Enlargement and Power of Membership in the European Union

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*The article discusses the development of political conditonality
in the process of the EU enlargement. It uses the concept of
the Power of Membership (POM), which is defined as an advantage a member state has,
by the virtue of its veto power, over a country that has applied for
the membership in the EU, with a view to winning concessions from such an applicant.
In the past (with the exception of France in the 1960s), the POM has been
carefully applied by the EU members which wanted to win certain concessions
from candidate states. However, recently the POM has assumed a new dimension,
because some of the EU members have introduced referendum as a 'final check'
for candidate states (except Croatia). This move seems to have a specific goal:
to prevent Turkey, which has started accession talks, to become a full EU member.
The article argues that this may have negative consequences for the success
of the EU enlargement process and can undermine efforts
to create stability in Europe as a whole.*

Key words: EU enlargement, Power of Membership

1. Introduction

This article focuses on the conceptualization and analysis of an increasingly important factor in the process of widening the membership in international organizations that often escapes the attention of scholars – the so-called Power of Membership (POM). In the context of the European Union (EU), the POM is defined as an advantage a member state has, by virtue of its veto power, over a country that has applied for the membership in the EU, with a view to winning concessions from such an applicant.

Such, essentially political conditionality can be manifested unilaterally, jointly (two or more member states can use the POM because of similar concerns over issues raised with an EU applicant) or collectively (where the POM against an EU applicant is demonstrated by the EU membership as a whole). The POM typically (but not as a rule) emerges out of unresolved issues between a member (or several members) and the applicant. These issues may not necessarily be strictly connected to the main criteria for the membership (such as the adoption of the *acquis*) yet they still need to be resolved before a candidate becomes a member. Hence, a 'European solution' for the problem is sought. There is a very thin line between what an EU applicant may perceive as a 'European solution', and something it could simply see as an attempt of 'extortion'; hence, the outcome of negotiations may be difficult to pre-

dict. In this respect, the POM could assume a double role. It can be instrumental in solving open issues between the EU members and EU candidates, because neither the parties to the dispute nor the EU want to 'import' unresolved bilateral problems that could damage intra-membership relations. On the other hand, the POM can also have a damaging effect on the enlargement process in cases where the EU candidates feel they face demands that are impossible to fulfill, or have even been denied a European perspective altogether.

After the 'big bang' in 2004, the biggest ever enlargement in the EU history (10 states have been admitted as new members) the POM seemed to have assumed a new, and rather worrying political dimension. Namely, some of the EU member states have decided to reallocate decision-making about future members from the government to the public sphere, by introducing the referendum as a final check for the EU candidates on their way to the membership. This means that the importance of the POM as an ultimate negotiating tool for members to resolve open issues with EU candidates has been significantly reduced. Using the POM as a tool for extracting concessions leads to predictable results: if concessions are won, a candidate country has secured its entrance in the EU. Using a referendum to confirm the entry of a candidate country to the EU gives this country an important democratic legitimacy, but the outcome of a referendum could be uncertain. Such an uncertainty, in turn, could mean that the candidate would not be motivated to internalize European norms and values, *a sine qua non* for the Union to keep up its cohesion and internal stability, and strengthen its external security.[1]

The present article sets out to explore the extent and scope of the POM in the enlargement process. In the past, there have been several cases where the use of the POM could be discerned. The most blatant among them has been the French conditioning of the British membership in the EU. The current EU candidates (Croatia, Macedonia,[2] and Turkey) have many bilateral issues they may need to resolve along their way toward the EU. In not doing so, they may risk the exercise of the POM by the respective EU members, or have indeed already experienced it. The article will analyze these developments. The relevance of the findings and their implications for European integration in the light of recent developments, especially the conditioning of the entrance of new members by a referendum, will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

