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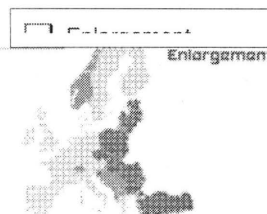
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WEEKLY
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As a hectic 2002 comes to an end this edition of Enlargement Weekly will be the last for this year. It ends on a high note, with an historic conclusion to the European Council in Copenhagen. Enlargement Weekly will then be back in the New Year.

DG Enlargement Information Team.

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.

THE NEW CHAPTER OPENS FOR EUROPE

"With the decisions in Copenhagen, we closed one of the darkest and most blood-stained chapters of European history. We closed a century ravaged by war and conflict. We bid a final farewell to the Europe of the Yalta Conference and the Cold War", said Danish prime minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, when he addressed the European Parliament after chairing the Copenhagen summit. "At the same time, we opened the door to a new era of European history. An era blessed by freedom, peace, growth and prosperity. The Copenhagen Summit marked a pinnacle in the history of European co-operation, a triumph for freedom and democracy, and a gate to a better future for all our peoples."

But he admitted that the negotiations were intense and difficult until the very end - often on very specific issues, like milk quotas and money transfers. "It had to be so", he said. "This ensured that we finished with the right balance between the wishes of the candidate countries and what the present member states considered feasible." The same point was made by European Commission President Romano Prodi during the European Parliament debate: "Some people might have the impression that the conclusion of the accession negotiations at Copenhagen was a formality that the deal was in the bag. Nothing could be further from the truth", said Prodi. "Political courage and strong leadership was required on all sides to get this result", he insisted.

On Turkey, Rasmussen said: "We arrived at a balanced and realistic response". A "strong and positive message has been sent to Turkey. However, the initiation of accession negotiations remains unconditionally subject to the fulfilment of the political Copenhagen Criteria. This is the way it

must be. Turkey must be treated on an equal basis with all other candidate countries." Prodi added that "this date will give Turkey time to push ahead with the reforms it must make to satisfy the Copenhagen criteria and implement them both in law and in practice. The Commission will report on its progress and make recommendations with complete objectivity and impartiality."

And on Cyprus, there is also "a realistic possibility that the parties will be able to find an overall solution to the Cyprus problem before 28 February 2003 on the basis of the proposal put forward by the UN Secretary General", said Rasmussen. "We came close to getting agreement on a settlement for Cyprus. Although the unflagging efforts of the negotiators and the UN Secretary-General were not crowned with success at the Summit, the two sides' willingness to continue negotiating with the aim of getting agreement by 28 February gives us real grounds for optimism", said the Commission President.

"ONE EUROPE" DECLARATION

Agreement was reached at the Copenhagen summit on a declaration about "One Europe" which will be annexed to the Accession Treaty. The text, to appear above the signatures of the 15 current EU member states and the ten new member states, reads: "Today is a great moment for Europe. We have today concluded accession negotiations between the European Union and Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. 75 million people will be welcomed as new citizens of the European Union.

"We, the current and acceding member states, declare our full support for the continuous, inclusive and irreversible enlargement process. The accession negotiations with Bulgaria and Romania will continue on the basis of the same principles that have guided the negotiations so far. The results already achieved in these negotiations will not be brought into question. Depending on further progress in complying with the membership criteria, the objective is to welcome Bulgaria and Romania as new members of the European Union in 2007. We also welcome the important decisions taken today concerning the next stage of Turkey's candidature for membership of the European Union.

"Our common wish is to make Europe a continent of democracy, freedom, peace and progress. The Union will remain determined to avoid new dividing lines in Europe and to promote stability and prosperity within and beyond the new borders of the Union. We are looking forward to working together in our joint endeavour to accomplish these goals. Our aim is One Europe."

"FAIR AND TAILOR-MADE AGRICULTURE PACKAGE" FOR ENLARGEMENT

The outcome of the Copenhagen summit was a "fair and tailor-made package which benefits farmers in accession countries", according to Franz Fischler, EU Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries. He said: "This a great day for Europe - for the EU, for the candidate countries and for their farmers. The leaders of the candidate countries can return home with their heads held high. They have achieved a farm package which is perfectly saleable to their farm community". The package is summarised as follows:

- a rural development package of □ 5.1 billion for 2004-2006, specifically adapted to the requirements of the ten acceding countries, and more favourable than for the current EU member states; from accession, the EU will co-finance at up to 80% a wide range of rural development measures, such as early retirement of farmers, support for less favoured areas or areas with environmental restrictions, agri-environmental programmes, afforestation of agricultural land, and setting up of producer groups.

