The EU is determined to do everything we can to ensure this unique part of Russia gets the full benefits of enlargement. And we have presented a package of ideas to smooth the introduction of Schengen visas which should have the practical effect of reducing the existing bottlenecks and administrative obstacles that make border crossings to and from Kaliningrad such an ordeal today. In addition we need to protect the Baltic against pollution; to start the mammoth task of cleaning up nuclear waste in North West Russia; and combating illegal immigration and organised crime. These, too, are part of our 'proximity' agenda".

"The only sensible option for both of us is to make our relationship work as successfully as possible economically, socially, politically. This is a really significant strategic partnership enhanced by enlargement. Perhaps we still have to turn away from the past to bury ancient suspicions once and for all. But the view of the Commission is that we should do all we can to make this partnership work and work well. There is no other sensible option. But a partnership involves traffic in both directions; it involves give and take; it involves understanding the other side's point of view. We understand that and I am sure our Russian colleagues will understand it too", Patten concluded.

- For background on the summit, see DG Relex site at http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russia/summit_05_02/state.htm

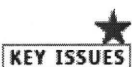
BRINGING ALL SIDES TOGETHER IN ENLARGEMENT INFORMATION

Information and communications professionals from the 15 EU member states and the 10 candidate countries agreed last week that public understanding of EU enlargement would grow all the more effectively with governments playing a larger role in information provision. Meeting in Brno, the second city of the Czech Republic, officials from the European Commission representations in the member states and delegations in the candidate countries reviewed their own performance over the last year, and exchanged ideas on how the message on enlargement - and its delivery - should be adapted in the light of the evolution of the enlargement process.

There is added urgency because of the impending closure of negotiations and subsequent ratification of the accession treaty for some candidates - and in all member states. Opening the seminar with a message from Guenter Verheugen, in which the Commissioner stressed the importance of the communication strategy, Wenceslas de Lobkowicz, the head of unit responsible for communications in the Commission's Directorate General for Enlargement, told the meeting "It will be all the more important, as we enter this new phase of the enlargement process, to seek close co-operation with and involvement of national authorities".

The message too could usefully be adapted to focus more on the aspects of enlargement that touch people individually, and to reach more closely targeted groups, the meeting urged. There was support for the idea of working more closely with interest groups, non-government organisations and associations, through established EU relay mechanisms such as the European Information Centres, and with national and regional governments. Even the decision to host this meeting in Brno rather than in a capital city was a reflection of a conscious desire to reach out to wider audiences, according to the Commission.

The European Commission is due to adopt a communication on its enlargement communications strategy at its June 5 meeting - one of the documents to be presented to the Seville summit later in the month. It is likely to stress the merits of co-operation with national governments in ensuring wide public understanding of enlargement.



Enlargement news in brief

Finland urges compromise on Ignalina

"In Finland we understand that the internal political situation in all the candidate countries is at stake when making sometimes difficult decisions. Each country has sensitive issues that need to be addressed and explained to their citizens", said Jari Vilén, Finnish minister for foreign trade, speaking recently in Vilnius at a celebration of Europe Day. "In Lithuania's case, Finland understands that the closing of the Ignalina power plant is one of those difficult issues. Nuclear safety is an important question that concerns us all in Europe. We feel that a solution is possible to find that also takes into account Lithuania's economic concerns". But, he added, the week that Finland itself announced a decision to start its own new programme for construction of nuclear power capacity, "It is important, as in other nationally difficult question to keep in mind the end toward which we are all striving: Lithuania's membership in the European Union. What economic concerns there are about the closure of an unsafe nuclear power plant will be compensated manifold by the benefits of membership in the years to come."

For questions on answers on the EU and Lithuania, including the issue of the Ignalina NPP, see the new web site of the Commission Delegation in Vilnius at http://www.eudel.lt/en/eu_and_country/faq.htm

Challenges for EU and BEUC in the consumer protection aspects of enlargement

The preparation for EU enlargement is presenting additional challenges for consumer policy. European Consumer Affairs and Public Health Commissioner David Byrne said at the general assembly of the European consumers association, BEUC, in Brussels on 30 May. Celebrating BEUC 40th birthday, and 30 years of EU consumer policy, he said preparing for enlargement will also require a lot of BEUC's time and energy, "not least because consumer movements in candidate countries will need help to reach your level of organisation and participation in policy making". BEUC already represents 33 organisations from 23 European countries.