2. Experience with the POM by the EU Members: The Case of British Candidacy

The reasons for the French demonstration of the POM to the British throughout the 1960s are complex. While the jury is still out as to the balance of political and economic concerns, it seems plausible to say that, in the light of scholarly arguments[3] and media reporting in the period 1960-1969, both concerns featured high in the French consideration of the British entry into the EEC. From the political perspective, the French concerns about the British entry seemed to be about the leadership. The French government did not like what it felt was a transatlantic dimension of the British candidacy. Britain was the major US ally and it favored global free trade. In the eyes of the French, especially President De Gaulle, Britain as a full member of the EEC would be a kind of Trojan horse for the 'infiltration' of American interests in European Communities' affairs.[4] In the light of the failed Fouchet plan for a political union, many historians agreed, De Gaulle was even more determined to keep the British at bay, at least until the consolidation of the Communities (according to the French interests[5]) had been carried out. From the economic perspective, France's main concern was the Common Agricultural Policy. The latter was in its infant stages, yet it had been based on a German-French deal: the creation of a common market (which benefited a rapidly industrializing Germany) for a centrally subsidized agriculture (which benefited France and its huge agricultural sector, amounting to about 25 % of its GDP at the time). It was thought in Paris that if Britain were to become an equal member of the EEC, given its economy structure, comparable with that of Germany (i.e. an economy with a very small agricultural sector), Bonn and London would have undoubtedly pursued the policy of opening the European agricultural sector to world markets rather than spend money on supporting European (mainly French) farmers.

The political discourse that the French government sought to introduce to defend its specific national concerns about the British application for the membership in the European Communities occasionally referred to Britain as being unable to appreciate 'European problems' and look for 'European solutions'. For example, in a 1963 press conference De Gaulle justified his decision to block the British entry by saying that Britain was not "ready" for the EEC membership, both economically and politically.[6] He claimed that the British understanding of how the EEC was supposed to work was not

that of the EEC's. In the same period, the French foreign minister Maurice Couve de Murville was reported to have said that the origins and the significance of the crisis related to the British candidacy for the EEC membership stemmed from Britain's inability to accommodate itself fully to the "European character of the Common Market".[7] Little did it matter in such circumstances whether the position of one country is shared with others – and in the case of the British entry, France stood alone against the rest of the Six. But the 'European' language was still used as an argument to justify the reasons of why Britain was not yet 'ready' to become an EEC member. This has not changed until the late 1960s when Georges Pompidou, who succeeded De Gaulle as the President of France, opened the door to Britain, which eventually joined in 1973.

3. The POM and the EU Candidates – An Overview

There seem to be many issues unresolved in the part of the Southeastern Europe that yet needs to be integrated in the EU. Currently three states from the region enjoy the status of the EU candidates. These are Croatia, Macedonia, and Turkey. Croatia, which began its accession negotiations in October 2005, has some open bilateral issues with its neighbors Italy and Slovenia, which could lead to the exercise of the POM. These include the fishing rights, and the border problems which Croatia has with Slovenia. Turkey, which, like Croatia, began its accession negotiations in 2005, has much tougher issues to resolve with its neighbors. The EU members that share borders with Turkey and Macedonia are Greece, Cyprus, and Bulgaria, but it seems that only Greece and Cyprus could represent an obstacle for Turkey.[8] The relations between Greece and Turkey suffer from history-driven animosities, which had been further exacerbated by the conflict in Cyprus in 1974, which led to the creation of a new state, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The problem of the division of the island has become further complicated because Cyprus has become a member of the EU. As for Macedonia, Athens and Skopje seem unable to separate cultural issues from bilateral intergovernmental relations. The causes of disagreement are the two diametrically opposing narratives on the cultural and geographical space of 'Macedonia'. These narratives are symbolized by the so-called name issue, i.e. the disagreement as to what name should Macedonia use in its international relations.

4. The EU Candidates from the Former Yugoslavia and Their Neighbors

Croatia

Because of a long and devastating war in the 1990s, Croatia was late to apply for a membership in the EU. This happened in 2003. A year later, Croatia officially became a candidate country and in late 2005, it started accession negotiations with the EU. Before the accession negotiations, the Croatian government had already been faced with the POM. Because of its lack of cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) with regard to Ante Gotovina, a former general and a local hero sought for war crimes he allegedly committed during the war in Croatia,[9] the Croatian government could not reach a breakthrough in an attempt to foster its integration into the EU. Dissatisfied with Zagreb's efforts to find Gotovina, the British and Dutch governments had demonstrated the POM by suspending the ratification of the Stabilization and Association Agreement, which the EU signed with Croatia already in 2001.[10]

