

Enlargement - The Political Impact

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Introduction

1 May 2004 will be a historic landmark for the European Union (EU) as it moves from 15 to 25 Member States. It should be an occasion for celebration as Europe unites after more than half a century of division. But the sad truth is that there is very little enthusiasm for enlargement, either in the present or new Member States. Indeed there is a pervasive mood of fear and uncertainty. Politicians, officials and the public worry about the implications of enlargement.. Will the EU still be able to function effectively? What are the budgetary consequences? Will the advent of several poorer countries help or hinder the EU as it tried to become more competitive? Will the new Members act together as a block? Are the new members likely to become Trojan horses for the United States and thus prevent the development of a European security policy? And what will be the political impact on the European Council, the Council of Ministers, the Commission and the European Parliament (EP)?

Key Points

- Enlargement will have a significant impact on the political life and culture of the EU, in particular on the composition and functioning of the institutions. It may take several years to adjust to the changes.
- The new Member States will not form a unified block but will band together on some issues such as their wish for an increased budget and less social and environmental legislation. They all want to join the euro and Schengen as soon as possible.
- Alliances will be more complex in the enlarged EU. New and old Member States will form ad hoc alliances. France and Germany will remain the most important relationship.
- There is little understanding of the EU and in particular the ‘community system’ in the new Member States. But there is no reason to doubt that they will soon recognise the benefits it brings to small and medium-sized states.
- Poland is the only large newcomer and may continue to try and assert itself as a major player. But Poland faces many internal problems which may weaken its ability to act on the European and global stages.
- The present centre-right majority in the Council will diminish after enlargement.

The European Policy Centre

- The EPP is likely to be strengthened as the largest political grouping in the new EP. There will be little relative change in the position of the Socialists and Liberals. There will be an increase in the number of eurosceptic MEPs. The big losers will be the Greens and Rainbow Coalition members.

Background

The ten acceding countries are a very diverse group. For the most part they are poor, eastern, Slavic and have gone through a traumatic transition decade from communism to democracy and a market economy. There are a number of new states and all share concerns about minorities and national identity. Malta and Cyprus apart, democracy has only been established within the last 15 years in the new Member States. During this period there has been enormous political volatility reflecting the exuberance of new democracies and the difficulties of the transformation process. In the Baltic states governments have formed and fallen as quickly as in Italy in the 1960s. There has been a steady reduction in the number of political parties represented in parliaments. The trend has been towards parties modelled on EU counterparts and today most parties are affiliated to the mainstream EU political families.

During the Convention on the future of Europe, it was often difficult to distinguish between speakers from the old and new Member States. By and large they covered the same spectrum of views as current Member States regarding reform of the institutions. They all wanted to maintain their Commissioner, and maximise their Council votes and number of MEPs – just like most current Member States. Partly due to the fact that so many of the new Members are in the small/medium-sized category there was a rift in the Convention and Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) between Big v Small states. This translated into disputes over the size of the Commission and voting in and organisation of the Council, including the proposed new President of the European Council. Most new Member States will be anxious about trends towards any kind of ‘directoire’ in the enlarged EU.

One area where there was some clear difference between old and new members in the Convention was on security. Most new Member States were sceptical about plans for a European defence policy and worried that it might undermine NATO. They recognised the important role NATO had played in preserving the peace during the Cold War and most were instinctively pro-American for understandable reasons. They had signed letters in support of the US-led invasion of Iraq although many now regret doing so. This support for the US is likely to slip as they experience direct participation in EU foreign policy decision-making; and cope with unpopular US visa policies. The acceding states have already been aligning their positions with the EU on key issues such as Kyoto and the International Criminal Court. Two areas where the new Member States may have an impact on external policy are Russia and development assistance. In general the new Members are more suspicious of Russia due to recent history; and they are likely to be less keen than existing Members

in maintaining a high level of funding for development aid. They would prefer more funding to be spent on their immediate neighbourhood.

As regards the future of Europe, the new Member States have not really engaged in fundamental domestic debates as in the UK or Ireland. Their priority has been membership of the Union and all are worried at talk of a core Europe. They all experienced a high vote in favour of joining the EU in national referendums and some will hold another referenda to ratify the Constitutional Treaty. But rather like the situation in present Member States, the forthcoming EP elections will be fought almost entirely on domestic issues. An understanding of national political trends in the new Member States is thus essential to understand the new European political landscape.

