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Enlargement

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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.

ENLARGEMENT BECOMING A REALITY FOR PUBLIC OPINION

Public awareness about the candidate countries and about EU enlargement is stable in the EU member states, according to the latest EU poll on opinions about enlargement, although familiarity is clearly greatest between neighbours. While a majority across the EU accepts the possibility of further enlargements, there is a concern to set a clear boundary to the EU and a desire for further reforms after this enlargement.

See <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/opinion>

PARLIAMENT VOTES "YES" TO ENLARGEMENT

The European Parliament gave a resounding welcome to European Union enlargement last week. After all the hesitations of the last weeks over the budgetary aspects, MEPs voted massively on April 9 in favour of the accession in May 2004 of the ten countries with which the EU has completed negotiations. There were more than 500 "yes" votes for each of the candidates except the Czech Republic - and even there, 489 MEPs said yes, with just 39 against and 37 abstentions. Parliament also voted through a resolution approving the agreement reached with Council on the budget for the enlargement and on preserving Parliament's budgetary rights.

Accession required the assent of Parliament voting by 314 out of 626 votes. In the event the voting figures for the other candidates were as follows:

COUNTRY	VOTERS	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAINED
CR	565	489	39	37
EE	566	520	22	24

CY	562	507	29	26
LV	568	522	22	24
LT	567	521	22	24
HU	568	522	23	23
MT	567	521	23	23
PL	565	509	25	31
SV	566	522	22	22
SK	567	521	21	25
BROK REPORT	567	548	68	41

On the basis of a vote on the report by the Foreign Affairs' Committee, (the **BROK Report**) The Parliament also backed the outcome of the enlargement negotiations. The negative votes and abstentions were largely motivated by individual MEPs' concerns on issues such as the stance taken by some candidates on Iraq, the readiness of the EU to take on new members, or persistent indignation at the budget deal.

Overwhelmingly, the Parliament greeted the arrival of ten new member states "as an important step in building an even stronger and more effective European Union (...) consolidating democracy and peace, strengthening its economy and sustainable development (...) based upon the shared values of liberty, respect for fundamental rights, good governance and the rule of law". MEPs also confirmed their belief that the enlargement will have a positive impact on the development and cohesion of the European Union.

The EU aim to admit Bulgaria and Romania by 2007 and to decide next year on opening accession negotiations with Turkey - if they meet the criteria - also received formal Parliament endorsement. And Parliament reaffirmed its consistently expressed view that the enlargement process "offers the prospect of membership to all European countries which fulfil the political criteria", with an explicit reference to the countries of the Western Balkans.

Now, the Parliament said, there was work to be done on all sides. For all the candidates - including the acceding states - preparations for accession must be completed, and MEPs reiterated their intention of monitoring closely compliance with the EU acquis, particularly in terms of combating corruption and protecting human and minority rights. And for the EU itself, efforts are needed to ensure that an enlarged EU retains its internal cohesion and can speak with a common voice on the international stage, especially on common foreign and security policy. The EU has "special responsibilities to strengthen transatlantic ties, especially the relations between the EU and NATO", so as not to disappoint the legitimate expectations of the peoples of the new member states, the Parliament insisted.

During the debate, European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen urged a positive vote as a message that would help fulfil the aspirations of some 70 million people who had earned the right to be part of a united democratic Europe. His only regret was that an agreement had not been achieved on Cyprus to allow the entry of a united island into the EU - but he promised support for any further talks under the United Nations.

The Commission would be monitoring progress in the new member states and drawing attention to any additional measures needed, promised the Commissioner. He particularly emphasised establishment of proper judicial and administrative systems to tackle corruption and crime, and protection for human rights and equal opportunities. "The imminent enlargement is no guarantee of a politically and economically strong Europe. But it makes it more likely. It will make us better able to ready Europe for the demands of the 21st century and offer its citizens a century of peaceful development, personal freedom and individual opportunity," he concluded.