Since the Gotovina case, Croatia has had different things to worry about while on its road to the EU membership – the already mentioned fishing rights and the border problems, which concerned its neighbors in the Adriatic. The issue that spurred the political debate and even tensions has been the proclamation of the so-called ecological and fisheries protection zone, which the Croatian parliament declared in October 2003, and was due to enter into force in 2004. The decision upset Italy and Slovenia. For Italy, such a zone would significantly reduce the possibilities for Italian fishermen to fish in the Adriatic. For Slovenia, this decision was also problematic. Slovenia has a total of just over 40 km of the coast to the Adriatic Sea, and all of it is in a small Piran Bay. Croatia's mainland coast to the Adriatic Sea is over 1,700 km long and goes almost parallel with the Italian coastline. Slovenia was worried that the decision would pre-empt the decision about the borderline on the sea and that Croatia would extend its jurisdiction in the Adriatic Sea by declaring an exclusive economic zone. In such a case, Croatia and Italy would 'close' the Adriatic see and effectively kill Slovenia's attempts to get a free access to international waters.[11]

After the Croatian Parliament's decision, several meetings of the three foreign ministers and other state officials took place in early 2004, at which Italy and Slovenia called for a 'European solution' to the problem. Croatia had to decide whether it wished to

insist on its 2003 decision on the ecological and fisheries protection zone or revise it. In such a case, Croatia would have risked a delay in getting a status of an EU candidate. At that time, Italy still had not ratified the SAA and Slovenia had already become a member of the EU. Finally, Zagreb agreed in 2004 that the decision on the zone would not be implemented in full, i.e. temporarily it would not apply to the EU members.[12] Italy ratified the SAA in October 2004, being the last EU member to do so. However, at the end of 2006, the Croatian Parliament adopted a decision that the ecological and fisheries protection zone would be applicable to EU members as of 1 January 2008. At the beginning of 2008, Croatia did not further postpone the decision of the Croatian Parliament as expected by the EU, which led to a crisis in accession negotiations.

At the time of writing, the way out from the stalemate between Croatia and the EU was not yet determined. It was equally unclear what a new formula might be that could lead to a 'European solution' which would settle the border problems between Slovenia and Croatia that could avoid the risk of Slovenia's attempt to use the POM in the accession process. The Croatian government has stated on many occasions that arbitration is the only means it would accept to resolve the border dispute. Slovenia had for a long time maintained that diplomatic means had not yet been exhausted and that leaving such a sensitive matter to an arbiter "would not contribute to good neighborly relations of the two European countries."[13] Recently, the Slovenian position has changed somewhat. At a meeting in August 2007, prime ministers Janez Janša and Ivo Sanader agreed in principle that the border dispute should be settled by arbitration, presumably at the International Court of Justice in the Hague.[14] Be that as it may, the fact that any perception of the public of either of the two countries that their government has 'lost' more in negotiations than the other would almost certainly cause a political suicide of that particular government. In taking a broader perspective on the situation, however, it could be argued that the two governments seem trapped in a paradox situation. The border problems may be burdening bilateral relations politically, but at the same time the two economies are heavily interdependent. In terms of export, for example, Croatia is among Slovenia's four major trading partners; the data for Croatia show the same picture.[15] In this respect, economic interdependence as an incentive for the two governments to come to a mutually acceptable approach to solving outstanding problems which they have inherited as a consequence of the break-up of Yugoslavia should perhaps come more to the fore in the negotiations between the two governments.