The following pages provide a brief assessment of the political situation in each new Member State and the likely implications for the European Council and EP elections. It should be pointed out that the affiliations of political parties in the new Member States to European political parties is rather unstable, especially as regards the various right wing groupings. It remains to be seen whether the eurosceptic members attempt to organise their own grouping.

Poland

Political Background:

Poland is governed by a Social Democratic-led coalition government headed by SLD (Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej). In recent months, the SLD and prime minister Leszek Miller have suffered a major loss in support, prompting Miller to offer his resignation as of 2 May. The main reasons for the drop in support are high unemployment (above 20% in many eastern areas), the Polish role in Iraq (more than 50% of Poles were against the war) and on-going corruption scandals (Rywingate). These developments have led to a significant rise in support for the centre-right party of Civic Platform (PO – Platforma Obywatelska) and the nationalist agrarian party Samoobrona (Self Defence) under the populist Andrezej Lepper. These two parties are in an extremely tight race in the polls, far ahead of the SLD. President Kwasniewski has nominated the Finance Minister, Marek Belka, to succeed Miller as Prime Minister. Given the size of its agricultural sector Poland can be expected to take a major interest in the future of the CAP.

EU

Poland has attempted to portray itself as a Big Power in the EU and has run into trouble as a consequence, both in the IGC and with its fellow new members. It now appears that Warsaw recognises the importance of a compromise on the IGC before the summer.

If there is no general election before June, then the EP elections could be a referendum on the SLD government. A large number of the 54 Polish seats in the EP are likely to be won by right-wing, nationalist, agrarian parties. The PO and Samoobrona could gain a majority of seats leaving the SLD a distant third. There is no real chance for any new Green members.

President:

Aleksander Kwasniewski,
Member of the SLD, second term,
Reelected 8 October 2000

Prime Minister:

Leszek Miller (Marek Breka from 2 May)
Elected 23 September 2001
Former leader of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD)
Head of minority government

Government:

Minority Coalition of SLD and UP
Controls 206 (SLD 191, UP 15) of 460 seats in the Sejm (lower house of parliament)

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz

EU Commissioner:

Danuta Hübner
Former Minister for European Integration

Next Elections:

Presidential Elections: October 2005
President elected by popular vote for a five-year term

Parliamentary Elections: September 2005
Prime minister and deputy prime ministers appointed by the president and confirmed by Sejm (lower house)

Political Parties:

SLD - *Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej* (Democratic Left Alliance) [PSE]

UP - *Unia Pracy* (Labor Union) [PSE]

PSL - *Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe* (Polish Peasants' Party) [PPE-ED]

PO - *Platforma Obywatelska* (Civic Platform) [PPE-ED]

PiS - *Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc* (Law and Justice) [UEN]

LPR - *Liga Polskich Rodzin* (League of Polish Families) [NI]

SO - *Samoobrona* (Self-defence) [NI]

 **Cyprus**

Political Background:

Cyprus is governed by President Tassos Papadopoulos, an economic liberal from the DIKO party (*Dimokratiko Komma*), who holds the function of head of state and government. He was elected against former President Glafcos Clerides in 2003, who had held power for more than a decade on the divided island. Elected primarily because of the support of the former communist party (AKEL), and with rather weak popular support for his own party, Papadopoulos has found it difficult to establish a strong base. His government is now overwhelmingly concerned with the consequences of the 24 April referendum on the Kofi Annan sponsored peace plan to reunify the island.

EU

Cyprus has few special issues to defend in the EU. It will clearly have a major interest in EU policy towards Turkey and the Middle East.

The outcome of the Cypriot vote in the EP elections is hard to predict because of the low voting registration so far among both the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. The Turkish Cypriots must vote in the south.

President:

Tassos Papadopoulos
Democratic Party
Elected 1 March 2003

Vice President:

Empty (Reserved for a Turkish Cypriot)

Last VP: Rauf Denktash

Rauf Denkstash is currently the president of the self-declared “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus”

Government:

Centre-Left Coalition of the DIKO, AKEL, and KISOS
Controls 48 seats (AKEL 20, DISY 19, DIKO 9) of the 80 in parliament
24 seats are empty and reserved to Turkish Cypriots.

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

George Iacovou

EU Commissioner:

Markos Kyprianou,
Former Finance Minister

Next Elections:

Presidential Elections: February 2008
President elected by popular vote for a five-year term.