Tassos Giannitsis, Greek minister for Europe, said the accession negotiations had been difficult, but that there was good reason for everyone involved to be proud of the outcome. He also welcomed the positive results of the recent referenda in Malta and Slovenia, and looked forward to a stronger Europe emerging in May next year. Against a difficult economic and political background, enlargement offered hope, and could serve as a catalyst to economic growth and increased stability across the world.

Elmar Brok, the chairman of the foreign affairs committee, made a point of offering thanks to the efforts made by so many (including Commissioner Verheugen and his services) to translate the enlargement project into an achievement. Enlargement would, above all, mean stability for the region, and would make interstate war in Europe impossible, he said. And Verheugen reciprocated in his remarks during the debate: "The close understanding between the Commission and Parliament on the strategy for enlargement was of tremendous help in working together and made for constructive teamwork, for which I am deeply grateful".

Speaking for the EPP-ED group in the Parliament, Hans-Gert Poettering expressed personal "joy" at the realisation of a dream that had not even been born when he entered the Parliament in 1979 - that in 2003 the European Parliament would be voting on the accession to the EU of countries that were then still fully under the yoke of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. For the PES group, Enrique Barón Crespo called the vote "a date with history" - and viewed it as the beginning of the process rather than the end. And for the Liberals, Cecilia Malmström said she was proud to be taking part in "such a historic debate", after longstanding Liberal support for enlargement.

Parliament was able to give unconditional backing to the enlargement plan because of the budgetary agreement reached with the EU Council on the eve of the vote. The upward revision of the EU's financial perspective would make it possible for enlargement to go ahead in a way that would fulfil the EU's obligations to the new member states and, at the same time, preserve the budgetary powers of the European Parliament, the vote underlined.

The last-minute deal on the budgetary arrangements raises the extra spending for enlargement to €540 million (at 2004 prices) for 2004-2006 - close to what the European Parliament had been demanding. It also introduces a new category of expenditure for Turkey under a "pre-accession strategy", which will free funds in the foreign aid sector, and enable a more flexible approach to be taken to other international questions. And it paves the way for extra spending in areas such as research and the Erasmus education programme. It is also accompanied by a declaration by Council that it would respect Parliament's budgetary rights, including the budgets for 2004, 2005 and 2006, as well as future long-term budget planning from 2007. The Council declaration also guarantees no discrimination against the new member states.

Michaele Schreyer, Commissioner for the Budget, also welcomed the deal: "Faced with this historic step, we had an obligation to find a satisfactory outcome in the negotiation on finance for the enlarged Union. With this question resolved, all financial decisions are taken so that enlargement can become a successful reality in 2004", she said.

For all the various country reports, see the EP web-site at http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/sipade2?PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+AGENDA+20030409+SIT+DOC+XML+V0//EN&LEVEL=4&NAV=S&LSTDOC=Y&L=EN&SAME_LEVEL=1

HUNGARY VOTES "YES" TOO

The vast majority of Hungarians who took part in their country's accession referendum on April 12 voted "yes" - leading to triumphant declarations of success by the pro-EU camp. Provisional results showed about 84% of voters backing entry and the Hungarian authorities celebrated with fireworks and a European Union son-et-lumière over the Budapest parliament building on the banks of the Danube.

Prime Minister Peter Medgyessy complimented the citizens of Hungary on "providing a future for their children". Former prime minister Viktor Orbán, of the opposition Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party, emphasised that efforts now have to focus on ensuring that everyone would become winners through EU accession - which will not, he warned, happen automatically.

The European Commission was quick to salute the result, too, as "a momentous occasion for rejoicing. By coming out overwhelmingly in favour of EU membership today, the Hungarian voters have signalled their clear choice to build their future within a strong, united Europe. This decision marks the end of Hungary's tragic separation from the European family of democratic nations. By the same token it marks the start of the Hungarians' full participation in our shared future, to which they have so much to contribute with their rich and enlightened cultural heritage".

The **Commission statement** also paid tribute to Hungary's "key role in tearing down the Iron Curtain in 1989", and emphasised that Hungarians "can rest assured their rights as a sovereign nation will be wholly respected within the European Union".