Vitorino explains border guard plans to candidates and member states

"Border controls and surveillance have increasingly become one of the top priorities of the Union, not only in view of the future enlargement of the EU, but also in view of an expected capability to react effectively, in common and at all levels, to the challenges posed by illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings, the activities of criminal networks in general and last but not least, terrorism", said European Justice and Home Affairs Commissioner Antonio Vitorino at the ministerial conference on external borders in Rome on 30 May, which was attended by the candidate countries too. The recent Communication of the Commission on the subject identifies the main components of an integrated management of the external borders of the member states of the EU, including a common corpus of legislation, a common coordination and operational co-operation mechanism, common integrated risk analysis, strengthened for the European dimension and availability of inter-operational equipment, and burden sharing between member states. The last stage could be the setting-up of a European Corps of Border Guards, composed of joint multinational teams, which would have the function of supporting the national services of the member states, but not replacing them. The Communication, the Commissioner stressed, was based on experience gathered from the work carried out under several Presidencies, from the visits on spot in the framework of the Schengen Evaluation commission and also in the framework of the preparation for enlargement. "The challenge in the months to come will be to work together to find practical and flexible means for co-operation", so as to guarantee a high level of security in an enlarged Union.

For the communication and other related background information, see web site of Justice and Home Affairs DG at http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/news/immigration/index_en.htm

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Survey shows more EU public wants more information on enlargement

EU citizens support enlargement but want more information, according to a special EuroBarometer survey released last week. The survey, carried out in the fifteen member states of the EU among 16,000 EU citizens aged 15 and over in January and February, shows that a broad majority of citizens expect benefits from the enlargement process, but lack information. Overall, 83% feel less than well-informed on the subject. The survey confirms that television is perceived as the preferred source for information on that issue. On average, citizens tend to think that the current speed of the enlargement process is correct (48% feel it should continue at the same speed, 16% believe it should be accelerated and 15% say it should be slowed down). 67% of citizens believe enlargement will unite the continent and 63% think that enlargement will make the EU stronger politically. 60% also see enlargement as bringing peace to Europe. Regarding European integration, 61% of respondents feel favourable towards the EU, Italy being the most favourable country and UK the least. 62% feel that their country's membership of the EU is an advantage in defending their national interest. Some 80% of the respondents consider the fight against illegal immigration as a priority for the EU, but only 45% of them consider EU action as effective in this field.

For full report and individual, and broken down by member state, see the web site of D PRESS at http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb56_3/eb56_3_en.htm

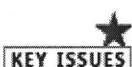
"Governments must sell enlargement to the public" - Fischler

EU member states and candidate country governments must do more to sell the idea of Europe; the job cannot be left to the Commission alone, according to European Agriculture Commissioner Franz Fischler. Speaking at a forum on communication about Europe, Brussels on 28 May, he said: "Member states have to live up to their responsibilities, because at the end of the day they take the decisions. It is not only the Commission pushing for enlargement. It is the member states who decided it unanimously. And it is the candidate countries who have sent in the application form. Consequently, we need a joint effort to win over the public in the EU and the applicant countries."

EIB loan for Masaryk University in Brno

The European Investment Bank, the European Union's project financing bank, is lending € 9 million to the Czech Republic for the expansion and modernisation of Masaryk University in Brno, the second largest city in the Czech Republic, and also the second largest centre of education in the country. The loan will help finance the development of a new university campus on a site near an existing teaching hospital on the periphery of Brno, where the university's faculty of medicine and the chemistry and biology departments of the faculty of science will relocate. Part of the loan will also help upgrading existing university buildings and financing the acquisition of state-of-the-art teaching and research equipment. The investments are intended to make it possible to teach a growing number of students, expand the range of courses and research activities and increase the quality of education. The upgrading of existing facilities will help preserve the historical buildings to be vacated in the city centre, and further the architectural heritage. In 1999 the European Investment Bank extended its financing of health and education projects to the candidate countries, and early involvement with the project presented by Masaryk University was one of EIB's first experiences in this region in the human capital sector.

