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**Political Scenarios**  
**for the EU and Its Neighbourhood**  
**– Views from Selected Southern**  
**Mediterranean and Eastern**  
**European Countries**

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## Executive Summary

The objective of this report is to develop four different scenarios related to the possible implications of two major decisions the European Union needs to face. First, a decision is pending on the future institutional setup of the EU, as expressed in the Constitutional Treaty. After the negative French and Dutch referenda on the text in 2005, no decision on this matter has yet been taken. Therefore, the EU's "finalité politique" remains undecided.

Since the 2004 enlargement, many citizens and decision-makers in the member states of the EU have been wary of a further extension of the EU's borders. There is a widespread view that enlargement might have been 'too much too soon', and that the EU was ill-prepared to take on board new members. In any case, the main consequence of the 2004 "big bang" enlargement for the future of the process is that the prospects for further enlargement are less favourable than they were three years ago. Concerns have been voiced over the EU's absorption capacity and calls are being made for the EU to define its ultimate borders. At the same time, calls for support of further enlargement are being voiced on the premise that the EU's membership means enlargement of a zone of peace and prosperity. Therefore, the EU's "finalité géographique", as the authors coin it, also remains unclear.

Questions revolving around the fate of the Constitution and future enlargements feature prominently in European policy debates. The answers to these fundamental questions will not only determine the EU's own future course. They will also frame the way in which the EU relates to global politics, and thus its closest neighbourhood. Since the historical enlargement in 2004, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) has been the EU's major foreign policy initiative, linking the EU policy debates to EU's foreign policy ambitions.

In this light, this report discusses the ways in which the major European questions (and some possible answers to them) are believed to impact upon the ENP according to a number of selected partners in the Southern Mediterranean and Eastern Europe. The analysis is guided by four major political scenarios for the future development of Europe and relate to the Constitution and further rounds of enlargement.

The scenarios were derived from two major questions: First, what is the future of the Constitutional Treaty? Not the Treaty itself, but the answer to this question is probably the most important variable that needs to be addressed in order to determine the future of the EU's most ambitious political project. The second major political question concerns the decision on the further enlargement of the EU, as it is an issue that is of major concern to the governments and societies of the new EU member states. While there is a widespread and rather positive awareness of the transformative power of EU membership in these countries, societies in "old" EU member states are rather cautious as regards further enlargement.

Although admittedly simplified for analytical purposes, we can identify four possible scenarios with respect to the EU's finalité issues:

1. The Constitution is rejected and further enlargement allowed, leading to a "divided Europe";
2. The Constitution is rejected and further enlargement suspended, leading to a "Europe in limbo";
3. The Constitution is adopted and further enlargement suspended, leading to an "inward-looking Europe";
4. The Constitution is adopted and further enlargement allowed, leading to an "outward-looking Europe".

Although this report outlines all the four possible scenarios, it can be assumed that most analysts would agree that the last two scenarios are rather unrealistic in the short and medium-term. For this reason the report addresses these scenarios more superficially and discusses extensively the other two scenarios.

The analysis focuses on the manner in which the EU's relations with the neighbouring nations change under each of the scenarios. This is done through a discussion of the future of the ENP which, in turn, is somewhat determined by the fate of the Constitutional Treaty and further enlargement. The ENP was launched by the European Commission in 2003 to serve as the single most important framework for the EU's relations with its neighbours. Yet, the ENP is still lacking many elements of a full-fledged foreign policy and, at least at this point, it remains, to a large extent, an unfulfilled opportunity for the development of relations with the Southern Mediterranean and Eastern European neighbours (including the Southern Caucasus).

The functioning of the ENP and thus its future course is very closely related to the challenges the EU faces. First, the Constitutional Treaty lists the ENP and provides it with a primary legal basis. It declares that “the EU shall develop a special relationship with neighbouring States, aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness.” Second, the Constitution provides the underlying political and legal framework of the ENP by shaping the EU’s future role, objectives, image, identity, and, moreover, the making and conduct of its foreign policy. Again, since its inception, the ENP has been closely associated with the enlargement policy as it was generally modelled after the enlargement templates; it was conceptualized by the same officials in the European Commission who had led the 2004 enlargement process. “In the light of the relative weakness of past policies towards these ENP countries in promoting these values”, the ENP was conceived as a policy to “extend the reform stimulus of enlargement to the would-be new neighbours of the EU” and was thought as an alternative to full membership of the Eastern European countries.

This study is based on the existing literature and 20 focused interviews that were conducted during the period from March to May 2006 with policy-makers, academics, and think tank representatives in one Southern Mediterranean country (Egypt), four new EU member states (Czech Republic, Latvia, Poland and Slovakia), a designated EU member state (Turkey) and Brussels. The new EU member states were selected on the grounds of their relevant experience while Egypt has been chosen for its alleged leadership role in the Arab world, and because of its status as *primus inter pares* of sorts among the Southern Mediterranean partner countries (MPC). Among the latter, we maintain that it is probably the country that has accumulated most knowledge and expertise on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP). Yet, the authors acknowledge the limitations associated with a single case study in the Southern Mediterranean area and have tried to remedy that weakness by utilizing relevant secondary sources. The new member states under study represent in geographical terms a good combination of big and small states, of states that have or do not have ratified the Constitutional Treaty and that differ with respect to their vision of the ENP. Turkey is included in the study due to its hybrid status as an EU candidate country, and thus as a stakeholder of the enlargement process, and its participation in the EMP as a MPC. Furthermore, the authors assume that its European vocation may have a significant impact on the geographical scope and content of the EU’s neighbourhood policy.

With respect to the EMP, one of the major findings of this study relates to the fact that the new EU member states, with the exception of Malta and Cyprus, prefer a low-key approach given the general lack of expertise and the virtual absence of any relevant debate on this issue, as is expressed by the statement of one interviewee who stated that ‘the Mediterranean, seen from most of the EU’s new member states, is a distant sea’.

It can be asserted that the interrelationship between the ENP and the EMP has not been sufficiently crystallised as the former seems to have turned into a technocratic and bureaucratic tool for the EU’s assistance in the Southern Mediterranean area, whereas the latter has developed into an instrument of political dialogue between northern and southern partners of the EMP. Yet, there is no clear answer to the limits of the ENP nor is the Barcelona Process’ departure point obvious.

## Part I. Introduction

After the French and Dutch referenda on the Constitutional Treaty in 2005, no decision on the future of this document has yet been taken. Since the 2004 enlargement, many citizens in the EU have been concerned about a further extension of the EU's borders and as many EU member states are confronted with serious socio-economic and political challenges, ambitious projects, such as the Constitutional Treaty and enlargement, have lost support among the EU-European public. The majority of the citizens in "old" member states have become increasingly frustrated with the integration process, as well as with their national governments, for not being able to deal effectively with stagnant economies and rising migration pressure.

Today, the EU is at a critical juncture as it has to take vital decisions on a number of issues, most of which are of an economic, political, and social nature. Yet, the fate of the Constitution and of future enlargements feature prominently in European policy debates and the way these two issues will be addressed will not only determine the EU's own future course, but also condition the way in which the EU relates to global politics and thus its neighbourhood. After the historical enlargement of 2004, the ENP is now the EU's major foreign policy initiative that links EU policy debates to the EU's foreign policy ambitions.<sup>1</sup> Hence, this study, by the means of scenario-building, discusses the ways in which a combination of developments related to the Constitution and EU enlargement are believed to impact upon the ENP according to some partners in the Southern Mediterranean and Eastern Europe. The scenarios were derived from two major questions: First, what is the future of the Constitutional Treaty? Second, will there be further rounds of enlargement once Romania and Bulgaria have joined the EU, and if so, when, how, and under which conditions will they take place?

These two questions represent the starting points for the scenario-building that is at the heart of this report. Although admittedly simplified for analytical purposes, four possible scenarios will be discussed:

1. The Constitution is rejected and further enlargement is allowed, leading to a "divided Europe";
2. The Constitution is rejected and further enlargement is suspended, leading to a "Europe in limbo";
3. The Constitution is adopted and further enlargement is suspended, leading to an "inward-looking Europe";
4. The Constitution is adopted and further enlargement is allowed, leading to an "outward-looking Europe".

Given that the last two scenarios are rather unrealistic in the short and medium-term, this study will focus in particular on scenario I and II.

After outlining the general analytical framework, the report will address the question of how the different scenarios are likely to influence the EU's relations with its neighbours. We concentrate our attention on the ENP, which was launched by the European Commission in 2003 to serve as the single most important framework for the EU's relations with its neighbours. However, the ENP lacks many elements of a full-fledged policy and remains, to a large extent, an unfulfilled opportunity for the development of relations with the Southern Mediterranean and Eastern European neighbours (including Southern Caucasus).

The ENP is very closely related to the EU's major challenges in that the Constitutional Treaty lists the ENP and provides it with a primary legal basis. It declares that "the EU shall develop a special relationship with neighbouring States, aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness"<sup>2</sup>, thereby shaping the EU's future role, objectives, image, identity, and, moreover, the making, and conduct of its foreign policy. Again, since its inception, the ENP has been closely associated with the enlargement policy, and was generally modelled in accordance with the enlargement templates; it was conceptualized by the same officials in the European Commission who were in charge of the 2004 enlargement process. Second, "in the light of the relative weakness of past policies towards these ENP countries in promoting these values," the ENP was conceived as a policy to "extend the reform stimulus of enlargement to the would-be new neighbours of the EU."<sup>3</sup> Lastly, it was thought as an alternative to full membership of some Eastern European countries.

Although there exists a vast array of literature on the perceptions of older EU member states of the Constitution and further enlargement, and to a lesser degree the ENP, the new

<sup>1</sup> The ENP includes sixteen countries: ten partner countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (the Barcelona Process) from Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, and Tunisia), and six post-Soviet countries of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine).

<sup>2</sup> Draft Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe, Part I, Title VIII: The Union and Its Immediate Environment, Article 56.

<sup>3</sup> Judith Kelley (2006), "New Wine in Old Wineskins: Promoting Political Reforms through the New European Neighbourhood Policy," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 44, No 1, pp. 29-31.

member states' perceptions of the Constitutional Treaty, as well as of the enlargement, and the neighbourhood policies, remain, to a large extent, unknown in Western Europe. The same applies to the views of the ENP partner countries, both in the South and the East. Thus, this report attempts to fill this research gap by analyzing the positions and perceptions of one Southern Mediterranean partner country, and of some of the new EU member states on these issues. While the inclusion of the Mediterranean partners appears natural, questions might be raised over the need to incorporate the new member states in the discussion. Although, already members, and thus, not subject to the ENP, these states have a large stake in the ENP due to the fact that the policy addresses their direct and more distant neighbours. The new East European EU member states traditionally have strong relations with their neighbours (especially in the post-Soviet area), sharing various concerns in the fields of regional security, trade, and social and political stability. Most of the new member states feel obliged to help their neighbours to move closer towards prosperity, democracy, and stability. The new "neighbours" in Eastern Europe are not included in this study as there has been no significant debate on the ENP in these countries. The last section ends with a set of policy recommendations in order to improve the ENP and thus the foreign policy profile of the EU.

This study is based on the existing literature and 20 focused interviews that were conducted during a period from March to May 2006 with policy-makers, academics, and think tank representatives in one Southern Mediterranean country (Egypt), four new EU member states (Czech Republic, Latvia, Poland and Slovakia), a designated EU member state (Turkey) and Brussels. The new EU member states were selected on the grounds of their relevant experience while Egypt has been chosen for its alleged leadership role in the Arab world, and because of its status as *primus inter pares* of sorts among the Southern Mediterranean partner countries (MPC). Among the latter, we maintain that it is probably the country that has accumulated most knowledge and expertise on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP). Yet, the authors acknowledge the limitations associated with a single case study in the Southern Mediterranean area and have tried to remedy that weakness by utilizing relevant secondary sources. The new member states under study represent in geographical terms a good combination of big and small states, of states that have or do not have ratified the Constitutional Treaty and that differ with respect to their vision of the ENP. Turkey is included in the study due to its hybrid status as an EU candidate country, and thus as a stakeholder of the enlargement process, and its participation in the EMP as a MPC. Furthermore, the authors assume that its European vocation may have a significant impact on the geographical scope and content of the EU's neighbourhood policy.