Hans-Gert Poettering, chairman of the EPP-ED Group in the European Parliament, greeted the outcome as "a great result". Following this further successful referendum "we can now look forward with some optimism to positive results in the other referenda", he said.

But turnout was low, at less than 50% of the eight million electors, with notable abstentions in some rural areas. The lack of enthusiasm is not being ascribed to the small but voluble "no" campaign, which had warned of sell-outs to foreign capital and risks for Hungarian smallholders (and which garnered some 12% of the votes); instead the choice of a Saturday for the poll, and the apparent certainty of a positive vote, are believed to have kept voters away from the voting booths. The constitutional validity of the result is not affected, in any case: a Hungarian referendum is valid if 25% of eligible voters cast the same vote - and on April 12, 38% of eligible voters voted "yes". Since this was a binding referendum, the Hungarian Parliament is now expected to immediately approve the mandate for the government to sign the Accession Treaty.

The process of the referendum can be followed on site of Hungarian National Election Office at <http://www.valasztas.hu/en/index.html>

For more information on Hungary, see: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/hungary/index.htm> or the web pages of the Commission Delegation in Budapest at <http://www.eudelegation.hu/>

CANDIDATE COUNTRIES "CAN BENEFIT DESPITE RECESSION"

The European Commission's spring 2003 economic forecast for the **candidate countries** show Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania to be potentially more vulnerable than other countries to the current economic slowdown and the uncertainties caused by the Iraq war, noted European Economic and Monetary Affairs Commissioner Pedro Solbes, discussing the forecasts with the European Parliament last week. "Candidate countries are varied as regards their exposure to these developments", he said.

"However, regardless of the higher risks surrounding the foreseen scenarios, candidate countries should enjoy significantly higher economic growth than current member states, partly due to significant progress in macroeconomic stabilisation and structural reform", he went on. "This has also led to a considerable decrease in average inflation and a stabilisation of unemployment. We expect GDP growth at 3% in 2003 and even around 4% the year after". But, he warned, "general government deficits rose considerably last year, due to lower growth and the loose fiscal stance in some larger countries. These deficits are expected to only gradually fall over the forecast horizon to 3.9% for the acceding countries in 2004."

ATHENS THE FOCUS FOR ACCESSION TREATY SIGNATURE AND EUROPEAN CONFERENCE

The ceremony of the signature of the Treaty of Accession of the new member states to the European Union will take place in Athens on April 16. The ten acceding states will sign the Treaty, and will join the Union on 1 May 2004 if the treaty is ratified by all 25 contracting parties. The delegations from the EU15 and the ten acceding states - represented at the highest level - will arrive at the Stoa of Attalos (the ancient marketplace of Athens) at the foot of the Acropolis in mid-afternoon. European Commission President Romano Prodi and European Parliament President Pat Cox will participate in the ceremony, and the Commission will also be represented by Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen. The Treaty will be signed by two signatory plenipotentiaries of each of the 25 states. And the three candidates that are not yet signing the Treaty - Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey - have been invited to be present too.

See <http://www.eu2003.gr/en/cat/39/>

On April 17 a European Conference will take place at the Zappeion Hall, bringing together heads of state and/or government and foreign affairs ministers of forty countries: the member states, acceding states, candidate countries and neighbour countries of the enlarged Union (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Norway, Serbia and Montenegro, Switzerland, Ukraine and Russia, as a special guest). Commissioner Verheugen, HR/SG Solana, EP President Cox and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan will also address the meeting. (Cox to be confirmed)

The issue on the agenda is the enlarged EU's relations with its neighbours

The European Conference, which met for the first time in 1998, was set up by the EU as a companion body to the Union's overall enlargement process. It is a multilateral forum for political consultation to address questions of general concern to the participants and to deepen their co-operation on foreign and security policy, justice and home affairs, and other areas such as regional co-operation or economic matters. The EU's Luxembourg Council in December 1997 stipulated that the European Conference should provide a platform for the EU member states "and the European States aspiring to accede to it, sharing its values and internal and external objectives". The last **European Conference** was held on 20 October 2001 in Brussels, in the aftermath of September 11 terrorist attacks. As during previous meetings, the European Conference plans to adopt a declaration.

