

## “The Changing Constellation of the Enlarging EU”

Joint Conference of the Greek Politics, French Politics and Policy, German Politics and Italian Politics Specialist Groups

23 January 2009, Durham University



The recent waves of enlargement towards ten Central and Eastern European and two South-Eastern European countries have fundamentally altered the size and the nature of the European Union. The Single Market of 27 member states now represents the largest and most densely populated integrated economic area in the world and the EU has become one of the major international organisations with increasing levels of policy coordination amongst its member states. Further waves of enlargement towards the Balkan countries, Turkey and former Soviet Union states like the Ukraine would substantially increase the political and socio-economic diversity of the EU.

This conference, organized jointly by four of the PSA's European specialist groups, adopted an original perspective and concentrated on a comprehensive analysis of the changing power balance within the EU-27. The conference, funded partly through the PSA's Specialist Activities Fund, brought together a range of national and comparative analyses and examined the ways new member states are influencing the EU policy agenda and how the original EU-15 member states respond to this process.

The Greek Politics Specialist Group took a leading role in the organizing of the conference and presented **four papers** on: the Greek perspective and experience of enlargement (focusing on Europeanization, policy transfer and decentralization), Bulgaria's accession and industrial restructuring, and the issue of Turkey's possible accession to the EU.

### **Dr. Dimitris Tsarouhas (Assistant Professor at Bilkent University)** “Turkey and the Future of EU Enlargement”

In his presentation, Dimitris Tsarouhas reviewed the current stalemate in EU-Turkey relations and identified some of the mechanisms responsible for that. He went on to argue that from the viewpoint of the Turkish government and civil society, the salience of the EU factor in accelerating necessary political and economic reforms has considerably diminished, and that Turkey's complicated, domestic political turmoil will continue for some time. This could in the long run undermine EU-Turkey relations further, with unpredictable consequences.

After outlining a series of possible scenarios and stressing the importance of Turkey regarding our contemporary understanding of enlargement, Tsarouhas asserted that Turkish EU accession is ultimately a ‘win-win’ scenario for all sides concerned, and that keeping Turkey ‘on track’ is today the Union's foremost enlargement policy challenge.

### **Dr. Stella Ladi (Public Policy Expert at the Greek Ministry of the Interior)** “Europeanization and Policy Transfer: A Comparative Study of Policy Change in Greece and Cyprus”

There has been a growing academic interest in processes of Europeanization and their impact upon policy making although there have been a few attempts to link the phenomenon of Europeanization with policy transfer per se. The aim of the paper is to contribute to this growing body of literature by studying processes of policy change in an ‘old’ and a ‘new’ Eastern Mediterranean EU member-state. The theoretical aim of the paper is to evaluate the

Europeanization and the policy transfer frameworks and to conclude about their usefulness and possible methods of combining them.

The argument put forward in this paper is that the two frameworks although they describe similar processes they serve different analytical purposes. The Europeanization framework is more useful for the analysis of cases where the EU plays a central role in the process of transfer while the policy transfer framework has more to offer to the discussion of case where no concrete European model exists and a 'search' for ideas and best practices in different national contexts takes place. Nevertheless, the PTN approach can offer more depth in the analysis of all cases of Europeanization because it can shed light to the processes, stages, agents and networks of policy change. Furthermore, three specific hypotheses with theoretical, empirical and policy implications are explored. The first hypothesis is that Europeanization is a two-way process, more so in the case of old EU member states than of new member states. The second hypothesis is that Europeanization affects EU member-states but also candidate countries. Finally, the third hypothesis concerns the importance of the informal dimensions of Europeanization and thus of 'soft' mechanisms of policy transfer. The paper is empirically supported by the existing literature on Europeanization in Greece and Cyprus.

 **Diana Bozhilova (A.C. Laskaridis Research Fellow, Hellenic Observatory, LSE)**  
**"Bulgaria's Accession, Industrial Restructuring and Greek FDI"**

Bulgaria's path to EU membership has been uneven. This in itself is not a novelty where a process of EU-Europeanization runs in parallel to an open-market transition. However, the expectation amongst scholars is that in such cases the former stands to provide incentives and remedies to the latter. Yet, this paper finds that there is little evidence to support such an argument in the case of Bulgaria's industrial restructuring. The evidence points overwhelmingly to a positive effect on the balance of payments for the state as a result of EU-Europeanization in industry but a deterioration of the state's fiscal position. What emerges as the factor that makes all the difference is the inflow of FDI. Greece has established itself as both a regional and an EU leader in this field. Importantly, still, is the fact that Greek FDI fall in the group of strategic, non-speculative investments. These findings posit an important question as to the effectiveness and efficiency of the distribution of EU accession funds, as well as whether EU-Europeanization is not in important areas of the benchmarks better served through a process of regional integration.

 **Vasilis Leontitsis (PhD Candidate, University of Sheffield)**  
**"Decentralising Greece Against the Background of the EU"**

The paper is about the decentralisation process in Greece since the early 1980s seen within the context of Greece's membership into the European Union. It is argued that the territorial restructuring of the country has only been partially influenced by the EU membership. However, to the extent that the EU has mattered, the influence can be traced (a) on the effects Greece's continuing membership has had on its own polity and (b) on the effects consecutive enlargements have had on it. The former is responsible for most of the reforms related to the introduction and further strengthening of the regional tier of the country, whereas the latter has had more indirect influence mainly due to the changing allocation of resources within the EU. On the whole, the paper concludes that the Greek membership into the EU has had far-reaching consequences, since it has even affected elements of its polity.

More info @ [http://www.gpsg.org.uk/docs/GPSG\\_Durham\\_Conference\\_Programme.pdf](http://www.gpsg.org.uk/docs/GPSG_Durham_Conference_Programme.pdf)