Parliamentary Elections: May 2006

Political Parties:

DIKO - *Dimokratiko Komma* (Democratic Party) [ELDR]
DISY - *Dimocraticos Synagermos* (Democratic Rally) [PPE-ED]
EDEK/KIDOS - *Eniáa Dimokratiki Enosis Kyprou* (Social Democrats)
[PSE]
AKEL - *Anorthotiko Komma Ergazomenou Laou* (Former Communists)
[GUE/NGL]



Political Background:

The political situation is dominated by two political parties, the Nationalist Party (PN Partit Nazzjonalista) and the Labour Party.

PN leader and former Prime Minister Edward Fenech Adami, the longest serving PM in Europe, won the last elections on a pro-EU platform. He resigned in March in favour of Lawrence Gonzi. The Labour Party was strongly opposed to EU membership in the past but has come to recognise and accept the fact of Maltese membership. There remains, however, a real

fear in Labour circles that EU policies will change the island's economic balance, and force the country to rely exclusively on tourism for its development.

EU

Malta's five MEPs will likely be split 3 to the PN and 2 to the Labour Party.

President:

Guido de Marco
Nationalist Party (PN)
Elected April 1999

Prime Minister:

Lawerne Gonzi
Nationalist Party (PN)
Assumed office in March 2004

Government:

The PN governs with a small majority in the 65 seat Maltese parliament. It has 35 seats and the opposition Labour Party 30 seats

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Joe Borg

EU Commissioner :

Joe Borg
Current Foreign Minister

Next Elections:

Presidential Elections: April 2004
President elected by the Parliament for a five-year term

Parliamentary Elections: April 2008
Prime minister and deputy prime ministers appointed by the president and confirmed by Parliament.

Political Parties:

PN - *Partit Nazzjonalista* (Nationalist Party) [PPE-ED]
MLP - *Partit Laburista* (Labour) [PSE]
AD - *Alternattiva Demokratika*, Maltese Green Party [Greens]

Czech Republic

Political Background:

The political situation of the Czech Republic is dominated by the political rivalry between the ODS party of President Vaclav Klaus (*Obcanska Demokraticka Strana* - Civic Democratic Party) and the CSSD of the Prime Minister Vladimir Spidla (*Ceska Starna Socialne Demokraticka*). The euro-sceptic Klaus was only elected after three rounds of voting. The Spidla coalition government can fairly be described as pro-EU but it only commands a one-seat majority in parliament (101 of 200 seats).

EU

Klaus is fighting a rearguard action to co-decide on foreign policy. Spidla would appear to have the constitution on his side but their rivalry remains an issue. Opinion polls show an increase in support for the ODS as a sign of discontent with the current government. This is likely to mean more ODS MEPs (at least 10 MEPs of 24), who are members of the EPP-ED. The ODS, a rather Euro-sceptic party, have close links to the British Tories.

President:

Vaclav Klaus
Civic Democratic Party (ODS)
Elected in Feb. 2003 by the Czech parliament
Presidential powers are limited

Prime Minister:

Vladimir Spidla
Social Democratic Party (CSSD)
Elected June 2002 elections

Government:

Majority coalition government
Coalition members are CSSD, and the 'Coalition.'
The largest parties in the 'Coalition' are the Christian Democrats and Freedom Union (US).
Controls 101 of 200 seats in Parliament (CSSD 70, 'Coalition' 31)

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Cyril Svoboda

EU Commissioner:

Pavel Telicka
Former Czech EU ambassador

Next Elections:

Presidential Elections: Fall 2008
Term of five years and may serve a maximum of two successive terms.

Parliamentary Elections:
June 2006 for the Parliament (lower house)
November 2004 for the Senate (upper house of parliament)
Prime minister and deputy prime ministers appointed by the president and confirmed by Parliament.

Political Parties:

CSSD - *Ceska Starna Socialne Demokraticka* [PSE]
US-DEU - *Unie Svobody-Demokraticka Unie (Freedom Union)*[PPE-ED]
KDU-CSL - *Krestanska Demokraticka Unie* [PPE-ED]
ODS - *Obcanska Demokraticka Strana (Civic Forum)* [PPE-ED]
KSCM - *Komunisticka Strana Cech a Moravy* [GUE:NGL]



Political Background:

Estonia is governed by a coalition led by Prime Minister Juhan Parts. A newcomer on the political scene, Parts is a very young leader (36 when elected), and his centre-right party, Res Publica (RP) was only founded in December 2001. Within the current government, RP is allied to the centre-right Reform Party (ER), in partnership with the agrarian/eurosceptic People's Union (ERL). Between them, the three parties hold 60 seats in the 101-seat parliament. The RP itself has the same number of seats as its rival, the Centre Party (Eesti Keskerakond, or K), both with 28 MPs. The Centre Party, led by Edgar Savisaar, is the strongest single party and somewhat euro-sceptic, but no other party has agreed to form an alliance for fear of Mr. Savisaar's alleged dominating personality.