Before the Accession Treaty signing ceremony on April 16, an informal EU summit, with the 15 heads of state and/or government, will review the work of the Convention on the Future of Europe, particularly on institutional issues: continuity in the presidency of the European Council, the size and the composition of the European Commission after enlargement to 27 members, the powers of the President of the Commission and of any EU "foreign minister", and the role of any congress composed of national parliaments and the European Parliament.

GETTING READY FOR NEW MEMBER STATES' OBSERVERS IN EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

On 1 May, the European Parliament will welcome the observers from the ten acceding states - Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta. These 162 "observer MEPs" will be able to familiarise themselves with Parliament's work in the run-up to their countries' accession, scheduled for May 2004. Malta will have five observers, Cyprus and Estonia six each, Slovenia seven, Latvia nine, Lithuania thirteen, Slovakia fourteen, Hungary and the Czech Republic will each have 24, and Poland 54. Their membership of political groups will be decided definitively on 1 May.

During their year with observer status, the 162 representatives of the future member states will take part in much of Parliament's work. Offices have been set aside for them in the buildings in Brussels and Strasbourg, and language services will be provided on the basis of availability, subject to the recruitment of translators and interpreters. The observers will have the right to speak in parliamentary committees and inter-parliamentary delegations, but not the right to vote or to be elected to any positions of responsibility. During plenary sessions they will have seats in the chamber but will not be entitled to speak, vote or be elected to positions of responsibility. While they will continue to draw their salaries as national MPs, the European Parliament will pay travel expenses between their capital and Parliament's places of work, as well as an allowance of €250 a day.

The observers' mandate is scheduled to run from 1 May 2003 to 30 April 2004. On 1 May 2004, if all ratification procedures are completed, fully-fledged MEPs, nominated by the new member states' national parliaments, will briefly take over (although in practice many of the observers may at that stage be nominated as members). After the European Parliament elections of June 2004, the first directly elected MEPs from the new member states will then take over definitively as from the new Parliament's constituent plenary session of 20 July 2004.

Enlargement news in brief

Malta re-elects a pro-EU government

Maltese voters restated their determination to see their country join the EU last weekend. In their April 12 general election, the central issue was again - as in the referendum only weeks ago - Malta's place in Europe. And again, the majority of the voters showed their preference for membership by re-electing the pro-EU government of Eddie Fenech Adami. And again, although the margin was slender, the result was clear, with 51.79% giving their backing to Nationalist Party leader Fenech Adami, who has been a vigorous proponent of joining the EU. He has consistently argued that membership is vital for the island's economy and international credibility - in contrast to opposition Labour Party leader Alfred Sant, who had said that Malta would not sign the EU Accession Treaty on April 16 if his party won, because - he claimed - belonging to the EU would cost Malta jobs and leave the island overshadowed by big European nations. So hotly contested was the election that plane loads of Maltese flew back into the island to vote, benefiting from special low prices that the state-owned Air Malta offered for the occasion. But as soon as provisional results were available, Sant acknowledged that Fenech Adami had won an absolute majority.

The President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, sent **congratulations** to Fenech Adami on behalf of the Commission, and interpreted the result as "a clear message by the Maltese people" and "a confirmation of the willingness of the Republic of Malta to join the enlarging European Union". Hans-Gert Poettering, chairman of the EPP-ED Group in the European Parliament, was among the first to issue congratulations. "We are all delighted that you will once again, as prime minister, lead the Nationalist Party into government", he wrote to Fenech Adami. "I look forward to working with you to make a success of Malta's membership of the European Union." And UK prime minister Tony Blair also sent Fenech Adami a note of congratulations, assuring him of the UK determination "to strengthen still further the unbreakable ties between Malta and the United Kingdom", and expressing delight at the reaffirmation of the Maltese people of "their wish to join the EU in May next year".