## Part II. Political Scenarios for the EU and Its Neighbourhood

### 1. Political Scenario One: Europe Divided

#### 1.1. Description

This scenario, which appears to be in line with current political realities, implies that the Constitutional Treaty is rejected while enlargement continues. The rejection of the Constitutional Treaty has major repercussions on the EU's ability to play a major role on the international scene. It is commonly accepted that the EU suffers from an inability to produce, communicate and implement a common foreign policy on a number of key international issues. Many events ranging from the wars and conflicts in the Balkans to the invasion of Iraq and to the recent conflict between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon have shown that the EU cannot manage to come up with a cohesive and coherent foreign policy stance. Although not a panacea, the Constitutional Treaty could have alleviated the lack of a single voice for Europe.

The current Nice Treaty is somewhat limited in its scope as it provides a legal base only for 27 member states. In contrast, the Constitutional Treaty with its provisions for enlargement is well-situated to respond to the effects of further rounds of enlargement and its rejection in the two referenda in France and the Netherlands does not automatically have to hinder future EU enlargements. One temporary way out would be to simply amend the current institutional setup of the Nice Treaty by Accession Treaties, and it seems that in the case of Croatia, that will most likely become the 28th EU member state, the Croatian Accession Treaty will amend the Nice Treaty.

For this scenario to materialize it, would be necessary that a favourable political environment for further enlargement will emerge in Europe. This seems possible only under the condition of a multi-speed integration. The rejection of the Constitutional Treaty and simultaneous openness for enlargement mean that the EU will develop into a two-dimensional body. Inside, there would be a 'core group' of countries with a separate treaty establishing a political Union among them. Outside, there would be all other member states participating at various levels of integration. Some of them would have the status of a full member, others would be left with the 'privileged partnership' status, while others could enjoy the membership of the EU only in selected policy areas, thus resembling what is often referred to as the EU à la carte.<sup>4</sup> The EU 'core group' would have a common currency (the Euro), common social policies (including employment, migration and health issues), as well as common economic policies (including fiscal and taxation issues). This system would aim at protection and improvement of the so-called 'European social model' and the group would also be characterised by a common foreign policy, joint army forces, justice and security policy and technological cooperation<sup>5</sup>. Eventually, the 'core group' could evolve towards a federal European state. However, limiting the integration to a narrow core group of the EU members would seriously compromise its impact in the international system. Not only would this configuration lead to the marginalization of Europe's role in the Middle East and the CIS but could undermine and even reverse the process of reintegration of Western and Eastern Europe.

In this context, the 'enlargement factor' means any form of accession to the wider EU, not necessarily to the 'core group'. In principle, accession to the latter would remain possible for some countries (i.e. Norway and all current EU 25/27 members). However, some of today's member states would not adhere to the 'core group', partly because such an integration would not be in their interest, and together with those countries that currently remain outside the EU (such as Turkey), would accede only to selected policy areas.

Such a complex institutional and political setup would lead to much confusion for the EU's partners and neighbours as well as to a major power shift within the European decision-making process. The EU's officials would have to concede much of their de facto initiative in outlining the directions for the EU's external policies, leaving them to the relatively more powerful activist member states. The European Commission would be even more closely identified with the core member states than is the case today.

It is necessary to stress that the 'core group' would not be based on the Eurozone<sup>6</sup>, but its initial members would rather include those countries that agreed to create a more integrated group, simply due to the fact that the Euro currency is more common than is the idea of a political EU. The Euro has been adopted, inter alia, by Ireland, Greece and Finland, i.e. countries which are not expected to join the 'core group' in the foreseeable future. Ireland remains outside of the Schengen zone and has negotiated a few opt-outs since the Nice Treaty referendum was held in Ireland in 2001. Greece has been confronted with continuous economic problems and has a relatively different foreign policy agenda than most of the Western European countries, which in the past has caused stalemates of sorts, such as the EU's position vis-à-vis the 1999 war in Kosovo. Greece has also pro-Eastern Orthodox sentiments that are not necessarily shared by other Western European countries. In contrast, Finland has a long-standing policy of neutrality and much closer links of cooperation with other Scandinavian countries than any of the six founding countries of the European Community. In other words: The concept of a stronger political EU seems to be possible only among some of the Western European states, including the original six.

4 See [\[http://www.europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/europe\\_a\\_la\\_carte\\_fr.htm\]](http://www.europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/europe_a_la_carte_fr.htm). Recently, the term 'two-speed Europe' has been debated, as in Heather Grabbe, "The siren song of a two-speed Europe", *Financial Times*, 16 December 2003. [\[http://www.cer.org.uk/articles/grabbe\\_ft\\_16deco3.html\]](http://www.cer.org.uk/articles/grabbe_ft_16deco3.html)

5 See Guy Verhofstadt, *Verenigde Staten van Europa (the United States of Europe)*, November 2005.

6 The idea put forward and supported by the Belgian Prime Minister, Guy Verhofstadt.

Within this scenario, the following integration circles could be envisioned:

1. A core group characterised by the most advanced level of integration; political integration with some features of a federal state;
2. The 'core group' plus other members (non-core group member states have a possibility to enter into the core group); various forms of enhanced horizontal cooperation in many policy areas between groups of countries are possible (such as the Euro and Schengen zones);
3. Privileged partnership (or restricted membership), applicable to countries which would not become members of the EU 27+; those states could participate in a number of policy areas, but without access to some of the key elements of integration, such as the voting power in the institutions and participation in the common foreign-policy making process;
4. European Neighbourhood Policy; in principle a free-trade zone with some other policies, such as educational programmes, research & development, energy security, free movement of capital, also accessible to the ENP partner countries; some ENP countries could be invited to obtain a 'privileged' partnership status;
5. Other lighter institutional forms of engagement with actors such as Russia, or other global or regional actors, e.g. Mercosur or ASEAN, which could include cooperation with Europol, the Galileo project, creation of a free trade zone, etc.

The neighbours of the EU would have to face a more complicated situation as the EU would rarely be able to speak with one voice. Members of the 'core group' themselves, which might have a more unified foreign policy stance globally, are likely to disagree with one another on many issues related to the neighbourhood. Thus, the first challenge for the ENP under this scenario would be that the EU was not able to formulate and thus, speak with one voice.

The next challenge for all the actors concerned would be the non-transparent decision-making process. A Europe divided into circles is not likely to take any major decision on the future of the ENP. As a result, the Southern Mediterranean and Eastern neighbours would be even more confused about the locus of power and the overall position of the EU.

The ENP, as has been mentioned above, would become some form of participation in the EU. It would not be a formal policy, but would remain a technical framework for political and financial decisions. In this way, the ENP could meet its key objective of exporting peace and security to the EU's neighbourhood and some policies, such as the energy policy, trans-European networks or joint research projects, would be implemented together with the ENP partners.

If this scenario prevailed, the institutional setup of the EU would become less clear and the lack of transparency could underpin the very construction of the EU. Since the EU architecture would become more unwieldy, the prestige of the EU would be undermined in the eyes of the partner countries and could lead to a decreasing interest among partner countries to cooperate with the EU.

The Southern Mediterranean countries are not satisfied with this scenario that resembles the current status quo. For instance, the Egyptian interviews clearly indicate the preference for an EU that had a foreign policy 'personality' which the Constitutional Treaty could have provided for. Multiple voices heard from Europe especially over Middle Eastern issues have been interpreted as signs of the EU's incapacity to get actively involved in foreign affairs. As comparisons have been made with the much more coherent policy stances of the USA, the Southern Mediterranean partner countries had much lower expectations from the EU in contributing to the solution of the problems of the region.

The Southern partners expect that, as the EU expands, it would be even more difficult than it is today to make the EU commit itself to new international obligations under this scenario. The EU policy initiatives are likely to be ad hoc, inconsistent, ineffective and counterproductive in the Southern Mediterranean area. Therefore, the rejection of the constitution is viewed as a stumbling block for the EMP. There is a widespread opinion that the EU must revisit the issue of the Constitutional Treaty in the medium term.<sup>7</sup>

## 1.2. Consequences for Europe's Neighbours

## 1.3. Southern Mediterranean Perspectives

<sup>7</sup> Cf. the interviews held in Cairo, 8-9 May 2006.

As regards enlargement, the Egyptian interviewees believe that it would be more difficult for the Southern Mediterranean partners to deal with an enlarged EU as the interests of the various member states, eventually belonging to different groups, would be further diversified. They also indicated that the EU has been paying less attention to the issues of the South since the latest round of enlargement as the Eastern dimension figures more prominently on the EU foreign policy agenda.

Indeed, the Southern Mediterranean partners are closely observing the developments related to the issue of Turkey's EU membership quest.<sup>8</sup> While some interviewees also expressed an interest in the Western Balkans to be part of the European enlargement policy, there is little opinion and knowledge on the possible Eastern dimension of future enlargement policies. However, the Southern Mediterranean partners do not appear to consider EU policies towards Eastern Europe as an alternative or as a competing project to Turkey's candidature.

Those interviewed in Egypt and Turkey pointed out that the EU would need to develop a deeper interest in the Muslim neighbourhood in general once Turkey had joined the EU. It is generally believed that a Turkish accession to the EU could bolster the cooperation between the EU and its Southern neighbours. Turkey's entry into the EU would be a landmark event as it would demonstrate that the EU is not constructed as a 'Christian Club', but as a house of different faiths, cultures and traditions, that was based on a certain number of common values. It would also show that the EU, building on the Turkish experience, views Islam and democracy as compatible value systems, and in the short term a Turkish membership would be also beneficial for the EMP as it would equip the EU with a deeper understanding of the region and the Islamic world in general. If Turkey was not accepted despite its fulfilment of the Copenhagen criteria, this would undoubtedly be seen by many in the Muslim world as a 'bad sign'.

## 1.4. New Member States' Perspectives

### Double Perspective in the Discourse on the Enlargement

EU enlargement is viewed in the new member states in two different ways, depending on the geographical direction: One view relates to the integration chances of other states that are considered to share the countries' historical and cultural heritage (such as the Western CIS or the Balkans), while the other view relates to states that are culturally farther away (e.g. Turkey or the Maghreb). In general terms, the two debates have been treated separately in the new member states. This, in turn, leads to the conclusion that 'enlargement' as a whole rarely features in the national discourses, but instead is being treated as a development in the relations with particular countries. This also means that the agenda of enlargement has influenced the intensity or direction of the debates to a very limited extent - for instance, the new member states from Central Europe and the Baltic region have paid little attention to the progress of negotiations with Bulgaria and Romania, while Poland, Lithuania and Latvia have focused strongly on their neighbours in the CIS which were yet offered any membership prospects.

Considering that the national geographical and historic priorities play a crucial role in determining the new member states' interest in the relations with various non-EU states, it may not come as a surprise that the 'mental proximity' or 'distance' retains its relevance for framing the debates over the accession of particular candidates. From this perspective, two groups of states may be identified. Firstly, the European integration of countries of Eastern Europe (in particular of the immediate neighbours of the new member states, such as the Ukraine, Romania or Croatia) is not subject to a separate debate about enlargement as it may be considered to be a component of earlier debates related to the individual "European fate" that were held in the new member states themselves. Statements supporting the 'continued process of enlargement in the region' from these governments appear also to build on recent experiences of their own completed accession negotiations. These states stress the principle according to which the EU ought to fulfil its earlier obligations (*pacta sunt servanda*).