EU

Given its liberal economy Estonia will be a champion of de-regulation in the EU. It is also likely to adopt a sceptical attitude towards Russia which has dragged its feet on ratifying the Russian-Estonian border treaty. Estonia's six MEPs should be evenly split between the Centre Party, the Reform Party and Res Publica, with the polls foreseeing two seats for each party. This means four new members of the EDLR Group (K, ER) and two for the EPP-ED (RP).

President:

Arnold Ruutel
People's Union (ERL)
Elected 21 September 2001
Former Chairman of the Estonian Communist Party under USSR

Prime Minister:

Juhan Parts
Union for the Republic (Res Publica, RP)
Elected March 2003

Government:

Majority coalition government
Coalition of RP, Reform Party (ER), and People's Union (ERL).
60 seats in the 101-seat parliament. (28 RP)

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Kristiina Ojuland (ER)

EU Commissioner:

Mr. Siim Kallas,
Chairman of the Reform Party and former prime minister

Next Elections:

Presidential: fall of 2006
Parliamentary: general election March 2007

Political Parties:

RP - *Res Publica* [PPE-ED]
ER - *Eesti Reformierakond (Reform party)* [ELDR]
ERL - *Eestimaa rahvalliit* an agrarian party [UEN]
IL – *Isamaaliit* [PPE-ED]

M - *Rahvaerakond Moodukad* (now called Social Democrats) [PSE]
K - *Eesti Keskerakond (Center Party)* [ELDR]



Political Background:

Latvian politics are extremely fluid as witness ten governments in twelve years. The most recent change was caused by the collapse of the ruling coalition government of former Prime Minister Einars Repse (JL, New Era Party). Without a new election, the president appointed an extremely weak government headed by Prime Minister Indulis Emsis who is a member of the Union of Greens and Farmers, and is the only Green Prime Minister in Europe. It remains to be seen how long his coalition will last. A major factor in Latvian politics is the large Russian minority and the various issues surrounding their citizenship. This has caused tension with Russia.

EU

Normally Latvian election rules ban candidates with a communist past, but there is an exception for the EP. Because of this a number of Russian-speaking candidates are running, especially former Communists under the coalition ticket of the TSP/LSP (ex-communists). In general, however, the JL's coalition with the People's Party (TP) and Latvia First Party (LPP) is likely to win more than half of all MEP seats despite the collapse of the government. All the coalition parties are members of the EPP-ED group and will control at least six of Latvia's nine MEPS. But because of the new government, there is now a real chance of at least one Green MEP from Latvia.

President:

Mrs. Vaira Vike-Freiberga
Reelection by parliament in 2003

Prime Minister:

Indulis Emsis,
Zaļo un Zemnieku savienība (Union of Greens and Farmers)
Appointed by the President February 20, 2004.

Government:

Coalition of TP, LPP, and ZZS
Seats in the Parliament by Party: JL 26, TSP/LSP 25, TP 20, LPP 10, ZZS 12, LNNK 7.

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Rihards PIKS (TP [PPE-DE])

EU Commissioner:

Mrs. Sandra Kalniete
Former Foreign Minister

Next Elections:

Presidential elections: June 2007
President elected by Parliament for a four-year term

Parliamentary elections: October 2006 (Early Elections may be called before)

Members are elected by direct, popular vote to serve four-year terms

Political Parties

JL - *Jaunais laiks (New Era)* Centre Right wing [PPE-ED]
TB/LNNK - *Tēvzemei un Brīvībai/LNNK* Nationalists [UEN]
ZZS - *Zaļo un Zemnieku savienība* Green party [Greens]
TP - *Tautas partija (People's Party)* Centre Right [PPE-ED]
LPP - *Latvijas Pirmā Partija (Latvia First Party)* Right [PPE-ED]
TSP - *Tautas Saskaņas Partija* ex communists [PSE]
LSP - *Latvijas Socialistiskās partijas* ex communists [GUE/NGL]

 **Lithuania**

Political Background:

Current Lithuanian politics centre on the impeachment of President Rolandas Paskas, a former PM and mayor of Vilnius. He is alleged to have links with both the Russian Mafia and Russian secret service. Dismissed by parliament on 6 April, the favourite to succeed him is Valdas Adamkus, his predecessor. The PM is Algirdas Brazauskas of the Social Democrats (LSDP) and a strong political rival of Paskas. His coalition government is reasonably secure and support for the LSDP has risen since the impeachment affair began.