Favourable opinion trends in acceding states

The latest opinion polls from some of the acceding states indicate continuing support for accession. There has been a slight increase in support for EU membership in Lithuania, which will hold its referendum in May: the latest increase of 2% since February brings the number of EU membership supporters up to 65.5% in March, while opponents have decreased to 13.3%. Slovakia has a high level of EU membership support, with almost 8 out of 10 respondents to a recent poll by Slovak Radio declaring their intention to participate in the upcoming referendum, and 83% supporting EU membership. Among younger voters, support is around 85%, against 79% among those over 60. Support is higher among the more educated population, in conurbations, among workers in the state sector, and among entrepreneurs; it is lowest among the unemployed and in smaller towns.

Meanwhile, an opinion poll in the southern part of Cyprus shows that 74% percent of Greek-Cypriots are confident their country will benefit from joining the EU. Economic development, security, human rights, the rights of workers and environmental protection top the list of areas where benefits are expected to be felt. And a growing proportion of the population support joint decision-making on matters ranging from combating drugs to foreign and security policy.

§ Poll results across the candidate countries are being monitored by Gallup, at the request of the European Commission, and a weekly two-page summary is available at <http://www.gallup-europe.be/epm/>

New Government sworn into office in Estonia

On 7 April, the Parliament authorised the Chairman of Res Publica, Mr Juhan Parts, to form the new Government. Earlier, Mr Parts had presented the principles of his Government on the basis of the 43-page Coalition Agreement, which had been signed between Res Publica (centre-right), the Reform Party (liberal/right of centre) and the People's Union (left-wing rural party). The new Ministers were appointed by President Arnold Rüütel on 9 April and took their oath of office on 10 April. Reform Party's Kristiina Ojuland continues as Foreign Minister.

In his presentation to the Parliament on 7 April Mr Parts emphasised the new coalition's full support for Estonia's membership of the EU and NATO. He said accession to the EU would speed up economic development and increase the welfare of Estonia's residents. He added that the Government must ensure that instead of simply moving along with the rest, Estonia should become a serious EU Member State that has to be reckoned with. He underlined that ahead of the referendum on 14 September, it would be the Government's task to offer unbiased and exhaustive information about the EU to the citizens.

See the Estonian Government web page on <http://www.riik.ee/en/valitsus/>

Prodi reassures Balkans of enlargement prospects

Speaking in Belgrade last week, European Commission President Romano Prodi President of the European Commission said: "The historic process of Europe's unification will not be complete until the countries of the Balkans join the Union". He reaffirmed that the Commission "is fully committed to achieving that goal. We want you to become members of the Union -- with no 'ifs' and no 'buts'. Europe's history is your history, Europe is your home. Our peoples all want and deserve the same things: democracy, peace and prosperity. Enlargement is based on the sharing of these values -- and we want to share these values with all the countries in the region". But he insisted that enlargement is a demanding process, calling for "determination, commitment and dedication", and with "no short cuts". He made clear that "no political agreement can set aside or soften the criteria that must be met for membership of the Union". However, "in this tough process, the Union and the Commission will be by your side. They will help you. They will provide guidance and expertise. They will also provide financial assistance." What the

countries of the Balkans will have to furnish is political will, he stressed - "and that is something no form of assistance can provide".

For more on the EU's relations with Serbia and Montenegro, see http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/fry/index.htm

European Parliament okay for Kaliningrad transit documents

The European Parliament has given its approval to new EU rules on travel documents for Russians crossing frequently to and from Kaliningrad via Lithuania. The Facilitated Transit Document and Facilitated Rail Transport Document have been created to replace the visas that Russians would otherwise need for going through what is scheduled to be EU territory as from May next year. The Parliament added, however, that the concept of frequent traveller should be better defined, in order to prevent abuses and misinterpretations. Parliament also wants early ratification of bilateral border agreements between member states and third countries (Russia is still dragging its feet on this), and early solutions to be found for local frontier traffic at the EU's external borders - before new member states join the EU in May 2004.