Macedonia

The evolution of relations between Greece and Macedonia has had a rocky start. After Macedonia declared independence in 1991, the Greek government refused to recognize the new country. When explaining its policy toward Macedonia, the Greek government cited cultural, historical, and security reasons. The government could not accept that the name, which it considered as the pillar of the Greek history and identity, would be used by another country, with a Slavic population. In addition, the government believed that the basic symbols of the new country, (the flag, the Constitution, and the ethnic maps) have demonstrated irredentist claims against Greece.[16] The pressure to change the name was met with resistance in Macedonia,[17] but the Macedonian government offered a compromise in 1992, by adding the name of its capital, Skopje, to the name of the country. The new name, the 'Republic of Macedonia (Skopje)' had not been acceptable to Greece, which wanted that the word 'Macedonia' be removed altogether. It was at this point that Greece began to demonstrate its POM. Because of Greek objections, the EU members decided at the Lisbon Council in 1992 that they would not recognize the Republic of Macedonia unless it changed its name, i.e. left out the word 'Macedonia'. Thereafter, negotiations about the name under which Macedonia was to be accepted in the international community continued. The deadlock was broken, much to Greece's dismay, by a third party; in 1993, the United Nations (UN) admitted Macedonia as a new member state under a provisional name the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.[18] The new Greek government under Georgios Papandreou got increasingly impatient with Macedonia. Eventually, Greece unilaterally left negotiations in fall 1993. Athens decided to put a pressure on Macedonia by imposing a trade embargo against it in February 1994. The policy of trade embargo, which lasted until October of the same year, backfired on Greece. Athens has lost the support in the EU. The Commission promptly reacted to Greece's pressure on Macedonia. In spring 1994, the Commission brought Greece before the European Court of Justice, arguing that unilateral embargoes by any of the EU members constituted the violation of the Communities' law.[19] Six EU members have decided to recognize Macedonia under its provisional name. Perhaps the major disappointment for Greece came in the fall of 1994, when the United States recognized Macedonia under its constitutional name.

Meanwhile, Greece returned to negotiations and, with the brokerage by the United States, the compromise solution had finally been found. The so-called Interim Accord was signed between Greece and Macedonia in 1995. All the concerns except for the name have been successfully addressed – as for the name issue, the two governments have agreed in the Accord that they would continue to negotiate on it.[20] Subsequently, the Greek government ended the trade embargo and the Commission dropped its charges against Greece.[21]

Since then, the relations between the two states have improved considerably. In 1995, Greece recommended to the Council of Europe to invite Macedonia to become a member. In the same year, it lifted its objections against the Macedonian participation in the OSCE, and supported the joining of Macedonia to the NATO Partnership for Peace. An important signal of Greece's support for Macedonia was first received in 2000, when the Feira Council recognized Macedonia as a potential candidate for the EU membership. Since then, Greece has remained consistent in helping to pave the way for Macedonia to become an EU member. In 2001, a Stabilization and Association Agreement between Macedonia and the EU was signed. The Agreement entered into force in 2004, and in 2005, the EU members agreed to grant to Macedonia the status of a candidate country. Economic relations have also improved dramatically; for example, Greece is now Macedonia's third most important trading partner.[22]

However, the name issue still looms large over the Greek-Macedonian relations. The Macedonian government would prefer using its constitutional name in international relations and a mutually acceptable name in bilateral relations with Greece. Predictably, this position is not acceptable to the Greek government. In 2005, the United Nations special envoy for Macedonia, Matthew Nimetz, recommended that the country be known internationally as 'Republika Makedonia-Skopje'. The Greek government did not reject the proposal outright: Petros Molyviatis, the Greek foreign minister, said that the proposal did not ''totally satisfy'' but could be a basis for negotiation.[23] The solution does not seem to be on sight. The Interim Accord prohibits Greece and Macedonia from blocking each other's membership in international institutions, but only under the condition that the mutually accepted provisional name – the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – is used.[24] If the two states did not succeed in finding a solution, or if Macedonia insisted on using its constitutional name internationally, facing with the reality of Greece's POM might be inevitable. The Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyanis has made

that clear after the Macedonian government decided at the end of 2006 to rename its international airport after the Alexander the Great (also known as Alexander of Macedonia). Indicating that Athens considered the decision as a provocation, she said that such a move by Skopje "does not further its Euro-Atlantic aspirations",[25] and it is likely to become one of the factors to determine the date of the beginning of the EU-Macedonia entry talks as well.[26]