Poland has long been an outspoken supporter of continued EU enlargement to the East. Just days before Poland's own EU entry, its foreign minister, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, outlined a long-term national objective: 'to open the prospects of membership in the European EU for Ukraine, Moldova and eventually Belarus and to work consistently towards this end even if it will take many years to achieve this goal.'<sup>9</sup> The issue had been salient even during the accession negotiations during which Poland, along with Hungary, did not ask for any derogations or transition periods in the area of common security and foreign policy, but resisted the negative impact of the common EU visa policy on Ukraine, thus balancing the priority of its own accession against the possible rupture in good-neighbourly relations with the East.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> For example, record number of journalists from the region followed the EU-Turkey meetings leading to the opening of the membership negotiations on 4 October 2005. See *Milliyet* (Turkish daily), 5 October 2005.

<sup>9</sup> 'The Eastern Policy of the European Union', given on 22 April 2004 at the Institute of Political Science in Paris. Full text on the website of the Polish Foreign Ministry: <http://www.msz.gov.pl/>

<sup>10</sup> Details of the debates in four new member states on the dilemma of introducing more restrictive visa policies towards Ukraine and other CIS states may be found in the Institute of Public Affairs' publication, *Visegrad States between Schengen and the Neighbourhood* (ed. Piotr Kazmierkiewicz, Warsaw 2005).

The continued interest of Poland in the EU's enlargement to the East may be seen in the stance of the Polish diplomacy, which on numerous occasions supported the accession aspirations of some post-Soviet states. For instance, current Polish Foreign Minister Anna Fotyga stated that 'the support for the pro-European direction of Ukraine should remain the goal of the EU' and referred to the expectations of other states, such as Moldova or Georgia 'for greater EU openness' to their 'transformation efforts' as 'justified'. Moreover, she called on the EU to acknowledge these countries' 'determination of the membership in the long term'.<sup>11</sup>

East European new member states other than Poland have clearly preferred to see further enlargement primarily reaching into all of South-eastern Europe (first Croatia and then other Western Balkan countries). Possible alliances in support of the candidacy of Croatia include the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia as well as Austria and Slovakia, while Serbia has been the object of particular attention of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. This prioritisation reflects not only the EU's likely path, which recognises the earlier involvement in Bosnia, Kosovo and FYROM,<sup>12</sup> but also the countries' genuine ties with some of those states (such as those of Slovenia with Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and of Hungary with Serbia) or the record of national foreign policy activism (as that of the Czech Republic or Slovakia) based on humanitarian or ideological reasons. As both new members of the EU and as smaller states, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia or Slovenia may also choose to invest their limited capabilities into the support of candidates that do not raise objections of major EU member states. For this reason, they may be less likely to support Poland's bid for the integration of Ukraine.

#### New Member states and Eastern Enlargement

All of the new member states from Central and Eastern Europe have upheld their support to the continuing inclusion of Bulgaria and Romania. However, the official stance is not reflected in the domestic debates as further EU enlargement has interestingly been a non-issue in these states since May 2004. This silence may be viewed as a lack of concern when the question is posed related to the candidacy of a country at a comparable level of economic development and similar cultural and historical traditions, such as Croatia. However, the prospect of the entry of poorer states of South-East Europe, like Bulgaria and Romania, has raised virtually no questions in the national debates either. It must be admitted that in a number of new EU member states, these candidacies enjoy far lower public support levels than Croatia or, even in some cases, the Ukraine.<sup>13</sup>

The public opinion in the new member states expresses considerably higher level of support for enlargement than the EU average. The top supporters of enlargement are Poland and Slovenia, but even the Czech Republic and Hungary, which show considerably lower support levels, are much more open to the idea of continuing enlargement of the EU than Germany or Austria. According to Eurobarometer 63 (July 2005), only 9 percent of the respondents in new member states were against enlargement, compared to 25 percent of their counterparts in the EU-15 (see Tables 1 and 2 in Scenario 2). Notably, the opposition to Turkey is lower in the new member states than it is in the old ones.

One way to explain the support and immunity to scepticism is the conviction that all Eastern European states are entitled to integration into the EU, and that the community owes solidarity to those countries with unquestionable European credentials. To a limited extent (since the issue is a potential area of conflict with Russia), this discourse on the unity of Eastern Europe may explain the absence of the Ukraine from the debates on enlargement, indicating that for many Central Europeans, Belarus, Ukraine or Moldova could potentially be integrated as part of the reunification of the region and the annulling of the division of the Yalta conference. In this context, from the perspective of new member states, the shared Eastern European heritage might be a more immediate and stronger lens for the determination of the enlargement schedule than would the history of the EU's explicit commitments be.

Poland typifies this perspective, as seen by its long-standing support for the pro-Western orientation of Ukraine, and eventual integration of Kiev into Euro-Atlantic structures. This strong preference may be seen as a case of classical geopolitical thinking in which the inclusion of the Ukraine into the European supranational bodies is vital to both Warsaw's own security and the broader regional security. From the Polish perspective, Ukraine's entry into NATO and the EU is a foreign-policy priority for which support needs to be sought from other member states and on which there is little room for compromise. Instead, the real point of tension is the place given to Russia in EU policies.

11 19 May 2006. Found at the Polish Foreign Ministry's site: <http://www.msz.gov.pl/Wyst>  
 12 Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.  
 13 See Eurobarometer 64, December 2005 [[http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb64/eb64\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb64/eb64_en.pdf)]

### The Neighbourhood Policy of New Member States and their Vision of the ENP

The European Neighbourhood Policy was preceded by several initiatives of the candidate states prior to their accession with the aim to upgrade the EU's relations with its future non-EU neighbours in Eastern Europe. Poland submitted first to the EU and the countries of Eastern Europe its non-paper calling for the establishment of an 'eastern dimension of the EU's foreign policy' in January 2003, which was followed by the publication of a more in-depth policy document, called 'New Neighbours—a framework of relations' in May that year.<sup>14</sup>

Following their accession to the EU, the governments of the four largest new member states associated in the Visegrad Group (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) issued a joint declaration in which they stated their interest in activism in the EU's neighbourhood. The 2004 Kromeriz declaration contained the resolution to apply the states' 'unique regional and historical experience and to contribute to shaping and implementing the European EU's policies towards the countries of Eastern and South-eastern Europe.'<sup>15</sup>

Near-consensus among the eight new member states from Central and Eastern Europe is the need to differentiate within the European Neighbourhood Policy. This view was clearly expressed by the Polish Foreign Ministry as early as in 2003. In April 2004, Minister Cimoszewicz reiterated the need to treat the Eastern and Southern peripheries of the EU differently and framed the EU's policy in the East as the instrument of modernization, which would be driven by the prospect of eventual integration into the EU. This view has been shared by the succeeding cabinets. Current Polish Foreign Minister, Anna Fotyga, issued a similar statement stating that 'Poland treats the neighbourhood policy as the priority direction of the EU external relations. We support differentiating the two main directions of the EU neighbourhood policy that is Eastern and Southern Dimensions.'<sup>16</sup>

### New Member States' Position as regards the EU's Southern Periphery

New member states have on the whole favoured giving priority to the Eastern direction of the neighbourhood policy. The Mediterranean direction has been viewed with far less interest, and has been typically classified as part of the EU's agenda. For instance, a long-term Polish observer of EU affairs, Krzysztof Bobinski, accounted for this low-key approach by reference to the general lack of depth in the coverage of EU affairs in the new member states: 'The Mediterranean, seen from most of the European EU's new member states is a distant sea...It is a struggle to get our domestic politicians to take an interest in salient EU related issues let alone something they consider to be esoteric as a policy aimed at creating 'a region of peace, stability and prosperity' in the Mediterranean...'<sup>17</sup>

The new member states have been involved in the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue to a very limited extent and several states have instead stressed their national priorities in the relations with Southern Mediterranean states. For instance, Poland and Hungary have asserted their agricultural interests in the course of the talks regarding the establishment of a free-trade area. Given the tendency of growing importance of interest groups in sectoral policies of the new member states' foreign relations, we may expect greater activism in specific fields of EU policy on the part of governments and non-governmental actors. This is also likely to prevent an emergence of any solid voting bloc in this group, and result in greater fragmentation and incoherence of the policy, given the continuing lack of public interest and concentration of sectoral concerns.

If the EU accession of Turkey has featured in the domestic debates, the "Mediterranean" was only weakly detected on the new member states' foreign policy radars. However, it is unlikely that either in the case of Turkey or the relations with the southern Mediterranean states the new member states from Central and Eastern Europe will ever be the leading actors in this EU policy. In general, the support of Turkey's candidacy remains half-hearted, if not ambivalent. In fact, the issue of Turkish accession did not create major dividing lines in domestic politics in the first months after accession. For instance, the issue of further enlargement did not feature in the campaigns of the candidates for MEP positions or in the party platforms in the first European elections. In the vote held in the European Parliament in December 2004 on the proposal to start negotiations with Turkey, European parliamentarians were in majority bound by the discipline imposed upon them in the respective clubs of the EP, and only single individuals chose to breach the regime. Thus, the MEPs' position was not directly driven by the domestic political considerations – all the more so as the vote itself was not a subject of controversies at home.

<sup>14</sup> Referred to in the speech of Polish Foreign Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz given at the Institute of Political Science in Paris on 22 April 2004, 'The Eastern Policy of the European Union'. Available at <http://www.msz.gov.pl>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.visegradgroup.org/documents/visegraddeclaration2004.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Fotyga, op.cit.: [http://www.msz.gov.pl/Wystapienie\\_Pani\\_Minister\\_A\\_Fotyga\\_na\\_konferencji\\_w\\_Natolinie\\_\(19\\_maja\\_2006r\)\\_6107.html](http://www.msz.gov.pl/Wystapienie_Pani_Minister_A_Fotyga_na_konferencji_w_Natolinie_(19_maja_2006r)_6107.html)

<sup>17</sup> Krzysztof Bobiński 'European Enlargement and the Barcelona Process' in Andreas Jacobs (ed) *Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation: Enlarging and Widening the Perspective*, Zentrum für Europäische Integrationsforschung Discussion Paper C131, 2004, Cited in Edwards, p. 2.

The Turkish accession may be analysed in the context of the general support of the governments of the new member states as regards further enlargement. However, it may be noted that the new member states from Central and Eastern Europe have taken a low-key stance on the issue of opening accession negotiations with Turkey. Generally remaining silent until the issue went on the EU agenda, they endorsed the consensus in the Council. Their reluctance to take a strong position on the issue continues as the governments have taken a 'wait and see' attitude, and statements have been made by some leaders that the outcome of the negotiations is 'open-ended'. Although some of the sceptical opinions of politicians from the governing parties might be interpreted as favouring a 'privileged partnership', the governments of these states are unlikely to take an official position before the EU determines its stance. One reason for the caution in their official positions can be the wish to maintain good relations with Turkey, which is, as a matter of fact, an important partner of the new NATO members.

Nonetheless, despite the current acknowledgement of the primacy of Turkish candidacy on the EU agenda, all the Central European states do not conceal that their bilateral ties with Ukraine are more substantial. The slogan 'if yes to Turkey, why not Ukraine?', which was commonly adopted by the Polish MEPs and government officials, has met with understanding from the other diplomacies (especially the Czech and Hungarian ones). Although currently not recognised as a candidate state, Ukraine's ties of history (a part of the country used to be a part first of Czechoslovakia and then of Hungary) and its 'European identity' have been invoked in support of the extension of the EU membership offer to Kyiv.