For more on EU policy towards Kaliningrad, see http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/north_dim/kalin/index.htm

Commissioner Verheugen faces the music in Hungary

Prior to the referendum this weekend, Commissioner Verheugen paid a visit to Hungary to answer questions on the EU, present and future. Aside from his official meetings, the Commissioner listened to Vladimir Ashkenazy conduct the [European Youth Orchestra](#), and rode from Budapest to Győr, inaugurating an EU ISPA railway project and enjoying a ride in an antique train, during which he discussed the future of the enlarged European Union with invited farmers, pensioners, students, trade unions, media and others.

For the Commissioner's speech at the Technical University, see <http://europa.eu.int/comm/commissioners/verheugen/speeches/sp31032003de.htm>

"Bring in EU voting rules", acceding states urged

The European Commission is urging the EU's new member states rapidly to transpose EU rules that will allow their citizens to vote and stand as candidates in their state of residence. Some one million citizens of the new member states live elsewhere in the EU, but will be entitled to vote - and to stand as a candidate - in their member state of residence in the 2004 elections to the European Parliament. The current 15 EU member states will also have to act fast to ensure that all EU citizens residing on their territory are entered in the electoral rolls so they can vote in the EP elections. The official date for accession is 1 May 2004, and the polling days in the European Parliament elections are 10-13 June. In at least 17 member states/acceding states, the deadline for application to register in the electoral rolls falls before the actual date of accession. António Vitorino, European Commissioner responsible for Justice and Home Affairs, said last week: "I am concerned that the time schedules for the registration of voters to the electoral rolls are very tight. I urge all countries to start preparations early. They also have a job to do in informing citizens about their rights."

Proc potrebujeme prekladatele? Multi-lingualism meets enlargement

The first Commission web site in the 23 languages of the enlarged EU made its debut recently. The Directorate General for Translation (formerly the Translation Service) has a new site intended primarily for translators from countries which are candidates for accession to the European Union, and

who might be interested in working in its institutions. The site, created at the joint initiative of the EU translation departments to introduce themselves to possible applicants, explains why those departments are needed, as well as the procedures for recruiting translators as future officials or as freelance staff. From the general information pages, you can access the individual institutions' web sites, where you can find more detailed information. See http://europa.eu.int/translation_enlargement/index_en.htm

Enlargement Mini-Briefs

- Want to know what is in the draft Accession Treaty but don't have the time to read all 6000 pages? The European Commission departments have prepared a report that provides a comprehensive guide to the draft Accession Treaty. The report covers all negotiating chapters, and provides a summary of the issues covered in the draft Accession Treaty for each of them. Since the authentic text of the agreement reached in the accession negotiations on the conditions of admission and the adjustments of the treaties on which the Union is founded are laid down in the draft Accession Treaty itself, this report is for information purposes only. The report can be found on the enlargement web site at http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/negotiations/pdf/negotiations_report_to_ep.pdf
- Local and regional representatives from across the EU and the candidate countries will have a chance next month to meet potential partners and assess funding opportunities under the EU's Interreg programme. The "Interreg IIC Partner Search Forum", in Vienna on May 12-13, will focus particularly on the enlarged Europe. The programme promotes partnerships among cities, regions and others involved in urban and regional development, to exchange information and know-how, and particularly to help integrate regions that share external borders with the candidate countries. A new call for proposals will be published in June 2003. More information from www.interreg3c.net
- European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen outlined one of his aims for the Commission's communication strategy during last week's enlargement debate in the European Parliament. "It is focusing on this year on disseminating information on what the Treaty of Accession contains and what enlargement means for citizens. This will not be an election campaign; we want to inform, to explain and to answer questions. We want citizens of these countries to be well informed so that they can express their choice in the best possible conditions", he said.
- Increasing development assistance will be quite a challenge for many new member states, and it would be unreasonable to expect them to attain the EU target of 0.39% of GDP by 2006, said Poul Nielson, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, speaking on "A Europe of 25 in a World of 193" at an international development policy meeting in Berlin last week. But he said he did expect the new member states to make an immediate and major contribution to EU thinking on all aspects of development policy.
- The European Anti-fraud Office - OLAF - and the Romanian Prime Minister's office are to organise a training seminar for anti-fraud communicators in Bucharest in the autumn. It will bring together the heads of communication of OLAF's partner services in the candidate countries, so as to develop increased awareness of EU ways of handling information. In particular it will aim at helping prevent fraud through the free flow of information across the candidate countries.
- With the accession of eight Central and Eastern European countries envisaged for 2004 (and two others for 2007), the integration of operations by EU transnational corporations will increase, says the Overview of the World Investment Directory: Central and Eastern Europe, launched last week by UNCTAD. It concludes, however, that there are differences in the type of FDI that accession and non-accession countries may attract. All accession countries, but