- direct aids for farmers phased in over ten years, (in line with the Commission's proposal from January 2002) starting with 25% of the full EU rate in 2004, 30% in 2005 and 35% in 2006. The decision in Copenhagen resulted in the possibility for this level to be augmented by "topping up payments" of up to 55% in 2004, 60% in 2005 and 65% in 2006, with rural development funds providing up to 40% in co-financing. From 2007, top-ups at 30% above the applicable phasing-in level in the relevant year will still be allowed, but financed entirely by national funds. Special provisions have been agreed for Cyprus and Slovenia, to take account of their specific internal support systems prior to accession. A simplified system will allow new member states to grant direct payments in the form of a de-coupled area payment applied to the whole agricultural area for the first three years of membership.
- full and immediate access to Common Agricultural Policy market measures, such as export refunds, and cereal, skimmed milk powder or butter intervention, which will contribute to stabilising farmers' prices and incomes in the new member states.

A BUDGET FOR ENLARGEMENT

Michaele Schreyer, the Commissioner for the budget, told the European Parliament during its December 18 debate on the 2003 EU budget that this was a budget so prudent that the savings it made against the financial perspective is "greater than the additional expenditure which will be incurred in 2004 as a result of the accession of ten new member states".

Nonetheless, in line with the Copenhagen signal "to ensure that the process of enlargement will be smooth for our institutions", the budget allows, she pointed out, for 236 new posts in the Council, and 500 in the Commission. The money for this first batch of new posts needed for enlargement has been provided by bringing forward some administrative expenditure from 2003 to 2002, thus providing a cushion for the financing of new posts in 2003. Within the Commission, 59 posts are being allocated to competition, 53 to agriculture, 56 to the structural funds, 10 to OLAF, 69 to the language service and 60 to the Publications Office - all sectors where preparations are necessary to ensure EU rules are fully applicable from the date that new members accede.

The 2003 budget is the last budget for the Union of fifteen member states. The EU must now adapt the financial perspective to take account of the decisions taken in Copenhagen, and prepare the 2004 budget for the EU of 25 member states. In February the Commission, the Council and the Parliament will discuss the adjustments needed together in a dialogue - by which time, hoped Schreyer, "the situation will also be clearer regarding the future of Northern Cyprus". Pre-accession aid for Bulgaria and Romania is to be increased and Turkey is to be included in the budget for pre-accession aid, so the budget "reflects the dynamics of change in Europe", she said.

NEW THINKING ON NEW BORDERS

"We shall obviously have to think long and hard about where the borders of the EU will ultimately lie", European Commission President Romano Prodi said when he addressed the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 18 December. Looking beyond the current round of enlargement, he set out some thoughts on future policy.

"Each enlargement brings us new neighbours for which the EU is a pole of attraction. Some hope to become candidates themselves", he remarked. For some regions, this is a definite possibility: "The countries of the western Balkans rightly belong in the European Union in the long term. This prospect was confirmed by the Copenhagen Council", said Prodi. The Stabilisation and Association process for South East Europe "is a powerful instrument and we

should be proactive in using it", he said, expressing confidence that - in collaboration with the incoming Greek Presidency - the EU will be able to offer at the Thessaloniki summit "a detailed and substantial response" to the letter that the five Presidents of the Western Balkans sent the EU on the eve of the Copenhagen Council, seeking confirmation of their future membership.

But the Commission President was more measured in his remarks on other regions and countries beyond the EU. "We need to build a strong network of relations based on shared political and economic values with neighbouring countries from Russia to the Mediterranean", he said, but this would not necessarily amount to the prospect of EU membership. Instead, he spoke of a "proximity policy". This, he suggested, "would bring our neighbours many of the benefits of membership without formally joining the Union in the next future". He offered the example of the European Economic Area, "with an enriched political content", as a useful model, "sharing everything but institutions".

The proximity policy must be "attractive, unlocking new prospects and bringing mutual benefits. It must motivate our partners to cooperate more closely with the EU and it must be dynamic, based on a structured, step-by-step approach", he said. And the concept of how the EU makes its links with its neighbours must spring from a genuinely European debate, he said: "This is something we as Europeans, after listening to everyone, shall decide ourselves, without any outside interference. The debate on where Europe's borders lie is actually a debate about our identity", he said. But he insisted that "this search for the roots of our identity does not mean creating new divisions. European integration will offer benefits and new prospects for our neighbours as well."

European External Relations Commissioner Chris Patten also said as the Copenhagen summit closed that the EU "should not offer only membership", but find other ways of developing common economic and political links with its neighbours.