5. Turkey and Its Neighbors

Greece and Turkey

For a long time, relations between Greece and Turkey had mostly been those of mistrust and conflict. Besides the problem of Cyprus, the two states have been entangled in a host of unresolved issues, such as the delimitation of the continental shelf, the demarcation of territorial waters, the control of air space, the militarization of the east Aegean islands, and the question of the Turkish minority in Greece.[27] These problems have largely remained unresolved. However, the relations between Greece and Turkey have seen a considerable improvement since 1999. The Greek government had fundamentally changed its perception of Turkey. Athens seemed to have concluded that it was in the Greek interest to have a stable and viable neighbor, open to cooperation. The Greek government took an initiative to improve its relations with Ankara by signaling several gestures of goodwill to solve the outstanding issues by peaceful means. In the catastrophic earthquake in Turkey in 1999, Greece was the first to offer help. The gesture was reciprocated when the earthquake hit Greece a month later. As a clear signal of the desire to enhance the dialogue with Turkey, in December 1999 at the Helsinki EU Council Greece removed its objections to giving Turkey a status of a candidate for the EU membership. Since then, Greece has been actively supporting Turkish aspirations for a full EU membership. In the preparation for its presidency in the first half of 2003, the Greek Minister for European Affairs Tassos Yiannitsis stated that keeping the Turkish candidacy on a "front burner" was one of Greek priorities: "Turkey and the EU have very close economic relations and common strategic interests. The relationship has to develop and Greece will make sure the door to the EU is kept wide open for Turkey."[28] Indeed, the door has remained opened to the extent that Turkey could begin its accession talks in October 2005.

The Greek approach has paid dividends. Turkey, especially under the conservative government,

led by Recep Tayypi Erdogan has made its pro-Western orientation with an eye clearly set toward Europe, rather than the expansion to the East, a priority. Under the leadership of Erdogan, Turkey has gone through a substantial reform process, which Thomas Diez[29] (2005: 168) says can "only be called a revolution: sweeping constitutional and legal changes have been approved by Parliament; a party with religious roots has been elected to form a single-party government; relationships with Greece have become as between friendly neighbors (although not free from conflicts)." The confidence-building process in military relations is under way. For instance, it was agreed in 2003 that officers of both armies should participate as observers of each of the two states' military exercises.[30] In 2004, the Turkish Prime Minister visited Greece, which was the first official visit of a Turkish Prime Minister to Greece since 1988. Since 1990, when Turkey had but a minor share in Greece's trade, things have changed dramatically. Fifteen years on, Turkey is Greece's eighth largest trading partner.[31]

The decision of the Greek government not to slow down or even stall the Turkish progress toward the EU membership anymore has gotten an additional political dimension. Formerly perceived as a country, which, with its anti-Turkish position, had been the bulwark of the EU against European ambitions of Turkey, Greece, is now one of the main supporters of the Turkish full integration in the EU. This, in turn, has *de facto* forced other member states to deal with Turkey more actively. Some states, especially France and Austria, stepped forward to 'fill the vacuum' left by Greece, and so they have made it clear that they have considerable reservations regarding the Turkish membership in the EU. In this respect, one should bear in mind that the EU also has benefited from Greece's changing approach to Turkey. Because of lesser tensions between Greece and Turkey, the stability of the Southeastern region as a whole has improved.

Cyprus and Turkey

The rapprochement between Turkey and Greece has not led to a solution of the Cyprus issue before Cyprus entered the EU, even though much effort had been invested to this end. After the Cold War, the European Commission attempted to seize an opportunity given to it in 1990 when Cyprus applied for EU membership. The Commission, in its opinion of 1993, hinted that it would condition the membership with the unification of the island. Yet this opinion had been unrealistic, because it was to be expected that Greece would push for an EU membership for Cyprus regardless of whether there would be unification or not. Moreover, Greece has been repeatedly pointing out that there would be no EU enlargement to the East if Cyprus were not admitted to the EU.[32] Such "apocalyptic noises"[33] had been toned down as the relations between Greece and Turkey were improving, and a new effort to unify the island had been made. Thus, the UN drafted the so-called Annan plan to reunite the island. The plan, presented in its final form for a referendum to both parts of the island in April 2004, proposed the formation of a 'new' Cyprus: a loose federation of the Turkish and Greek entities. The plan was embraced by the people of Northern Cyprus who also voted in favor of the plan. The Turkish government had even made an unprecedented move in exercising pressure on the former Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash to accept the plan, but he has refused to do so. Consequently, Ankara turned its back to Denktash, who in addition to that lost the elections in 2005 to a pro-EU contender Mehmet Ali Talat. The Greek government had joined Turkey in supporting the plan. This support seemed particularly strong in the beginning of 2004, when the compromise between the Turkish and Greek Cypriots was being feverishly sought. However, the influence of Greece had been somewhat weakened because of the national elections, which took place in that very same period. Konstandinos Karamanlis, who took over the government from Papandreu in March 2004, somehow came 'late into the game' – there was not much time left to persuade the Greek Cypriot's President Tassos Papadopoulos to accept the plan. While the reasons for Papadopoulos' reservations against the plan which ultimately convinced the Cypriot voters are more complex and should be analyzed beyond the role Athens (might have) had in the process,[34] it is important to note that these reasons had much to deal with the basic structure of a unified Cyprus according to the Annan plan. Unlike the Turkish community, the Greek Cypriots felt that the plan leaned too much toward a confederation; indeed, goes the argument, it even ran against what seemed to be a common understanding between the two communities since the late 1970s, namely that neither a unitary state nor a confederation were options for the future solution of the Cyprus problem,[35] and that a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation was to be sought.[36]