especially those in the top end of the income bracket, can generally expect their GDP to increase as a result of EU membership. They may also attract an increasing concentration of services FDI and higher corporate functions (regional headquarters, R&D, shared services...) from current EU members and third countries. But EU enlargement offers opportunities to non-accession countries as well, since assembly-type manufacturing might shift from relatively higher-cost accession countries, it predicts. More information at <http://www.unctad.org/en/subsites/dite/>

- Lithuania is to introduce the Green Dot scheme - one of the vehicles for assisting in implementation and compliance with the European Packaging Waste Directive. Zaliasis taškas, a non-profit organisation focused on the environmentally friendly management of packaging waste in Lithuania, will develop a nation-wide recovery system that will tackle the collection, sorting and recycling of used packaging. Its shareholders include leading Lithuanian and foreign companies, ranging from Coca-Cola Bottlers Lietuva to Colgate-Palmolive, and from Nestlé Baltics to Tetra Pak Lietuva. More on the scheme at <http://www.gruener-punkt.de/en/pages/gp/systeme/>
- Talks on enlargement of the European Economic Area broke down last week. It had been hoped that the negotiations, between the EU candidate countries, the European Commission and the three non-EU EEA countries, would be completed in time for the EU Accession Treaty ceremony. But last-minute objections - from Poland, over fishing quotas - made agreement impossible at the last negotiating session.
- In order to inform Eurostat has produced a new leaflet on the occasion of the summit in Athens. For the first time it contains key indicators of Candidate Countries and Member States, including several averages and aggregates for the ten acceding countries. See <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/docs/pdf/eurostatdecember2002.pdf>

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
April 2003	
Wednesday 16th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Signature of the Accession Treaty, Athens ■ European Conference, Athens ■ Informal EU summit, Athens
Thursday 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ European Conference, Athens ■ Acceding states attend EU Council of Ministers working group on the EU Agreement with the United Arab Emirates, Brussels
Saturday 20th to Monday 22nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ European Employment and Social Affairs Commissioner Anna Diamantopoulou visits Cyprus
Monday 22nd - Tuesday 23th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen visits Poland
Tuesday 23th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ European Budget Commissioner Michaela Schreyer visits Turkey
Thursday 24th, Friday 25th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen visits Lithuania

May 2003

- Friday 2nd ■ Informal foreign affairs ministers meeting, Greece
- Saturday 10th - ■ **Referendum** in Lithuania on EU accession
- Sunday 11th
- Friday 16 and ■ **Referendum** in Slovakia on EU accession
- Saturday 17th
- Monday 19th ■ General Affairs and External Relations Council, Brussels

June 2003

- Sunday 8th ■ **Referendum** in Poland on EU accession
- Sunday 15th and ■ **Referendum** in the Czech Republic on EU
- Monday 16th accession
- Tuesday 17th ■ General Affairs and External Relations Council, Luxembourg
- Friday 20th ■ European Council, Thessaloniki
- Tuesday 24th ■ General Affairs and External Relations Council, Luxembourg

July/August 2003

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

September 2003

- Sunday 14th ■ **Referendum** in Estonia on EU accession
- Saturday 20th ■ **Referendum** in Latvia on EU accession

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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