An exception to this course of the debate is the position of the Czech Civic Democratic Party (ODS), which has presented the most coherent and developed argument in favour of Turkey's membership in the EU. Along the lines of the British Conservative Party's position, the ODS argues that the entry of a large, poor and populous Turkey would challenge the EU to undertake necessary reforms, requiring the most costly redistributive EU programmes (the CAP and structural funds) to be overhauled. Such impact is welcome from the *laissez-faire* perspective, officially upheld by the party. Furthermore, enlargement would have to slow down if not reverse the process of deepening the integration, resulting in a model *à la carte*, with greater scope for national sovereignty, cherished by the ODS. This vision also looks forward to strengthening the relations with the U.S., cherishing Turkey's avowed alliance with the US and hoping to gain an important ally in combating new threats to security (terrorism, illegal migration), which is already a key player in NATO structures. Finally, the party argues for keeping the membership offer available as a form of broader communication with Europe's neighbours, especially in the Muslim world, thus according Turkey a special status of an intermediary in the intercultural dialogue.<sup>18</sup>

#### Opposition to the Constitutional Treaty in the New Member States

The public in the new member states has expressed varying levels of support for the Treaty. The group includes both enthusiasts of the document (Slovakia and Hungary with support levels of 60-61 percent), moderate sceptics (Poland, Latvia and the Czech Republic with 43, 41 and 39 percent of those in favour respectively) and the societies where only a minority is in support (Estonia 34 percent, Malta 31 percent and Cyprus 23 percent).<sup>19</sup> However, some common characteristics are emerging: as compared with the EU-25 average, fewer residents of the new member states fear the loss of sovereignty as a result of the Treaty's entry into force or express opposition due to their opposition to a further construction of a united Europe.<sup>20</sup>

The failure of the Treaty to be approved in the referendum votes in the Netherlands and France had a mixed effect on the prospects of the ballot in the new member states. On the one hand, in the period following these two referenda, four new member states ratified the Treaty in the parliaments (the first being Latvia following the day of the Dutch referendum and the last being Estonia nearly a year later, on 9 May 2006). On the other hand, the two new member states that planned to hold referenda (the Czech Republic and Poland) put the decision to hold a referendum on ice.

No referendum is planned in the Czech Republic as the idea was dropped following the outcomes of the French and Dutch votes. The Czech Republic had been the only new member state to announce a definite date for the referendum (June 2006, coinciding with the parliamentary election). However, no date has been given for the planned vote in the parliament ever since. President Vaclav Klaus, said on 23 May 2006 that ratification was 'not on the agenda in the Czech Republic.' In his view by now 'all the political forces in the Czech Republic consider the treaty to have practically stopped after it was rejected by France and the Netherlands'.<sup>21</sup> The resolution to drop the idea of a referendum might

<sup>18</sup> See the Alliance of Civilizations, a joint initiative of the Spanish and Turkish prime ministers, [<http://www.unaoc.org>]

<sup>19</sup> Eurobarometer Special 214, conducted in November 2004, Q2, p. 15 [[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_214\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_214_en.pdf)]

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, Q4, p. 28.

<sup>21</sup> British Broadcasting Corporation's website, 30 May 2006 [<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3954327.stm>]

have been justified also by the results of Eurobarometer polls, indicating that out of nine countries planning the referendum, the turnout in the Czech Republic would be the lowest, at mere 19 percent.<sup>22</sup>

The Czech decision comes in the wake of serious doubts expressed over the ratification process in the domestic debate. As early as in 2004, President Klaus refused to attend the ceremony of signing the document in Rome. In turn, the then Prime Minister Stanislav Gross announced at the end of the year that the Czech Republic might be among the last to hold a referendum. This view was shared by the analyst Jiri Pehe who predicted that it is almost certain that ‘if all European nations approve the constitution, the Czechs will not say “No” because they won’t want to be the spoilers.’<sup>23</sup>

The referendum has been postponed in Poland with no date given. Originally, proposals were made to hold the vote on the Treaty on 9 October 2005 to coincide with the Presidential election. However, in July 2005 the Polish lower house voted against taking a decision on how to ratify the Constitution and the process was suspended. Early in his term, the new President Lech Kaczyński rejected the constitutional draft on the grounds of its allegedly hasty move towards integration which, in his view, would not have been backed by the majority of Europeans. He originally called for rewriting the draft, as in his view the current version ‘has practically no chance of being ratified in Poland, neither by referendum nor by parliamentary vote’.<sup>24</sup> However, the positions of both the President, the government and the Law and Justice, which forms the backbone of the cabinet, have shifted since then and since the EU Council summit in June 2006, the Polish position has been closer to the Czech ‘wait and see’ attitude.

Among the states that eventually ratified the treaty, only in Cyprus and in Slovakia did the opposition to the Constitutional Treaty surface more prominently. The Slovak parliament ratified the constitution on 11 May 2005, by 116 votes to 27 with four abstentions. The opposition to the Treaty centred on the anxiety to delegate power to the EU from national authorities, which would result in lower accountability. The head of the Slovak Christian-Democratic Party, Pavol Hrusovsky, argued against the Treaty, calling it ineffective as regards combating the EU’s inherent ‘lack of democracy’.<sup>25</sup>

22 Eurobarometer 214, [[http://www.ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_214\\_en.pdf](http://www.ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_214_en.pdf)], Q8, p. 33, November 2004.

23 BBC, 28 October 2004 [<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3952087.stm>].

24 BBC, 30 May 2006, [<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3954327.stm>].

25 Ibid.

The second scenario implies that the Constitutional Treaty fails due to the lack of agreement among the EU member states. Also, the decision on the EU's enlargement is suspended. This scenario resembles the current situation in many ways, especially if we consider that major enlargements following the accessions of Bulgaria and Romania in 2007/2008 are likely to be contentious.

The primary consequence of the failure of the Constitutional Treaty is that the EU might need another decade to work out a new treaty. A 'new treaty' could be negotiated either on the basis of the existing draft Constitutional Treaty or developed from scratch. In any case, without a Constitution adopted, the political environment in Europe is going to be unfavourable to any major policy reforms. In those circumstances the creation of a new treaty, eventually advanced to a Constitution, will also be difficult.

The EU needs a new institutional framework to operate smoothly in the 21st century. A lost decade for constitutional deliberations may put a halt to new major enlargements beyond the 2007/2008 enlargement (with the possible single exception of Croatia). The risk of the establishment of an exclusive 'core group', as presented in scenario one, could thus materialize. However, in the current scenario it remains unlikely that the policy of circles of integration will be introduced. The main reason is that most of the Western European societies experience a certain fatigue over the integration process, due to the real or imagined consequences of the 2004 enlargement. In a similar vein, there is little, if any, positive atmosphere, to deepen the integration. Therefore, any treaty establishing an even closer EU between a 'core group' of countries could fail in a referendum the same way the Constitutional Treaty was rejected in 2005 in France and the Netherlands. On the other hand, it is unimaginable that such a treaty could enter into force without being exposed to a referendum.

Under this scenario, there would be no major change in the membership structure of the EU. Surely, Romania and Bulgaria will join in 2007. Only the Western European non-EU countries could become member states without causing major political tensions. Currently, the EU holds membership negotiations with Turkey and Croatia. In the present scenario, any further enlargement to Turkey would be highly problematic, if not impossible given that as a big country its integration could be made impossible by reference to the EU's internal 'absorption capacity' criterion.

Even the accession of small Western Balkan countries (none of them has more than 10 million inhabitants<sup>26</sup>) could become problematic. In the end, Croatia and other countries of the region would be allowed to enter the EU, but each accession would stir a major political debate across the EU. What might be the best option for the integration of the region is a 'little big bang,' a simultaneous accession of all the Western Balkan states. This however is unlikely as these countries are at various stages of the negotiations with the EU. While Croatia already holds negotiation talks, and with FYROM being considered a candidate country, other states (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Montenegro and Serbia and, at some point, may be even Kosovo) remain only 'potential' candidate countries. With the accession of these countries, the extended EU would have a maximum of 37 member states.

This scenario is that of an EU that is politically in limbo. Such an EU would have a limited impact on its neighbourhood, because it would lose the most important instrument in bringing change to the region, i.e. the promise of enlargement. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, many countries in Europe have undertaken major social, economic and political reforms partly largely to meet their goal to become EU members. Once this possibility disappears one may expect fewer peaceful transitions across the former Soviet and nowadays EU area, as well as the Southern Mediterranean countries. Moreover, some of the changes might be overthrown, as is the case in Georgia and the Ukraine.

Although this negative attitude towards the Constitution and the enlargement policy would weaken the dynamism of the EU for a while, it could paradoxically be a positive factor for the EU in the sense that it would allow the EU the time to reflect on its future course in a fast-changing global environment. In the medium-term, the EU could be able to adjust to the new situation. This line of thinking indicates that only over time the EU could digest the consequences of the 2004 enlargement. Time could prove that the EU, consisting of 27 members, might work smoothly and efficiently, leading to the bridging of the gap in wealth between the old and new member states. A few more years for the EU in its current shape could provide Western societies with time to reform their socio-economic systems, often badly needed. Time could also allow the new members of the EU to understand better that the European integration is not only about free market and trade; but that it is equally important to have a community of values, common political objectives and interests that can be achieved only through joint work.

## 2. Political Scenario Two: Europe in Limbo

### 2.1. Description

<sup>26</sup> The potential 10 states are: Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, FYROM, Kosovo, Albania, Switzerland, Norway and Iceland.

At the same time the EU would not stop developing and reshaping its policies, following European Commission President Barroso's motto of a 'Europe of results'<sup>27</sup>. The process of limiting the common agriculture policy is already on the way. New policies are being drawn on immigration and energy according to the needs of the EU members. Only after a few years, when the political elites in Europe change and new leaders appear, and only when the European economy allows for further integration, a new treaty could be drafted and adopted.

## 2.2. Consequences for Europe's Neighbours

Unfortunately for the relations between the EU and its Southern and Eastern partners in the ENP, the defeat of the Constitutional Treaty and a simultaneous decision to cut short any future enlargements would bring greater harm than benefit to the ENP. Stopping the EU's enlargement and investing the bulk of the EU's efforts and attention to the internal issues means that the external factors are not given adequate attention. It also means that the EU will not be able to deal in a proper manner with the pressing issues of the South-North dialogue as well as the dialogue with the Eastern neighbours, including Russia. Often the crises, like the 2005/2006 cartoons row or the energy cut-offs, could determine the tone of the relations.<sup>28</sup>

Under this scenario, the European Neighbourhood Policy is likely to retain its present form. The high political aspirations of the EU clash with the political and economic reality, and the policy in its current shape remains largely unrealized. In effect, the EU has had little influence on the developments in the Middle East. The EU's impact in Eastern Europe could also diminish once those nations are given a clear red light for their membership in the EU. Even the Western Balkans, ten years after the end of the military conflict, could again be embroiled in warfare if no membership perspective is offered to countries like Serbia, Bosnia or Macedonia. As one interviewee in Brussels stated, 'the EU is currently very hesitant to put anything on the ENP table. They are not very ambitious. In its current format the ENP is very weak; it is sustainable but very thin.' Hence, it may be concluded that 'the EU in limbo' scenario could not offer a major incentive for the development of the ENP.

## 2.3. Southern Mediterranean Perspectives

In the perception of the EU partners in the South, the retention of the status quo would not favour the enhancement of the EU's role in its neighbourhood. At the same time, it appears that the EU cannot go on in its present shape but that in five to six years, the issues of both the Constitution and enlargement would have to be revisited. Until then the status quo would slow down the Barcelona Process with its ambitious goals. At any rate, although open confrontation between the Southern Mediterranean partners and the EU is unlikely in this scenario, these relations would not be significantly upgraded.

Unclear European politics would also discourage the Southern partners from engaging the EU in solving the regional issues. The lack of direction within the EU would result in increasing external influence in the Southern Mediterranean area. The USA is already being regarded by the countries in the region as a more serious partner than the neighbouring EU. This is in spite of the fact that the countries in the region believe that the EU has a better understanding of the problems and prospects of the region than the USA.

In addition to a decades-long strong presence of the USA in the region, newly emerging economies, such as Russia, China and India, have in recent years established strong bilateral relations with the Southern Mediterranean countries. Despite the expectation that the EU could play a constructive role in Middle Eastern affairs, hitherto the EU could not develop any leadership role on these issues but appeared to follow in the footsteps of the USA. This is likely to continue unless the EU presents a coherent and credible position.