In the wake of the failed referendum, the EU had promised to ease isolation of the Turkish Cyprus. In 2004, the Commission proposed an approval of a financial aid in the amount of EUR 259 million for Northern Cyprus in 2006. The package should have come with an arrangement that would have established direct trade between the EU and the Turk-

ish part of the Cyprus, thus ending its isolation.[37] This was unacceptable for Nicosia. Fearful that any direct relations between the EU and Northern Cyprus might mean a *de facto* recognition of the latter, Nicosia has remained adamant that it would not give its vote to the Commission's proposal unless the aid package was clearly decoupled from proposed direct trade regulations.[38] Eventually, this happened in early 2006, when the Council was able to adopt the aid in the amount of EUR 139 million (the rest was lost because deadlines for the use of the 2005 EU budget had been missed). Cyprus has made it clear that it would only give a green light to more relaxed trade relations between the EU and the Northern Cyprus if Turkey honored its obligations under the Additional Protocol to the Ankara Agreement,[39] which extends the Customs Union between Turkey and the EU to all the EU members, including Cyprus. However, Turkey has refused to open its ports and harbors to vessels from Cyprus unless the EU opened up traffic to the harbor in Famagusta and the Ercan airport, which are vital for Northern Cyprus to generate revenues on its own from tourism. But Cyprus does not see this as a 'European' solution. The Foreign Minister of Cyprus Yiorgos Lillikas has commented that "Turkey is trying to have something in return for fulfilling its obligations – it is not happening and we won't allow it to happen … Turkey should forget about the Anatolian bazaar."

It seems clear, therefore, that Cyprus will not hesitate to use the POM to protect its interests, although the question where to draw the line in seeking concessions from Turkey remains open. The main point of departure for Cyprus, i.e. to become recognized by Turkey, is a *sine qua non* for seeking a compromise. Furthermore, Turkey would need to show some goodwill by opening the door to international organizations such as the OECD to which Cyprus might want to join but cannot due to the Turkish veto. At the same time, Cyprus will need to remain open as to the kind of political arrangement for the island that will be acceptable to the majority of the population on the island. Both communities ultimately have to realize that it is in their interest to find a compromise, simply because political and economic benefits that would spring out of it cannot be overlooked. The unification of the island would enhance stability in the EU and in the region, facilitate economic aid to the whole of the island, further improve the Greco-Turkish relationships, and increase revenues from tourism and trade. Like Greece, Cyprus is and should be interested in having a stable neighbor, and keep Turkey on track for a full membership. Turkey, for its part, has already demonstrated that it sees a stable relationship with neighbors as an important

part of its path toward the European Union. Sadly, there has been an unexpected development in the meantime, which may well have a damaging effect on the unification process in Cyprus. Namely, the European perspective for Turkey has recently been put in an entirely new context, never seen before in the EU enlargement process – its membership has become conditioned by a positive referendum outcome in certain member states.