EU

Under current circumstances, it is likely that one can envisage four MEPs to the EPP-ED, which would be elected under the KDU label (Christian Democrats), six MEPs for the PSE coming from the LSDP, and four MEPs for the ELDR. These numbers, however, could be altered by the current

difficulties met by the president's party (the LDP, also part of the ELDR). While the LDP currently has two observers in the EP, those seats are likely to be redistributed in the next elections, and will most likely go to the Social Democrats.

President:

Rolandas Paksas
Member of LDP (Liberal Democratic Party)
Elected January 2003
Impeachment on 6 April, 2004

Prime Minister:

Algirdas Brazauskas
LSDP (Social Democrats, ex-communists)
Elected July 2001

Government:

Coalition government of the LSDP and NS (New Union/Social Liberals)
The coalition controls 79 of 141 seats (LSDP 51, NS 28)

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Antanas Valionis

EU Commissioner:

Dalniete Grybauskaite
Finance Minister

Next Elections:

Presidential Elections: Fall 2007, but early elections probable
President elected by popular vote for a five-year term

Parliamentary Elections: October 2004
71 members are directly elected by popular vote, 70 are elected by proportional representation; members serve four-year terms

Political Parties:

LSDP - *Lietuvos socialdemokratų partija* (Social Democrats) [PSE]
NS - *Naujoji sąjunga (socialliberalai)* economic Liberals [ELDR]
LKD - *Lietuvos krikščionys demokratai* (Christian Democrats) [PPE-ED]
TS-LK - *Tėvynės Sąjunga/Lietuvos konservatoriai* (Homeland Union)
Rightists [PPE-ED]
NDP - *Naujosios demokratijos partija* [PPE-ED]
LCS - *Liberalų ir Centro Sąjunga* [ELDR]

LDP - *Liberalų demokratų partija* [ELDR]



Political Background:

Strangely, Prime Minister Peter Medgyessy is not a member of any party, but was elected in 2002 with the support of the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP). His government controls 198 seats in parliament, and is based on a coalition with the Free Democrats (SZDSZ). The government faces strong opposition from the former governing party – the “Young Democrats” (Fidesz), and its leader, ex-Prime Minister Viktor Orban.

EU

According to current opinion polls, the European elections in Hungary have become a two party race between the Socialist and the Fidesz with each likely to get 12 of the 24 Hungarian MEPs. The government’s unpopularity may indeed give the Fidesz a couple of additional seats.

President:

Ferenc Madl

Prime Minister:

Peter Medgyessy
Not a member of any party
Elected April 2002

Government:

Majority Coalition Government
Coalition of Socialists (MSZP) and Free Democrats (SZDSZ)
Controls 198 seats in parliament. (MSZP 178, SZDSZ 20)

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Laszlo Kovacs

EU Commissioner:

Peter Balázs,
Former Ambassador to the EU

Next Elections:

Presidential Elections: June 2005

President elected by the National Assembly for a five-year term

Parliamentary Elections: April 2006

Prime minister elected by the Parliament on the recommendation of the president

Political Parties:

MSZP - *Magyar Szocialista Part* [PSE]

SZDSZ - *Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége* [ELDR]

FIDESZ- MPP - *Magyar Polgári Part (Young Democrats)* [PPE-ED]

MDF - *Magyar Demokrata Forum* [PPE-ED]



Slovakia

Political Background:

Slovakia is currently governed by the Christian Democrat SDKU party. Prime Minister, Mikulas Dzurinda, who won a second term in the September 2002 elections, is head of the ruling coalition. His party is not even the strongest but only comes second to the nationalist, euro-sceptic party of Vladimir Meciar, the HZDS. Discontent with both the SDKU and the HZDS has recently led to the rise of a new party called Smer (“Direction”), a socialist party but with no Communist past led by Ivar Gasparovic, a former aide to Meciar. He claimed victory over Meciar in the second round of presidential elections on 17 April 2004.