Under this scenario, the Barcelona Process and its objective of creating a free trade area by 2010 is not likely to be accomplished. The importance of the objectives of the Barcelona Process in principle will be diminished due to the change of focus of the European nations. The mutual dialogue will be secondary to the US policies in the Middle East. Migration pressures, domestic instability, international terrorism, organized crime and ad hoc issues, as well as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and energy needs, could drive EU-Southern Mediterranean relations in the upcoming years.

The scenario also implies that the economic interests of the EU in the South Mediterranean region will become of a lesser importance to those countries, as influence of other world

<sup>27</sup> José Manuel Durão Barroso, "A Citizen's Agenda – Delivering Results for Europe", European Commission, May 2006.

<sup>28</sup> Comp. [http://www.euromesco.net/euromesco/artigo.asp?cod\_artigo=127838]

players, notably the USA and China, grows. The lasting status quo is already causing problems for the Euro-Mediterranean process. There are too many actors and no unified voice within the EU. The enlarged Europe seems to be diluted, and a thesis was advanced by some Egyptian interviewees that the 2004 enlargement was in fact an American strategy to fracture Europe. Hence, with Europe in limbo in combination with a divided Arab world, it is difficult to move the Barcelona Process any further.

Some decision-makers of the region were concerned over the possibility of Europe failing to adopt a clear direction. While no strong opinion on enlargement towards the East has been expressed, the commonly held view is that a scenario related to shutting down Europe for its neighbours could be dangerous for itself, as well as for the neighbours. The Egyptian interviewees highlighted the salience of the issue of the Turkish EU membership. The Turkish accession negotiations are being closely watched in the Arab capitals and are being viewed as a litmus test for the EU's approach to the Muslim world. One of the interviewees in Egypt stated that 'such an attitude, even though we do not think about membership in the EU, would change our perception of the EU. We will see it as a Christian Club.'

They considered that the EU's approach vis-à-vis Turkey, a country with overwhelmingly Muslim population and plural democracy, would be taken as a strong indication of how the EU views its Muslim neighbours and the Muslim minority living in Europe. They thought that the Turkish membership in the EU would result in a qualitative shift in the European project, showing the Muslim world that the EU is not based on Christianity but on certain common values.

The debate on the potential Turkish accession across Europe concentrates on a number of topics. One of them is the security factor. Supporters of Ankara's membership quest claim that with the accession of Turkey the zone of security, rule of law and human rights would extend to the Middle East. Yet, opponents state exactly the opposite, i.e. that Turkish membership would bring instability and tensions to the EU, which ultimately could lead to the collapse of the EU itself.

However, this logic may be reversed. Middle Eastern instability would spread to Europe not via a Turkish membership, but rather through the failure to integrate Turkey. A stable, democratic and economically prosperous Turkey is in the best interest of the EU, be it a member or a non-member. However, Turkey might find it difficult to continue its century-long path of modernization, democratization and Westernization in the absence of the membership anchor. Many Turkish analysts fear that the failure of the country's EU accession negotiations would bring about dramatic consequences in both domestic and foreign policies. Some of the internal reforms could be questioned and maybe even reversed. Relations with the EU and some EU member states, especially Greece and Cyprus, could become tense, and the energy security of the EU would be seriously compromised as a result of the halt to enlargement.

#### Declining Support for Enlargement

Some signs may already be observed that the new member states' earlier enthusiasm for further enlargement might wane and become more in tune with the traditional members of the EU. Already in the Eurobarometer 63 survey, the Czech support for future accession of the Ukraine was close to the levels found in some 'old' EU countries (with a nearly even split of 46% of respondents in favour and 45% against). In turn, Hungarian respondents prove to be among the most sceptical about integrating the Ukraine – in fact, the country is unique among the new member states as the candidacy of Turkey is more welcome than that of the Ukraine.

**Table 1. Support for Enlargement in New and Old EU Member States**

	EU 25	EU 15	New MS
The EU should include all interested states	23	21	35
The EU should include only some states	42	41	49
The EU should not enlarge to any states	25	28	9

Source: Eurobarometer 63, July 2005

## 2.4. New Member States' Perspectives

**Table 2. Support for Enlargement in Selected New EU Member States**

	Hungary	Czech Republic	Lithuania	Slovakia	Poland
The EU should include all interested states	19	32	27	30	41
The EU should include only some states	59	48	52	55	45
The EU should not enlarge to any states	14	13	8	7	6

Source: Eurobarometer 63, July 2005

The new member states have generally favoured their neighbours or the states with which they share a cultural or historic heritage. In July 2005 Croatia's candidacy received the backing of 72% of the respondents in the new members as opposed to only 48% in the EU-15. This is further reinforced by the fact that the rankings for public support in various new member states fail to take account the official accession queue. For example, in the same poll, Bulgaria and Romania received significantly lower support among the respondents from the new member states (50% or less), but at a comparable level as the Ukraine, which has not been granted candidate status yet.

Christian Democratic parties of Western Europe have been among the most opposed to Turkey's EU accession. Their counterparts in Central Europe (e.g. the Czech KDU-CSL) have followed the arguments advanced against the full membership offer and have generally adopted the German CDU/CSU's idea of a 'privileged partnership'. However, the larger right-wing parties such as the PiS of Poland or Fidesz of Hungary have over time toned down their opposition, stressing that in principle no qualified country could be rejected, but pointing to the difficulties of integrating a large country with a different cultural background.

Moreover, some of the major parties have made a strong link between the opening of negotiations with Turkey and the imperative to keep the 'door open to the Ukraine'. While no key politician has directly stated his/her willingness to block the negotiations with Turkey until the Ukraine was offered a prospect of membership, these two agendas have been tied in some statements of the Central European MEPs. Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (EPP-ED, Civic Platform, and Poland) made it clear at the early stage of the debate that opening membership talks with Turkey should necessarily be followed by a parallel move towards the Ukraine. An even stronger statement was made by Konrad Szymański of the UEN (Law and Justice, Poland), which originally voted against opening the negotiations with Turkey, who noted that the stepping up of relations with Turkey should also be kept more in proportion to Europe's policy of openness towards Ukraine.<sup>29</sup>

#### New Member States' Response to the Failure of the Treaty in France and the Netherlands

On the surface, the failure of the Constitutional Treaty in the French and Dutch referenda has not affected the official support for continued EU enlargement in the capitals of the new member states. However, both the Central European politicians' statements and public opinion polls became more aligned with the pan-European scepticism. In a poll taken in the six largest EU member states, Poland's support for the accession of either Turkey or Ukraine declined most significantly of all the six member states under study (by 11 percentage points for Turkey and 13 points for Ukraine). Thus, while in March 2005 Poland led the rankings of support to enlarge the EU to either country, by November it trailed Spain in the enthusiasm for the Turkish candidacy. In that period, the support for other, already less-popular candidates dropped significantly, falling by 12 points with respect to Russia (down to 34%) and 7 points as regards Morocco (settling at 35%).

**Table 3. Support for Enlargement in Large EU Member States**

EU Member State	Support for accession of Turkey		Support for accession of the Ukraine	
	III 2005	XI 2005	III 2005	XI 2005
Average of 5 MS from EU-15*	44	41	54	50
<b>Poland</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>64</b>

\*France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom

The dependence of the new member states' public on the shifts in the opinion in the EU at large is largely due to the deficiency in the media coverage of the issue. With the exception of Poland, the debate in the Central European media on the enlargement prospects has so far been closely following the terms and directions dictated by the current EU agenda. This could explain why only the major events, such as the opening of negotiations with Turkey, sparked a flurry of op-eds, analytical reports and reviews in the columns of major newspapers, while the progress of EU-Ukraine talks, where membership is not at stake, was merely recorded. The different treatments of the Turkish and Ukrainian cases in the context of enlargement had been particularly stark prior to the Orange Revolution (until December 2004), and the question of Ukraine's potential membership was not even raised in the public debate of some smaller Central European states.

The extent to which the issue of accession prospects was dependent on the mainstream EU position could be seen by the fact that the repeated Polish initiatives for stimulating the EU thinking on the relations with Ukraine were for a long time virtually unnoticed by its partners in Central Europe. Only the success in attracting the attention of EU actors (in particular Javier Solana and later the European Parliament) to get engaged in the transformation process in the Ukraine brought about a considerable shift in the media discourse in the smaller Central European states. This experience not only highlights the relatively low interest in the foreign policies of other new member states, but also indicates that the reception of the initiatives undertaken by the newcomers is crucially dependent on their ability to make their voices heard in the EU-15.

The low profile that these states take on the issue of enlargement reflects their self-perception of being small countries (with the exception of Poland). The question of European integration of countries from outside the traditionally conceived neighbourhood is a new dilemma for many of those states. For instance, in countries such as Slovenia, Latvia, Slovakia or even Hungary a common view is discernible that the respective country is too small to affect any foreign policy decisions taken on a European level. At times, this results in either passivity or alignment with the EU position, as expressed for instance by the Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel who asserted that 'Slovenian policy has to be and definitely is in line with the EU policy'.<sup>30</sup> This approach tended to characterise the absence of the new member states in several debates on the issues that were seen as divisive.

The reluctance to assert their national interests and shape the EU agenda on divisive issues, which could pit them against major players in the EU, can also be seen in the official rationale of their position on enlargement. With the exception of the Czech, Hungarian, Polish and Slovak discourses on Ukraine, the statements on enlargement, especially with respect to Turkey, focus on the benefits and costs at the European, but not at the national level. Particularly striking is the reference to possible problems related to the integration of immigrants or to issues related to multiculturalism, whose direct transfer from the German or French to Central European discourses leaves them of limited value, given the new member states' different historical experiences. In fact, it might be argued that the reliance on the terms dictated by the EU-15 debates, such as the issue of the compatibility of values or customs, overshadows the discussion of actual domestic issues. Instead of tackling concrete questions of coexistence of ethnic and religious communities within a single state, the issues are presented as a vague dilemma of defining a 'European identity'.

The third scenario implies that the EU adopts the Constitutional Treaty, but takes a decision to suspend its enlargement beyond existing commitments.

Although the Treaty is not a universal remedy for all of the EU's problems, it could go a long way towards resolving some of the problems inherent in a heavily intergovernmental polity. Ratification of the Constitutional Treaty could bring a certain political ease to Europe. The Constitutional Treaty would help Europe to meet some of its economic and social aspirations and progress towards a stronger and unified political voice in the international arena. Again, the adoption of the Constitutional Treaty, in the most optimistic case, is not going to happen before 2009.

In the meantime, the adoption of the Constitutional Treaty could potentially have a positive impact on the enlargement process by setting up the legal framework of any further enlargement. However, in a 'not to enlarge' political atmosphere, at a time when EU politicians seem to exploit the new term 'absorption capacity of the EU',<sup>31</sup> any accession would turn into a major political issue.

### 3. Political Scenario Three: Inward-Looking Europe

#### 3.1. Description

30 Dimitrij Rupel, 'Po zmagi: ...Slovenska zunanja politika po članstvu v EU in NATO' ['Slovenian Foreign Policy after the Membership in the EU and NATO'], Delo, 30 April 2005.

### 3.2. Consequences for Europe's Neighbours

A more politically deepened Europe that invests its energy purely into the internal socio-economic issues at the expense of tuning it into the global currents would not have enough time, energy and financial resources to dedicate itself to its neighbours, both Southern and Eastern.

The adoption of the Constitutional Treaty and the establishment of a Minister for Foreign Affairs of the EU would make the European Neighbourhood Policy the most important tool the EU has in its external actions and in this respect the ENP would substitute the enlargement policy. Yet, it would not have the same impact on the partner countries as the enlargement perspective has had in the past due to lower political and financial incentives.

The ENP would undoubtedly become the most important tool in the EU's cooperation with the South Mediterranean countries. It would not substitute or be merged with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (the Barcelona Process). Yet, those two policies, however, would need to be re-defined in order to better complement each other.