Enlargement news in brief

Now to analyse the consequences

The European Commission is to generate an independent high-level report on the consequences of enlargement, as part of the efforts to inform and accompany the debate next year as the Treaty is reviewed and ratified across the 25 countries involved. "Although a number of studies have been published in recent years, a comprehensive analysis, at the European level, is desirable to provide clear and authoritative answers to the many questions which are posed by the public", the Commission says. Wim Kok, former Prime Minister of the Netherlands, has agreed to chair the work, and will be assisted by experts from present and future member states and by the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute, Florence. The report is expected by the end of March 2003.

Prodi pays tribute to the teamwork

Reflecting on the process that created the Copenhagen result, European Commission President Romano Prodi singled out "the tremendous work done by the Danish Presidency. As the multiple negotiations went down to the wire, they maintained a steady hand at the helm and a cool head under great pressure." But he also recalled that the Commission had put together "remarkable teams of negotiators who reached a deal on thirty-one chapters with each and every acceding country. Day in, day out, for over three years, 350 Commission officials and over 700 people in the Commission delegations in the candidate countries have been weaving the fabric of this silent revolution." The Commission President paid some personal tributes, too: "I want to voice here my gratitude to Günter Verheugen, our intelligent,

passionate and patient chief negotiator. And to Eneko Landaburu and the whole Directorate-General for Enlargement for their dedication and first-rate work."

The countdown starts to the referenda!

All the candidate countries that concluded negotiations in Copenhagen - except Cyprus - are now to hold referenda on EU accession. So far dates have been chosen by Hungary - on 12 April 2003, Slovakia - on 5-6 June, Poland - probably on 8 June, the Czech Republic - on 15-16 June, and Estonia - on 14 September. Malta, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovenia have yet to name their dates.

European Economic and Social Committee aims at making enlargement work

Enlargement will be a twin challenge for the candidate countries, according to a new opinion adopted by the European Economic and Social Committee at its plenary session on December 17. They will need to adapt speedily to EU legislation whilst at the same time reforming their entire political, economic and social systems, says this opinion on the economic and social consequences of enlargement for candidate countries. It points to the tensions arising as new jobs are created in new sectors, while many are lost in traditional sectors. The EESC advocates an active policy for the labour market, improving infrastructure and a balanced approach to welfare, payments and salaries. The opinion also sets out recommendations to streamline bureaucracy, strengthen legal protection, boost foreign investment, reform agricultural policy, develop civil society and promote economic and social convergence.

And another EESC opinion adopted at the same time - on the impact of the enlargement of the European Union on the single market - argues that utilisation of the workforce will be a key factor in how well the enlarged single market brings economic advantages, strengthens EU competitiveness and exploits its full potential. It also insists that public acceptance of enlargement will be crucially influenced by the way the benefits are distributed throughout the population.

The new President of the European Economic and Social Committee, Roger Briesch, has also made a priority of adapting to EU enlargement in his programme for 2003. During his presidency, he pointed out, the EESC will have to absorb new members and officials from candidate countries, and this challenge must be tackled head-on by a thorough reform of the workings of the Committee.

Some candidates excel in innovation - some don't

The European Commission's just-published 2002 European Innovation Scoreboard contains for the first time the innovation performance of the candidate countries, as well as of the member states. Overall, it reveals that the EU is still trailing the US and Japan in innovation. But it notes that many candidate countries perform favourably on some of the benchmarks used in compiling the Scoreboard - notably the proportion of the working population with post-secondary education, employment in high-tech manufacturing, spending on information and communication technologies, and the level of inward foreign direct investment. Weaknesses identified in the candidate countries are in the relatively low rate of employment in high-tech services, private research and development investment, patenting, and the level of Internet access.

The innovation capacities are concentrated mainly where candidate countries have already developed explicit national innovation policies, notably Estonia, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. Hungary, Lithuania and Malta are also among the innovation leaders in the group. The scoreboard also found that candidates still lack reliable innovation data - a weakness that has to be

addressed by governments, as it is hindering effective policy decisions, says the Commission. European Commissioner for Enterprise Erkki Liikanen said: "Innovation has to be on the top of the agenda of an enlarging Union if the EU is to meet its goals of becoming more competitive".