EU

It is likely that the SDKU will win six seats in the EP elections, the HZDS and Smer four each. This means that Slovakia will serve as a boost to the conservative parties in the EP.

President:

Ivan Gasparovic

Elected April 2004

Prime Minister:

Mikolas Dziurinda

Member of Slovakian Democratic and Christian Union (SDKU)

PM since 30 October 1998

Government:

Coalition lead by SDKU, a centre right party
Controls 78 of 150 seats in the parliament
(SDKU 28, SMK 20, KDH 15, ANO 15),

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Eduard Kukan

EU Commissioner:

Jan Figel
Former Chief Negotiator

Next Elections:

Presidential Elections: April 2004
president elected by direct, popular vote for a five-year term

Parliamentary Elections: September 2006
Members are elected on the basis of proportional representation to serve four-year terms

Political Parties:

SDKU - *Slovenska Demokratska a Krestanska Unia*(Democratic & Christian Union) [PPE-ED]

KDH - *Krestansko Demokratske Hnuti* (Christian Democrats) [PPE-ED]

SMK-MKP - *Strana Mad'arskiej Koalicie -Magyar Koalicio Partja* (Hungarian) [PPE-ED]

ANO - *Alianca Noveno Obcana* (Alliance of the New Citizen) [ELDR]

SMER – *Smer* ("Direction") socialists [PSE]

KSS - *Komunisticka Strana Slovenska* (Communists) [GUE/NGL]

HZDS - *Hnuti za Demokratska Slovenska*(Movement for a Democratic Slovakia) Nationalists [NI]



Slovenia

Political Background:

President Janez Drnovsek and Prime Minister Anton Rop head the current government of Slovenia. Both are members of the centre party, the Liberal Democrats (LDS), which, except for a short period, has ruled Slovenia since its independence. The LDS is the largest party in Slovenia, controlling 34 of 90 seats in Parliament. The second party is the Social

Democratic Party (SDS) with fourteen MPs. In spite of its name, the SDS is not a Social Democratic (left), but a Conservative party. The United List of Social Democrats (ZLSD), the large left party, is in third place with eleven seats. The next parliamentary elections will take place in October 2004. While LDS is set to win again, SDS has experienced a recent increase in the opinion polls.

EU

Opinion polls have seen the SDS pull even to LDS so it is likely that the two parties will split the vote, and get three MEPs each. The remaining MEP would go to the ZLSD. The SDS is a member of the EPP-ED. The LDS is a member of the ELDR, and ZLSD belongs to the PSE group.

President:

Janez Drnovsek
Member of Liberal Democracy of Slovenia (LSD)
Elected December 2002

Prime Minister:

Anton Rop
Member of LDS
Replaced Drnovsek as PM in December 2002

Government :

Coalition government is formed by the LDS, ZLSD, SLS and DeSUS
Controls 54 of 90 seats in Parliament (LDS 34, ZLSD 11, SLS 9, DeSuS 4)

Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Dimitrij Rupel

EU Commissioner:

Janez Potocnik
Former Europe minister

Next Elections:

Presidential Elections: Fall 2007
President elected by popular vote for a five-year term

Parliamentary Elections: October 2004
Members are elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms

Political Parties:

SLS - *Slovenska Ljudska Stranka* [PPE-ED]

ZLSD - *Združena Lista Socialnih Demokratov* [PSE]

LDS - *Liberalna Demokracija Slovenije* [ELDR]

NSi - *Nova Slovenija* [PPE-ED]

SDS - *Slovenska demokratska stranka* [PPE-ED]

DesSus – Party of retired people [NI]

Conclusion

The new Member States will bring fresh faces to the EU. Their ministers will defend their national interests just like current Member States. Overall the ‘new kids on the block’ will behave much as present Member States. They will be divided on economic policy. They will only vote as a block on issues such as increasing structural funds. They will likely push for a stronger Justice and Home Affairs policy, especially to share the costs of policing the external borders of the Union, and for a tougher policy towards Russia. They will also wish to see more resources devoted to Wider Europe and less to the developing world.

The balance of power in the European Council should move leftwards, reflecting the present political make-up of the governments in the new Member States. This could affect decisions such as the appointment of the next President of the Commission. Party affiliations have not played a major role in such appointments previously but the leader of the EPP, Hans-Gert Pöttering, has stated that his group would not accept a non-EPP candidate, if the EPP emerged as the largest party after the EP elections.