For the moment, the Arab assessment of the ENP is that 'it is a complementary instrument, and not an alternative, to the Barcelona Process, given the specificity of the relationship that links EU and Mediterranean partner countries, while avoiding any confusion or duplication between the Process and other initiatives.'<sup>32</sup> This attitude would face the reality, where the Barcelona Process would be nothing more than a political dialogue between Europe and its Southern members. The Neighbourhood Policy could become the only source of developing joint policies and projects.

### 3.3. Southern Mediterranean Perspectives

Already, the main Southern Mediterranean perception of the EU is the latter's increasingly paternalistic approach to the region. The sentiment, in the language of one interviewee in Egypt, is that 'Europe does not need Arabs except for the issues of oil, immigration and radical Islam.'<sup>33</sup> Should this sentiment become widespread, which is likely in this scenario, the South would become unwilling to go ahead with purely 'technical' policies of the ENP.

Therefore, the idea of a political dialogue between the two civilizations is very important to the Arab world. Moreover, it would like the EU to take increased political responsibility for the problems the region faces. It is repeatedly stated that the Barcelona Process should be implemented in its comprehensive entirety. It should take into account the priorities of both sides in a balanced way in accordance with the principle of co-ownership of this process. The Arab member states often invite the 'EU partners to give necessary attention, within the Barcelona Process, to issues related to threats to security and stability, foremost among which is the persistence of the Arab-Israeli conflict.' They 'stress the common responsibility of all parties to the Barcelona Process in advancing the Peace Process.'<sup>34</sup> These expectations of the Arab partners are not likely to be met unless the EU transforms itself towards a global power (under scenario 4).

The Barcelona Process' most courageous project was to establish a free-trade zone between all the countries of the Process by 2010. This deadline will not be met. Nevertheless, under this scenario the EU and all the ENP partner countries could create a free trade zone within another decade. Politically it would be a follow-up to the Barcelona Process, but technically it would be a part of the Neighbourhood Policy.

### 3.4. New Member States' Perspectives

Support for the Constitutional Treaty in the New Member States

As of August 2006, 8 out of 10 new member states have ratified the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe: Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia. This means that more than half of all the member states that have ratified were found among the new member states and that only the Czech Republic and Poland have so far failed to adopt the treaty. The first three states to ratify the treaty were all new members: Lithuania (11 November 2004), Hungary (20 December 2004) and Slovenia (1 February 2005). All the ratifications were carried out in the national parliaments with minor or no opposition to the Treaty in most states.

The group of new member states has been (with the two exceptions of the Czech Republic and Poland) a solid bloc in favour of the adoption of the Constitutional Treaty. In fact, these states were frontrunners in the ratification process (as the first decisions to accept the Treaty

<sup>31</sup> The principle of the absorptive capacity of the EU was originally stated at the Copenhagen European Council of June 1993: "The Union's capacity to absorb new members, while maintaining the momentum of European integration, is also an important consideration in the general interest of both the Union and the candidate countries." Quoted in: [http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/rubrique-imprim.php?id\\_rubrique=3257](http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/rubrique-imprim.php?id_rubrique=3257)

<sup>32</sup> An Arab Vision for co-operation priorities in the framework of the Barcelona Process, 04/08/2005

<sup>33</sup> Cairo, 8 May 2006.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

were made by some new members still in 2004) and crucial in sustaining its momentum, following the ‘no’ votes in France and the Netherlands. By now, the new member states are overrepresented in the group of countries that have adopted the document, as eight of fifteen states to have approved the Treaty are newcomers to the EU.<sup>35</sup>

This fact is striking for several reasons. Firstly, the new member states have had reasons to either take a ‘wait and see’ attitude or even resist the draft. The original idea of the Treaty came from within the old EU-15, the major figures in the drafting committee represented the EU in its shape from before the enlargement, and the completion of the preparations coincided with the period of the accession negotiations. These factors could have given grounds at best to the perception that the new member states were not among the ‘owners’ of the new Constitution and at worst suspicious that the Treaty represented a counterweight to the impact of enlargement. In some respects the Treaty may have represented to them ‘changing the rules of the game’ at the time when they, still being candidates, were not empowered to counter the process.<sup>36</sup> Secondly, having negotiated their entry into the club, the new members could have been expected to act, at least temporarily, as the followers and not pioneers. Moreover, the newcomers could have resisted the shifts in the power balance and communitarisation of certain areas of national policy (especially the foreign policy and relations with the neighbours) for fear of eroding their sovereignty even further.

Even in the two states which failed so far to ratify the treaty and where the political elites are openly sceptical about the need to do so, the treaty might not necessarily be rejected in a popular referendum. The public opinion survey conducted in Poland by the Institute of Public Affairs on the attitudes towards EU integration and the future of the Constitutional Treaty in June 2006 displays significant interest in continued work on the Treaty. Over two-thirds (68%) of the respondents adhered to the view that the EU needed a constitution, and among those who declared to be rather familiar with the text of the proposed draft, as many as 78% stated that the EU was in need of a document of this type. Contrary to the criticisms advanced by the opponents of the treaty, greater numbers of the respondents viewed its introduction as an improvement in efficiency of the EU’s operation (59%) and advancement of the interests of EU citizens (49%) rather than a source of strength for EU bureaucracy (36%) or multiplication of unnecessary regulations (33%).<sup>37</sup>

The poll also contradicts the common notion that the outcome of the French and Dutch referenda had fundamentally determined the support levels in Poland. Of all the respondents, only 13% considered that following the failure of the Treaty in those countries, the work on the document should be abandoned altogether. At the same time, the current draft was deemed acceptable for ratification by other states for 22%, while twice as many respondents favoured drafting an altogether new text of the treaty.<sup>38</sup>

In fact, the great majority of the new member states have acted in apparent disregard of many of the common concerns in the wake of the French and Dutch votes, demonstrating that other features prevailed at the early stage of their membership. The first two years of the ratification process have not been characterised by the opposition between new and old member states, but have confirmed the crucial link between the conviction that the further development of the EU policy was not in conflict with the vision shared by the public and the elite of a given member state. Initially, observers were taken aback by the speed at which many of the new member states identified themselves with the institutional reform of the EU, becoming concerned less with its own parity of power and more with the impact of the changes on the capacity of the EU to function effectively. Paradoxically, especially the smaller states with limited experience and resources to conduct an independent foreign policy towards the global players were vitally interested in the greater prominence accorded to the EU’s common foreign policy, symbolised by the establishment of the post of an EU foreign minister.

Neither the governments nor the societies of the new member states could rely on much first-hand experience in the functioning of the EU and thus have gauged their own ability to influence the policy process in the EU ungoverned by the Treaty, which could have been invoked by the proponents or opponents of the documents in the more established member states. However, it may not be argued that even the pioneers in the ratification process acted in ignorance of their own interests or were blind to their own position within the EU. The first ratifications took place nearly six months after the accession and the general consensus among the observers of enlargement has been that while the benefits of accession did not become manifest overnight, the greatest fears invoked by the sceptics in both the EU-15 and the new member states of the paralysis of the EU’s activities on the one hand and marginalisation of the newcomers in the decision-making process on the other did not materialise.

<sup>35</sup> As of 15 June 2006.

<sup>36</sup> French President, Jacques Chirac’s statement that the countries that had supported the US position on Iraq ‘missed a good opportunity to keep quiet’ was received in many candidate states as reflective of the one-sided position of the old member states as those who dictated the principles of European integration. See Chirac lashes out at ‘new Europe’, CNN 18 February 2003, [<http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/europe/02/18/sprj.irq.chirac/>]

<sup>37</sup> Institute of Public Affairs, Polish public opinion on the European Union and the Constitutional Treaty: Survey Report, Warsaw: May 2006, [<http://www.isp.org.pl/?v=page&id=299&ln=eng>]

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. p 9

### Widening vs. Deepening Argument

In contrast to the issues of future integration of neighbours from Eastern and South-eastern Europe, the dynamics of the national debates on Turkey are much more dependent on those found in Western Europe. One reason is that Turkey did not feature as a foreign policy priority item for most new member states from Central and Eastern Europe as they were more preoccupied with their own neighbourhoods. Instead, the issue of Turkey's relationship with the EU was 'inherited' automatically through accession. Secondly, the issue has been free from domestic factors (these states lack sizable Turkish Diasporas). At the same time, as most of the new member states are small or medium members of the EU, an entry of a large state with potentially different policy priorities could undermine the balance of power, which may dictate their lack of enthusiasm for rallying behind the issue.

Qualified support for enlargement is given by the Social Democratic parties of Central Europe, which generally follow the line of their counterparts from Western Europe. Like the German SPD, they support the Turkish accession as an incentive towards the country's democratisation and improvement of the human rights record and as a stabilising factor of the region around Turkey with the latter thus serving as a 'bridge' to the world of Islam. At the same time, the perspective of the entry of a large and poor country indicates the urgent need for continuing institutional reforms (e.g. the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty) in the EU. However, their support of Turkish accession is weakened by their wish to see a deepening of European integration and primary interest in other directions for enlargement (i.e. Western Balkans for Slovenia and Ukraine for Poland). Also, their support may be conditional on the evolution of the majority position in the European Parliament, where the issue of enlargement is closely tied to the public support of further enlargement in general and concerns over the EU's 'absorption capacity'.

In this scenario, the EU is assumed to adopt the Constitutional Treaty and to continue its enlargement policy. As a result, the EU will reach the market, demographic and land size that is required to be considered a globally competitive economy and polity, as well as possess the political solidarity, ability and willingness to project power as a global player.

Successful ratification of the Constitutional Treaty would bring a certain political ease to Europe and the resulting political climate would encourage greater openness of the EU towards other nations. This positive atmosphere, however, will not be sustainable unless the European public is convinced of the possibility of resolving economic, political, social, and identity problems that it faces. The Constitutional Treaty potentially addresses some of these issues while meeting the European aspirations of a stronger political unity.

However, adoption of the Constitutional Treaty in the current form seems impossible. Changes to the document (such as revision or even major restructuring) are necessary for it to enter into force. In the most optimistic case, the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe will become binding not earlier than in 2009.

The current EU treaties provide necessary institutional equipment for not more than 27 member countries (the Treaty of Nice). This means that without a new treaty or European Constitution it will be impossible for the EU to enlarge beyond the 27th member state. Clearly, a Constitution-like solution is needed in order to give the EU the legal and institutional capacity to enlarge and function efficiently with more than 27 member states.

If the EU is to decide for further enlargement, a new picture will emerge for the European neighbourhood. Many neighbours are going to seek membership in the EU at some point in the future. In addition to Bulgaria and Romania, which are going to enter the EU in 2007, two other countries, Croatia and Turkey, are already negotiating for membership without a specified date for entry. Several Western European countries – Switzerland, Norway and Iceland – could be easily integrated if they wished to enter the EU. Western Balkan countries – Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia and Kosovo as one or two countries – have already been declared as “potential” candidate countries. Three Eastern European countries, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, are other possible entrants although the EU does not commit itself to these countries. Finally, South-Eastern countries in the Caucasus, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, could conceivably wish to become members in the EU. Altogether the EU at one point in history could have as many as 44 member countries home to some 650 million inhabitants.

Even under this positive enlargement scenario, it seems unlikely though that the EU will ever decide to enlarge to the Middle East, North Africa or Central Asia. The membership of the Russian Federation in the EU is also unlikely at least for three reasons. First, at the moment there is no political will in Russia to become an EU member. Second, Russia's strategic interests, both in security and economic terms, are different from those of the EU. Third, Russia aspires to be an equal partner of the EU, not one of many of its member countries.