The loan brings total EIB financing in the Czech Republic since 1993 close to € 3 billion. The largest projects financed so far were in particular the modernisation of the main railway line, the extension and upgrading of the road and motorway networks; the expansion of the telecommunications network; the rehabilitation and extension of municipal infrastructure; the implementation of environment protection schemes; and the reconstruction of flood damage infrastructure. A growing number of small and medium-scale industrial and tourism ventures as well as some smaller municipal infrastructure and environmental schemes were financed through several global loans, in the form of credit lines, to local commercial banks. Since 1991 the EIB has lent nearly € 17 billion for projects in the ten central European candidate countries.



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For more information on the EIB loan, see <http://www.eib.eu.int/pub/press/2002/2002-028.htm>
Find out more about the Masaryk University, Brno on <http://www.muni.cz/>

Candidates win golden stars for town twinning projects

Town twinning projects involving municipalities in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland, and Turkey are among the recipients of EU "Golden Stars of Town Twinning" awarded last week. Since 1993 the EU has given annual prizes for exceptional projects supported by its town twinning fund. The winners of these 2001 awards include the city of Egros in Greece for a meeting with municipalities from Turkey (Kesan, Edirne) and Bulgaria (Topolovgrad); the Swedish town of Borlänge for inviting Czech citizens from Prostějov representing different walks of life (politicians, civil servants, the business community, youth, cooks, dancers, theatre, musicians, as well as people from different associations) to participate in exchange under the motto "Towards a multicultural Europe"; the city of Sint-Michielsgestel for organising a Dutch-Polish pedagogical exchange with its Polish twin-town Buk, with a focus on urban issues and social, health, and care services; the Polish town of Sepopol for its project "Small twin towns as a major factor to support European integration at the local level", carried out together with its German twin town Lagerdorf; and the Lithuanian town of Panevezys for organising the "International Panevezys Children and Youth Arts Festival". More than 13,000 towns are twinned in Europe. The tradition started after the Second World War to bring the peoples of Europe closer together and is now more popular than ever in the European Union. € 12,000 has been budgeted for twinning projects in 2002, with a particular focus on the countries now preparing to join the EU.

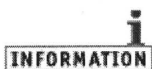
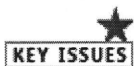
EP committee backs phasing-in of farm subsidies to new member states

The European Parliament's agriculture committee is backing the European Commission proposals to phase in subsidies to farmers in the new member states gradually over a ten-year period. In an own-initiative report drawn up by Swedish liberal MEP Karl Erik Olsson and adopted unanimously last week, it describes this as a "reasonable option" and considers the Commission's proposals for integrating the new member states into the common agricultural policy "a realistic proposal for a negotiating package". The committee says that applying the full levels of aid currently paid to farmers in the EU-15 to the new member states as soon as they join would create an imbalance between agricultural and non-agricultural incomes in rural areas in the applicant countries. It also fears that "an excessive influx of cash as a result of direct payments" would allow low productivity to persist and discourage investment. Instead, it believes priority must go to supporting rural development. The report endorses the Commission's proposal for a simplified system of area payments and believes the applicant countries should be allowed to make top-up national payments, under certain conditions. It is also keen to ensure that countries that have already reduced output levels whilst becoming competitive are not penalised and wants the special support for subsistence farming proposed by the Commission to be available to farmers seeking to diversify. On CAP reform, however, the committee urges the Commission to start talking to the applicant countries now about the direction of farm policy after 2007. The Parliament's June plenary session in Strasbourg will debate the resolution.

For full draft report, see the site of the EP Agricultural Committee at <http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/committees/agri/20020527/444087en.pdf>

"Candidates do not meet political criteria", says van der Laan

"Countries that do not respect human rights are not welcome in the EU", Dutch member of the European Parliament Lousewies van der Laan argued last week in Prague. "The assertion that the so-called Copenhagen political criteria are currently fulfilled by 12 of the 13 candidates is nonsense". The European Commission regular reports make it clear that many problems remain in the area of fundamental rights, she said - yet still the 15 member states repeat that they wish to stick to the timetable for accession in 2004 by 10 countries. "This makes mockery of the criteria", said van der Laan, and "it also confirms to our citizens that we do not take their concerns about enlargement seriously. In the long run this attitude will threaten the



enlargement process". Speaking at the EU Information Centre, van der Laan said she vote against Cyprus' membership last year because of discrimination against homosexuals in the Cypriot legislation, and she pointed out that the same laws exist in Hungary. In addition many applicant countries have persistent problems with discrimination, corruption and pre-trial arrests, she went on. Unless it is made clear that these problems need to be resolved before membership, the EU will lose the capability to improve the human rights situation, she warned. "We should hold them to the previously agreed criteria, notably the political ones. Human rights are not negotiable", she said