In contrast, elections to the EP are likely to lead to an increase in centre-right representation which, as mentioned above, could impact on the election of the next President of the Commission. This is because of the regrettable, general European trend to use the EP elections as a vote on the policies of national governments. Since most of the larger Central and East European states have socialist governments (Poland, Czech Republic, and Hungary), this means a vote to the right as a sign of discontent. In other new Member States, where the government is favoured or at least stable (Estonia, Slovenia, Latvia, and Malta), the MEPs should parallel the national coalitions, which are generally composed of economic liberals and right-wing parties. The only countries where one might see a strong showing for the socialists are Lithuania and Slovakia. Altogether, this means that at least 70 of the 162 new MEPs (more than 40% of them) will likely be members of the EPP-ED. The PES, on the other hand, should only gain 46 new members (or 28% of the new deputies). If one includes the contribution of Euro-sceptic deputies to the new EU-25 European Parliament (there should be around 31 of them), this shift to the right is even greater, at 60%. While one cannot foresee how this will affect the European Parliament as a whole, it does mean a larger bloc of MEPs who are not as federalist as in the past. The big losers after enlargement will be the Greens, who should gain at most one new MEP from the ten new Member States. The ELDR will gain nine, mainly from Estonia and Slovenia.

Fraser Cameron is Director of Studies at the EPC. The author thanks EPC intern Andrew Hillman, for his help in preparing this paper.

Annex 1: Tentative estimate of MEP repartition in new Member States

	EPP	PES	EDLR	GUE	UEN	Green	NI	Total MEPs
Slovenia	3	1	3					7
Slovakia	6	4			4			14
Hungary	12	12						24
Latvia	6	2				1		9
Estonia	2		4					6
Czech	15	8		1				24
Malta	3	2						5
Poland	19	10			10		15	54
Cyprus*								6
Lithuanian	4	7	2					13
Sum	70	46	9	1	14	1	15	162

* No data available yet for Cyprus.

Annex 2: Voting in the Council of Ministers

Countries	Council 1/05-31/10 2004	Council after 1/11/04
Germany	10	29
France	10	29
Italy	10	29
United Kingdom	10	29
Spain	8	27
Poland	8	27
Netherlands	5	13
Belgium	5	12
Czech Republic	5	12
Greece	5	12
Hungary	5	12
Portugal	5	12
Sweden	4	10
Austria	4	10
Denmark	3	7
Finland	3	7
Slovakia	3	7
Ireland	3	7
Lithuania	3	7
Latvia	3	4
Slovenia	3	4
Estonia	3	4
Cyprus	2	4
Luxembourg	2	4
Malta	2	3
TOTAL	124	321

QMV	88 sur 124	232 sur 321
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**Annex 3: Voting in the European Council for an EPP President
if on government lines**

Countries	Council Votes	Votes YES	Votes NO	Uncertain
	1/05-31/10 2004			
Germany (SPD)	10		NO	
France (UMP)	10	YES		
Italy (FI)	10	YES		
UK (L)	10		NO	
Spain (SD)	8		NO	
Poland (SLD)	8			YES/NO
Netherlands (CDA)	5	YES		
Belgium (VLD)	5		NO	
Czech Rep (CSSD)	5		NO	
Greece (ND)	5	YES		
Hungary (MSZP)	5		NO	
Portugal (SPD)	5	YES		
Sweden (SAP)	4		NO	
Austria (OVP)	4	YES		
Denmark (V)	3			YES/NO
Finland (KESK)	3		NO	
Slovakia (SKDU)	3	YES		
Ireland (FF)	3	YES		
Lithuania (LSDP)	3		NO	
Latvia (ZZS)	3		NO	
Slovenia (LDS)	3			YES/NO
Estonia (RP)	3			YES/NO
Cyprus (DP)	2			YES/NO
Luxembourg (CSV)	2	YES		
Malta (PN)	2	YES		
TOTAL	124	49	56	19
QMV Number	Majority 88	Blocking Minority	Blocking Minority	

It should be noted that in the past political parties have not played a decisive role in the choice of Commission president. There are also several coalition governments in both the present and future Member States which makes an analysis of voting patterns on party lines unpredictable. Much will depend on the personalities and abilities of the proposed candidates.