"A difficult start" for outward investment by candidates

In most central and east European countries, outward foreign direct investment is at low level, according to a new study from UNCTAD on the impact of the European Union's enlargement. UNCTAD says outward FDI is hampered because there is only a slow development of "firm-specific ownership advantages, management skills and know-how necessary to undertake investments abroad and to run a foreign business venture successfully". Prior to transition, only Hungary had the commercial skills (including the proficiency and competence required for world-market operations and the management of foreign affiliates), and that was limited to a handful of state-owned trading companies. "No wonder outward FDI had a difficult start", says the study. But there has been some increase, notably in Hungary, Estonia and Slovenia - driven largely by a search to overcome the profit constraints of small domestic markets, and by the need to boost manufacturing.

- See http://r0.unctad.org/en/subsites/dite/pdfs/CEE_outward_en.pdf

Still no guarantees for a "yes" vote

Since May, the support for EU accession among those that would vote in a referendum has not risen in some of the candidate countries, according to the latest poll by the Central European Opinion Research Group Foundation (CEORG). In Hungary the support fell by 9.2% to 75.1%, in Poland and the Czech Republic the changes were a small decrease, by 1.6% and 0.4% respectively. The Czech Republic remains the most sceptical and Hungary the most eager of the three as far as support for membership is concerned. In Hungary the least enthusiastic are those in the age group of 40-59 years (16.7% against EU membership) and those living in rural areas (20.9% against EU membership), while the most enthusiastic are inhabitants of the country's capital, Budapest. In the Czech Republic, the highest support for EU membership can be found among respondents with tertiary education (78.5%), and the most opponents are in the group with only primary education (43.2% would vote against EU membership). In Poland, inhabitants of rural area are the most eager opponents (27.5% against), while the highest support to EU membership is among the inhabitants of large cities (83.8% for) and people with tertiary education (83%).

Enlargement Mini-Briefs

- "Enlargement has been the number one priority of my Commission from the beginning. I have worked for this day long and hard. Today we have delivered", according to European Commission President Romano Prodi. "The European Union has stood by its commitments", he said in Copenhagen.
- European Parliament President Pat Cox stressed in Copenhagen that "The work on this enlargement does not end today. A new challenge is now posed: explaining to our citizens what their political leaders have decided for them; earning their consent and support in a way that will show to citizens what is 'in it' for them. Once the 'event' has passed, it will be time to make the process of enlargement work. It will also be a time when communication needs to be carefully managed, to avoid generating false hopes or scoring own-goals by disappointing expectations."
- Negotiations continue, even after Copenhagen. On December 20, Romania took part in another negotiating session with the EU, covering the chapters on freedom to provide services, agriculture,

- culture and audio-visual, and financial and budgetary provisions.
- "Together we need to ensure that the various EU programmes attain the desired objectives and help to improve citizens' quality of life. This is one of the main challenges which the applicant countries will have to face", Fabra Vallés, President of the European Court of Auditors, told the Presidents of the Supreme Audit Institutions of the thirteen candidate countries in Bucharest last week. "One of the Union's principal requirements is for sound public administration which is capable of managing and scrutinising financial transfers from the EU budget", he insisted.
- Within the framework of the Copenhagen summit, Turkey lifted its longstanding veto on EU access to NATO assets. This removes one of the major obstacles to the development of the EU's Common European Security and Defence Policy - and in concrete terms it means that the EU will be able to take on peacekeeping duties in Macedonia next year.
- The Netherlands would reject enlargement by a large majority if there were a national referendum on the subject, according to an opinion poll by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It showed nearly 68% of the population against bringing in ten new member states in 2004.
- Citizens of the new member states will have the same rights to work in the UK as current EU citizens, the UK government has formally announced. But the British government retains the right to restrict the flow of labour from the new member states if there is a threat to the British labour market as a whole or in a specific region or industry.
- The EU-Estonia joint parliamentary committee insisted at its meeting in Brussels last week that it is important to explain the benefits of an enlarged Union in the present and the future member states - both in terms of increased political stability and the prospect for sustained economic growth. The JPC resolved to continue its work until accession is achieved, and agreed that future meetings should promote broader debates on accession in Estonia, including on the Accession Treaty ratification procedure.

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
December	
Friday 20th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ EU Council of Ministers working group on enlargement meets, Brussels ■ EU Council of Ministers working group on the Accession Treaty meets, Brussels ■ Candidate countries' representatives take part in European Convention
Sunday 22nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Presidential elections, Lithuania (second round on January 5, 2003)
January 2003	
Details tbc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Presidential elections, Czech Republic
Sunday 5th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lithuanian Presidential elections
February 2003	
9th and 16th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Presidential, elections, Cyprus
24th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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

- Referendum on the accession treaty, Slovakia

Saturday 7th

Sunday 15th and

- Referendum on the accession treaty, Czech Republic

Monday 16th

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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