See the new web site of the Delegation in Prague on <http://www.evropska-unie.cz/eng/>

Agenda

Date	Event
June	
Tuesday 4th	European Enterprise Commissioner Erkki Liikanen takes part in a conference on "Connecting Europe", Ljubljana EU Council of Ministers working group on enlargement meets, Brussels
Wednesday 5th	At its regular weekly meeting in Brussels, the European Commission discusses two papers to be submitted to the Seville European Council: the action plan for boosting administrative and judicial capacity in the candidate countries; and a communication on its enlargement communications strategy. EU Council of Ministers working group on enlargement meets, Brussels
Thursday 6th	EU Council of Ministers working group meets to discuss administrative aspects of enlargement, Brussels European Internal Market Commissioner Frits Bolkestein receives Polish European affairs minister Danuta Hubner
Thursday 6th- Friday 7th	European Justice and Home Affairs Commissioner Antonio Vitorino visits Poland
Friday 7th	EU Council of Ministers working group on enlargement meets, Brussels UNICE European Business Summit: Members of the European Commission, business leaders, national and regional authorities, NGO's and other interest groups from civil society from current and future member states and elsewhere meet in Brussels. See http://www.ebsummit.org/
Thursday 6th- Saturday 8th	EU-UNICE conference on entrepreneurship and sustainable development in an enlarged Europe, with sessions in which candidate

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	countries present economic achievements and investment opportunities.
Saturday 8th	European Enterprise Commissioner Erkki Liikanen takes part in the Munich Economic Summit "Europe after Enlargement"
Monday 10th	General Affairs Council will review the state of the enlargement process, Luxembourg
Monday 10th - Tuesday 11th	Ministerial negotiating session with foreign ministers of the EU and of the candidate countries, Luxembourg
Wednesday 11th-Thursday 12th	EU-Slovenia joint consultative committee with the EU Economic and Social Committee, Ljubljana.
Friday 14th and Saturday 15th	Czech Republic parliamentary elections
Sunday 16th-Monday 17th	European Competition Commissioner Mario Monti visits Lithuania
Monday 17th-Tuesday 18th	European Culture Commissioner Viviane Reding visits Slovakia
Friday 21st, Saturday 22nd	Seville European Council: European Commission reports on the implementation of the plan of action for strengthening the candidates' institutions.
Monday 24th	Informal meeting of education ministers from the EU and the candidate countries, Bratislava
Wednesday 26th	EU/European Economic Area (EEA) consultative committee will discuss the implications of EU enlargement for the future of the EEA at its annual meeting, Egilsstadir, Iceland
Thursday 27th-Friday 28th	European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen visits Iceland
July	
Monday 1st	Start of Danish Presidency of the EU: the aim is to close negotiations before the end of the year with those countries that are ready. The Laeken summit noted that, if progress is maintained in the negotiations and in the reforms, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Slovenia could be ready.


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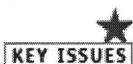

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Friday 5th	European Commission conference on enlargement from a local and regional perspective, Brussels
Thursday 11th-Friday 12th	Economic and Social Committee Joint Consultative Committee with Turkey, Erzerum
Autumn	
Details tbc	Estonian local elections
Details tbc	Slovak parliamentary elections (probably September)
Details tbc	Slovenia presidential and local elections
October	
Details tbc	Hungary local elections
Details tbc	Latvia parliamentary elections
Details tbc	Poland regional elections
Wednesday 2nd-Thursday 3rd	Meeting of liaison officers from supreme audit institutions of the candidate countries and the European Court of Auditors, Luxembourg
24th and 25th	Brussels European Council: enlargement will be on the agenda and the Commission's regular reports on the candidate countries may be available.
November	
Details tbc	Ecofin Council discusses the report on economic dialogue with the candidate countries
Details tbc	Lithuania presidential elections



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Thursday 28th and Friday 29th	Meeting of the presidents of the supreme audit institutions of the member states and the candidate countries, Luxembourg
December	
tbc	Meeting of heads of supreme audit institutions of the candidate countries and the European Court of Auditors, 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.

Archives

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.

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