This scenario is favourable to the strengthening of Euro-Mediterranean relations for a number of reasons. First, a direct consequence of the first scenario is that the dual geographical nature of the ENP disappears. There will be no Eastern European dimension of the policy, as all Eastern European countries were EU members. Meanwhile, the Barcelona Process will be merged with the ENP and almost the entire neighbourhood policy will be directed towards the Southern partners (as Russia is not likely to become an ENP partner country). With Turkey's entry, EU borders will move east- and southwards; Iran and Iraq could be invited to participate in the ENP.

The objective of a Euro-Mediterranean free trade zone by 2010 seems impossible to implement at this point. However, we could see new initiatives set in motion, especially in the next decade. Southern Mediterranean universities and researchers could be more engaged in cooperation with European partners through the EU-sponsored programs, such as Erasmus/Socrates, Tempus or Leonardo. The EU's common energy policy, currently under construction, should also be extended to cover those countries. Perhaps even a basic *acquis communautaire* could be adopted in the partner countries in certain domains, such as the free movement of capital or competition. A very advanced cooperation remains a futuristic vision as some of those initiatives have been only initiated recently.<sup>39</sup>

## 4. Political Scenario Four: Outward-Looking Europe

### 4.1. Description

### 4.2. Consequences for Europe's Neighbours

<sup>39</sup> E.g. currently the External Energy Policy is being worked on [[http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external\\_relations/energy/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/energy/index.htm)], participation of the neighbouring countries in the Tempus program will be greater under the new European Neighbourhood and Partnership (financial) Instrument. However, a new EC initiative, Erasmus Mundus is not opened for the ENP participants (only for the EU-25, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey and the EFTA countries).

### 4.3 Southern Mediterranean Perspectives

This scenario could be viewed as favourable to the Southern Mediterranean countries, which are looking towards a more enlarged and politically deepened Europe. The EU under this scenario is more likely to have more economic and political resources to dedicate to its neighbours, both Southern and Eastern. The Southern partners also prefer a Europe with a stronger regional and global role, which among others requires further consolidation of foreign policy-related decision-making power in Brussels. A complaint is often heard in the South about the lack of a single voice for the EU in the international arena. From that point of view, the Constitutional Treaty would have been a great leap forward for the EU in terms of increasing its resolve, as an actor of regional cooperation as well as a global actor that balances others, on the issues of concern for the region. An Egyptian interviewee asserted that even though the French and Dutch rejection of the Constitution makes it unlikely to move forward in the near future, the EU must and is likely to revisit the issue in the medium-term.<sup>40</sup>

According to some Egyptian observers, in spite of such a favorable future scenario for Europe, the objectives of the Barcelona Process – such as to create a free trade area between the EU and the EMP countries by 2010 – cannot be met for several reasons. First of all, no ambitious EU approach towards the Barcelona Process is foreseen in the next decade. Under these circumstances, the prospects of the establishment of the free trade area by 2010 are dim.

Secondly, there are doubts as to whether the process can be strengthened unless the mutual Euro-Mediterranean relations are extended to cover the crucial regional issues in a comprehensive manner, in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Many Southern partners argue that the EU usually pushes forward with its priorities, such as ensuring access to economic potentials of the region,<sup>41</sup> while it does not move to the real priorities of the region. Therefore, the adoption of a basic *acquis communautaire* by the partner countries, application of some policies, such as the free movement of capital and the adoption of a competition policy, do not create great enthusiasm in the region.

There seems to be no optimism among Southern intellectuals as regards the idea of a deepened ENP for the Southern Mediterranean, similar to what is today called ‘privileged partnership’ offered by the German CDU/CSU party to Turkey as an alternative to full membership. This could come with a set of ‘Copenhagen proximity criteria’<sup>42</sup> for the countries enjoying the ‘enhanced EMP’ status. Yet, this idea would most likely face a strong opposition of the Southern Mediterranean states.

### 4.4 New Member States’ Perspectives

A key to the understanding of strong support given to the Constitution could be the value that the new members attach to the cohesion and effectiveness of the EU in the areas crucial to their national interests but where these states, with their limited own potential, are unable to attain their objectives. The foreign policy towards Russia and other Eastern neighbours of the EU is a case in question. Admittedly, the accession to the EU was hailed in the Baltic States and Poland as a solution to these countries’ security dilemma *vis-à-vis* Russia whose assertive policy in Eastern Europe has been viewed with concerns from Tallinn to Warsaw. However, upon accession, the newcomers realised that the existing tools of the EU’s policy in the Commonwealth of Independent States (former USSR, CIS) region did not guarantee that the EU would speak with one voice and effectively counter the authoritarian tendencies in several states to its East. Thus, soon the concerns with the possible loss of autonomy in national foreign policies gave way to the anxiety about the likely nationalisation of the EU’s policies towards the East, resulting in incoherence or even in conflicting signals sent to the neighbours.

The breakthrough moment with respect to the shift of attitude of several of the new members’ in this regard was the activism during the electoral crisis in Ukraine in late 2004. When the resolution of the European Parliament, adopted on the initiative of the Polish and other Central and East European deputies, failed to curb the irregularities in the election process, the Polish and Lithuanian Presidents became personally involved in resolving the standoff between the candidate of the party of power and his opponent’s camp. In an exemplary manner of communitarising the issue, Polish President Kwaśniewski invited Javier Solana, the EU’s foreign policy coordinator, to take part in the mediation. Although Poland remains among the few Central European states that have abstained from adopting the Constitutional Treaty, this practical act of recognition of the role of the EU in the policy towards Eastern neighbours has been a powerful argument for the value of some of the proposals contained in the Constitutional draft (such as the post of the EU’s foreign minister) in themselves.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with a researcher at Al-Ahram Political and Strategic Studies Center, Cairo, 8 May 2006.

<sup>41</sup> With the Southern Mediterranean countries the economic co-operation has been quite high despite stalemate on the other baskets of the EMP. See J. Kelley, ‘The New Wine,’ p. 45.

<sup>42</sup> Romano Prodi, ‘A Wider Europe – A proximity Policy as the Key to Stability’, Speech at the 6th ECSA-World Conferences, 2002, Brussels.

The determination of the new member states to back up the process of adopting the Treaty following the Dutch and French referenda is another evidence for the assertion of the role of the newcomers in the integration and construction of European polity. Contrary to the view prevailing in the EU 15, accession of the new states did not bring about the revival of national egoisms, but rather contributed to the smooth running of the EU's machinery. An opposite process could be in fact noted: unlike the Dutch or French societies and the elites that reacted to the 2004 enlargement with defensive rejection of the reform, their counterparts from the new members showed surprisingly high enthusiasm for integration. If at all, the hysteric reactions in 'old' Europe made the public and the politicians in the new member states more aware of the need for greater solidarity and bred trust towards the European institutions.

Furthermore, the continuing process of adoption of the Treaty by successive new member states in the period since its rejection by the voters in the two referenda in the 'old' Europe can be interpreted as a sign of the newcomers' successful socialisation in the club and the sign of their growing self-confidence. At the time when doubts set in not only over the text of the Treaty (admittedly a document far from being easily understandable) but also over the benefits of the recent enlargement and the need to continue the institutional reform of the EU, the support from the new members to the Constitutional Treaty could no longer be interpreted as mere political correctness or 'good student's behaviour'.

#### Perspective of New Member States' Involvement in Shaping the ENP

Several new member states have retained strong interest in the development of the content of the ENP. For instance, the Lithuanian Foreign Minister was quoted saying in February 2005 that Vilnius 'was one of the most vigorous supporters of the extension of the European Neighbourhood Policy to South Caucuses, [and] considers this EU decision as completing the geographical boundaries of the EU strategic interests in eastern Europe [...]'<sup>43</sup> In turn, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary welcomed the ENP as a transformative instrument for modernizing the Ukrainian economy and institutions. Poland has moreover been vocal about inserting in the bilateral policy documents (such as the EU-Ukraine Partnership and Cooperation Agreement) the references to the objective of European integration, and upgrading them to an association agreement.<sup>44</sup>

In reality, however, the new member states do not form a bloc in their policies towards the eastern neighbours and choose to focus their efforts on bilateral actions. The Polish foreign ministry failed to win support for its 'eastern dimension' of EU's foreign policy, envisioning a gradual path towards the association of Ukraine and other eastern neighbours with the EU among its Visegrad partners in 2003. However, both the Czech and Hungarian diplomacies worked out their own strategies for supporting a possible pro-European course of Ukraine. Another area in which the foreign ministries gradually produced solutions for facilitating the contacts with Ukraine were the Visegrad states' visa policies: although initially only Poland and Hungary decided to introduce visas free of charge to the Ukrainian nationals, similar solutions became standard following the Orange Revolution as the Czech Republic and Slovakia responded with a comparable move to President Yushchenko's visa waiver for the EU citizens.

New member states from Eastern Europe have not emerged as a solid grouping on the issue of the EU's relations with the southern neighbours. As indicated above, these states have been content to leave the initiative on the issue to the EU institutions and major old EU member states. Also, new member states have not viewed the Mediterranean as a single region within their foreign policies, leading to the fragmentation of their national foreign policies into bilateral contacts, frequently driven by sectoral interests. Thus, the possible concentration of the ENP on the southern vector (as the east with the exception of Russia would join the western Balkans in pursuing eventual membership) would most likely not be accompanied by greater interest of the new member states.

43 Antanas Valionis 8 February 2005 [<http://www.urm.lt/index.php?2009173636>]  
Cited in: [<http://www.ekem.gr/pdf/Edwards%20rev.pdf>]  
44 Fotyga, op.cit.

## Part III. Conclusions

### From the Southern Neighbours' Perspective

Our research indicates that there are certain generalizations that one can make about the future of the EU, the Barcelona Process, and the ENP as seen from the southern Mediterranean.

On the future of the EU in general, the southern neighbours are concerned with the current debacle in Europe over the Constitutional Treaty. It is clear to them that the current document will not be adopted. Yet, they generally believe that the EU should revisit the issue in the medium-term. Although there are no strong opinions on the enlargement towards the East, it is commonly commented that the EU should judge each applicant on the basis of its potential repercussions on the harmony of the functioning of the EU institutions as well as of its contribution to the creation of a new global actor, i.e. the EU. The general sense seems to be that the EU expanded too fast and the “big boom” strategy of 2004 led to a fractured Europe that is not fit to undertake more international obligations.

Contrary to this rather negative picture of the EU prospects in the short-term, the southern Mediterranean would welcome a “stronger” Europe in both senses of the word: internally more cohesive and externally more effective and vocal. They consider a more robust EU as the engine of peace, stability, and prosperity in and around Europe. Their reference point in this regard is the American presence in the Muslim world. Balancing the US in the region, “a country with a lesser understanding of the issues of the region,” underlies the relatively positive attitude towards an increased European presence in the region.

The southern partners are generally supportive of the EMP. State officials consider it as a serious instrument of cooperation across the Mediterranean. Yet, the present situation of Europe, in their view ‘overstretched’ and without a single voice in international arena, is not conducive to the deepening of the EMP. It is impossible for the EU to meet the expectations of the southern countries, especially in terms of a comprehensive approach to the elements of the Barcelona Process, including European contributory steps towards the settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

All of our interviewees in the southern Mediterranean thought that the best scenario for the EMP to gain momentum and strength would be under the scenario according to which the EU would become a global power through its policy of enlargement and ratification of the Constitution. Only under such a scenario, the EU would be able to take on more international and regional obligations, bolstering the status of the EMP. Countries complain that currently the EU is adopting a technocratic approach towards the problems of the region and avoiding political involvement in the region, which falls far short of the expectations that exist. In the opinion of many southerners, the EU does not currently have the political will to strengthen the Barcelona Process.

There seems to be no sentiment in the south that the ENP would be in competition with the EMP. Interviewees see that these two processes are rather complementary and address divergent needs of the countries and regions in the European neighbourhood. As an EU official in Brussels indicated, ‘there is lack of visibility of the ENP in the Mediterranean countries.’ However, there is a general awareness that, regardless of the strengthening of the eastern dimension, the EU cannot turn a blind eye to the salient issues and problems of the southern Mediterranean, as instability and stagnation in this region are immediately reflected on the northern Mediterranean in the forms of economic, political, social and legal problems.

### From the New Member States' Perspective

There are strong factors accounting for the interest among the new member states for the EU's continuing enlargement and substantial relations with its neighbours. These factors are of domestic nature and reflect on the one hand these states' own successful integration and the wish to extend the benefits of enlargement to their neighbours. On the other hand, the EU's decision to establish a comprehensive framework for relations with the countries beyond its borders (the ENP) has been welcomed as a response to long-standing calls for solutions that would offset the negative impact of drawing lines of divisions across the larger region of Eastern Europe.

At the same time, the record of the activity of the new member states on the EU level since their accession has been mixed. On the one hand, bilateral relations with the neighbours from Eastern Europe and the western Balkans have been strengthened by the measures facilitating cross-border infrastructural investments and people-to-people contacts and

the greater availability of funding under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument. In addition, national efforts have aimed at focusing assistance to the countries in the EU's eastern and south-eastern neighbourhood, involving the development aid and technical assistance. On the other hand, the new members have not formed a unified bloc in favour of opening the accession perspective to the eastern European states of the ENP despite the declared interest of individual member states in eventual differentiation within the policy framework.

The relative passivity of the new members to shape the ENP and the concentration on bilateral relations with the focus on immediate neighbours do not bode well for the prospects of engagement in the EU's southern periphery. Moreover, a tendency to equate the ENP with the EU's framework of relations with eastern neighbours could be observed. This established policy frame has made it difficult for most new members from central and Eastern Europe to conceptualise the ENP as a vehicle for the strengthening of relations with the southern neighbours. This disparity in interest for the two groups of countries within the ENP suggests that in case the countries of Eastern Europe were to be placed in the accession group (as were the western Balkan states), the interest in the ENP would decrease significantly.

## Part IV. Recommendations

The ENP thus far has not adequately reflected the positions of either the new member states or the EU neighbours. The EU neighbours are key to the realisation of the EU's great potential on the world scene. However, their expectations with respect to the EU's role have not been considered by the ENP policy package. Meeting those expectations should be the guiding objective of the ENP, so that it becomes the policy framework for the EU's engagement in its neighbourhood. This rule should be applicable to Ukraine, the Caucasus, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and other places eastwards and southwards of the EU's borders. For this to happen the EU will have to agree on the interests and values it wants to protect and promote within the neighbourhood. Any EU failure to act in a concerted way outside of the ENP framework will also undermine the legitimacy of the policy itself.

Unless their role is significantly enhanced, the new member states are not likely to adopt a prominent role in shaping the ENP. A number of obstacles to their active involvement in the ENP formulation can be named. First, the ENP framework is of low importance in their foreign policies. Second, in principle all the member states have delegated management of the tasks related to relations with the southern Mediterranean partners to the European institutions. As a result no single concept of a unified neighbourhood vision exists among the new member states with a few notable exceptions. Since accession in 2004, the new member states have been preoccupied with domestic challenges of economic and societal reforms, as well as meeting the stringent criteria for joining the remaining EU policy areas, such as the Eurozone and Schengen, to name but a few.

To address these concerns and turn the ENP into an attractive package for both the EU's members and the new member states, we would like to present the following recommendations:

### Rethinking the Concept of ENP at a Summit in 2007

1. The ENP needs to be supplemented and strengthened by adding documentation expressing values and goals of this policy. The concept of the ENP, as developed prior to the enlargement of 2004, needs to be put to a thorough revision through the consultations at the 'Europe in Its Neighbourhood' summit to be launched by the German Presidency of the EU in early 2007. At the summit four major groups of countries should be represented: (a) interested old member states, (b) interested new member states and candidate countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Turkey and potential candidates from the western Balkans), (c) eastern neighbours of the EU, including Russia, and (d) southern neighbours of the EU.
2. The ENP has a potential to become a comprehensive EU foreign policy tool towards its neighbours. The need for such a unified framework is most urgent in those areas where the EU works together with other global players (as in the Middle East). All relevant ENP documents need to contain references to other EU policy areas affecting neighbours (such as CFSP, development, energy, trade). For these reasons, the agenda of the summit must be bold enough to consider all the major alternatives of the ENP: the creation of the 'ENP+' track for the countries potentially eligible for accession (European states of the CIS); the division of the ENP into the southern and eastern tracks; the integration of Russia into the ENP; the alignment of the EU's other key policies with the objectives of the ENP (in particular, energy dialogue, visa policy, migration control and regional security); possible establishment of multi-country funds to address regional issues.
3. While the political initiative will rest with the German Presidency it is expected that the European Commission will take a prominent role throughout the summit. It ought to take the role of a facilitator, helping the interested states express their interests and ambitions in the course of negotiations. The common perception is that particularly groups (see point 1. b, c, d) have not been consulted sufficiently in the process of designing the scope of the policy.
4. The strengthening of the dialogue between the EU and the neighbours should under no circumstances interfere with existing commitments of the EU vis-à-vis its neighbours. In particular, no constraints should be placed on the progress of the technical cooperation projects, as envisioned in the regulations for the ENPI. Also, the agenda of the political dialogue must not be made dependent on the level of on-the-ground cooperation.

5. At the conclusion of the summit a strategic framework document called 'Neighbourhood Charter' should be adopted. It should outline the common understanding of the limits and objectives of the ENP. On the one hand the EU's commitment should be spelled out clearly. On the other hand varying ambitions of the EU neighbours as to the finalité of their relationship to the EU should be highlighted.

#### Involving all the Stakeholders into the ENP Design

6. The ENP has not lived up to its promise of deepening the EU's relations with the neighbours and of making the external relations a higher priority in the EU's policy hierarchy. The ENP should not continue as a marginal add-on to the bilateral relations of the EU with each of the neighbours. The Policy needs to regulate comprehensively the entirety of relations with partner countries. Following the enlargement of 2004 and the setbacks in the Constitutional Treaty referenda, both the old and new member states have been relatively reserved towards concerted action in the neighbourhood. It is therefore necessary that the European institutions take note of the individual interests of EU member states and their record of cooperation with key partners in the neighbourhood in the course of further work on designing the ENP concept.
7. It is advised that the European Commission run regular informal consultations with those EU member states that have had a record of strong bilateral relations with a given neighbouring country. Such consultations should be held at the early stages of drafting of the common positions and of the implementation of particular programs for the neighbouring countries. While such consultations might have been used vis-à-vis the more established EU member states, the EU institutions need to take into account the voices of the new member countries as well. Drafting of the common positions needs to accommodate the new members' long term interests in relation to their neighbours, as well as their experience, often recent and very practical in mutual cooperation.
8. The civil society sector, especially in the new EU members and their neighbours, should become an equal partner of the European institutions in any dealings with the ENP. The priorities of cooperation with the civil society should include, inter alia, consultations on the details of each of the PCAs, people-to-people mechanisms and the protection of human rights.

#### Tailoring the Scope of the ENP to the Ambitions of the EU's Neighbours

9. Explicit acknowledgment of the different perspectives for various neighbouring countries should be communicated in the policy documents of the ENP as a whole. It is of utmost importance that the ENP communication strategy underlines that there is no contradiction between participation in the ENP and aspirations of some of the neighbours towards a full membership in the EU.
10. From the point of view of the new EU members it is particularly important to differentiate, within the ENP package as a whole, between those countries which could potentially become EU members in the future and other countries, which have a preference in an engaged dialogue and participation. As regards the first group the EU could introduce political conditionality, already existent within the ENP cooperation framework.

#### The Euro-Mediterranean Dialogue

11. The Barcelona Process should become fully integrated into the ENP's political process. It should concentrate on the most important aspects of Mediterranean relations. The 2010 objective of a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area between the EU and the southern Mediterranean countries should become an important objective of the ENP.
12. The ENP and the Barcelona Process need to become complementary with each other as well as with the Common Foreign and Security Policy as regards vision, objectives, strategies and policies. The political dialogue between civilisations needs to be strengthened and enhanced.

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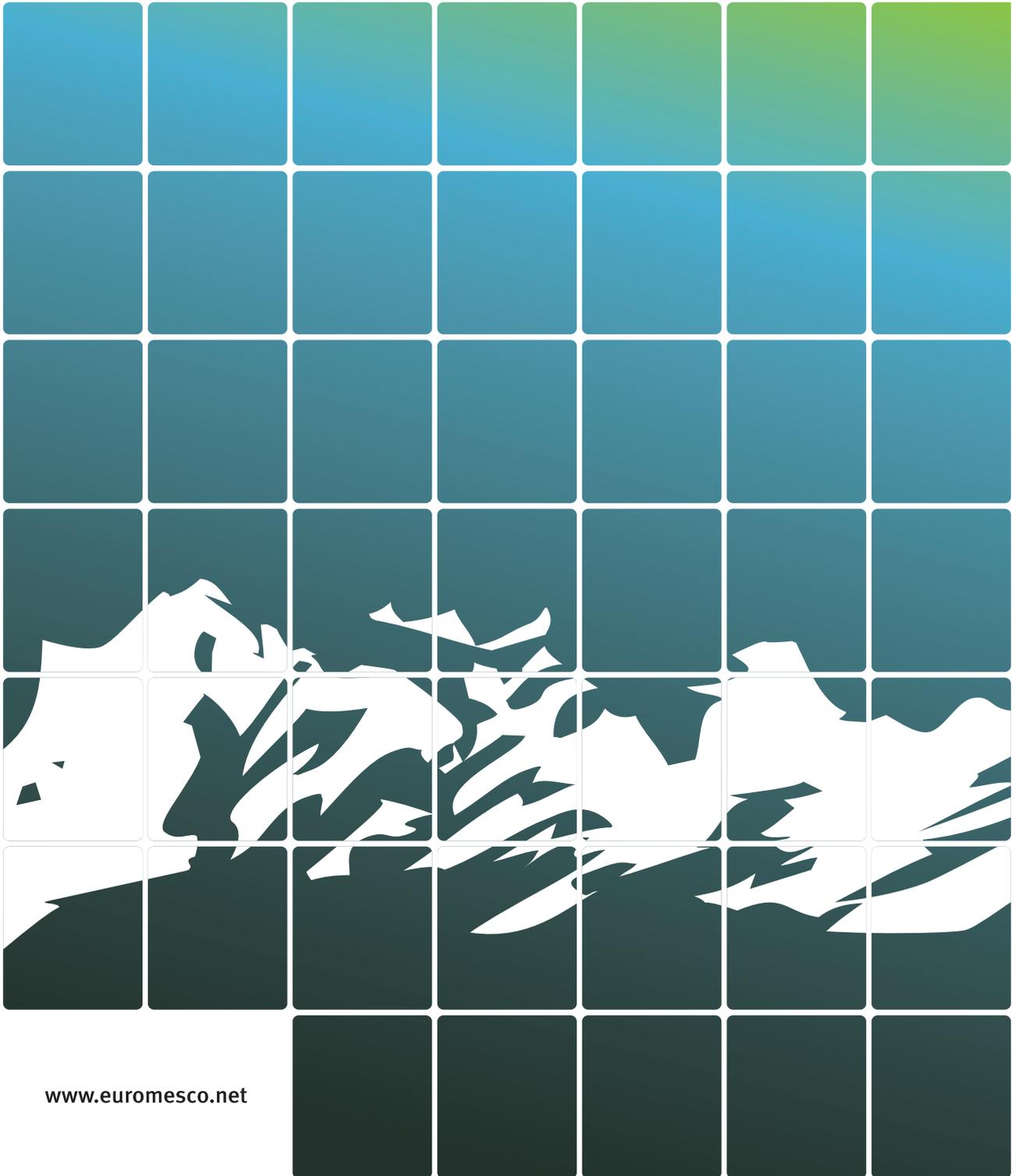
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