6. Turkey and the European Union

The Turkish bid for the membership in the EU has given the process of enlargement an entirely new dimension, which significantly undermines the POM as a negotiating tool. Namely, some EU members have introduced much tougher conditions for admitting new candidates than ever before in the EU history. France, for instance, has adopted a constitutional requirement that a referendum for any further enlargement beyond Croatia must be organized. Essentially, the requirement has been aimed at Turkey, but it may hit other EU aspirants as well. The former French President Jacques Chirac admitted that it would indeed be tough for Turkey to convince the French voters, but he appeared somewhat more optimistic about the prospects of other EU candidates. Using Macedonia as an example, Chirac said that this small country should easily win the French public because it was a "sympathetic" one.[40] Austria, too, will leave the decision about the accession of all the candidates, except Croatia, to its public. It also has openly declared its doubts whether Turkey will ever be able to become a full member of the EU. According to the Austrian Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel, Turkey's future with the EU should instead be seen in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy.[41] During his campaign for the next French president, Nicolas Sarkozy had been equally adamant. In his view, the EU should expand to the Western Balkans "when the countries in the region are ready", and to Norway as well as Iceland and Switzerland, "whenever they want". As for Turkey, he said, while there are many interests Turkey and the EU share, Turkey should not gain a full membership but only that of a "privileged partner." [42]

Such dealings by the EU members with present and future candidates show a worrisome departure from the conventional use of the POM. Referendum is of course the highest form of democratic decision-making, but its use could have negative consequences for the EU, because it jeopardizes the main rationale of the European integration – the unification of Europe. By the very act of giving a green light to Tur-

key to start EU accession negotiations, Turkey has become a part of the unification process. At the very least, the use of the referendum, as a final hurdle an EU candidate must clear to become a member, symbolizes the use of double standards applied in the membership negotiations. The subjecting of the enlargement process to the instrument of referendum undermines the importance the POM can have for member states. In the new circumstances, the POM has now become an insufficient guarantee for the EU members that compromises made with EU applicants would actually be implemented. Put differently, concessions given by the EU applicants do not provide any guarantee for them that the final goal, the EU membership, would eventually be accomplished. A clear European perspective has arguably played a major role in the improvement of relations between Greece and Turkey.[43] Now that Turkey – and not just Turkey – needs to "win the hearts and minds of the Europeans"[44] as declared by the President of the European Commission Barroso, the purpose of negotiations has become somewhat compromised.

7. Conclusion: Is POM Still Relevant in EU Membership Negotiations?

The POM has always been an integral part of the enlargement process, but as has been shown here, its use has rarely threatened to halt the process altogether. The POM has only once been used with a clear intention to deny a European perspective to an EU aspirant. This has happened in the 1960s, when De Gaulle's France was blocking the British entry into the Union. Mostly, the POM has been used as a facilitator of unresolved issues between the neighbors. Candidate countries generally have been willing to enter such negotiations and work on compromise. In some ways, one could even argue that the use of the POM (or the threat of using it) has had a positive effect on relations between neighbors, members and non-members of the EU. It is conceivable that in the end the EU membership and indeed the credibility of a member will lead to a compromise solution between Croatia and Slovenia. The lure of the EU membership has played its part in the improvement of the Greco-Turkish relations. Greece, which had had a hostile relationship with Turkey for decades, has changed its policy toward Turkey and its EU aspirations since the end of the 1990s, to which Turkey has responded positively, especially under the Erdogan government. The rapprochement has yielded benefits to both states. On the other hand, if

used as a zero-sum game, the POM is likely to backfire on the EU member, as has happened to Greece when the government decided in 1994 to use an economic embargo as a means of pressure on Macedonia to change its name.

Tackling the challenge of enlargement in Southeastern Europe has never been easy. The developments in the 1990s have only made things worse. This is especially true for the Western Balkans. Many of the states from this subregion have endured a long and a devastating war in the 1990s. Many unresolved political issues have been left behind, people have been driven out of their homes with a slim chance to return, and new ethnic maps have been drawn. If one adds Turkey to this picture, given that its candidacy itself also has historical proportions (never before has a country with predominant Muslim population applied for the EU membership), and the picture of the EU's soul-searching with regard to Southeastern Europe is complete. Nevertheless, the integration of the region as a whole into the EU is inevitable; the EU member states reaffirmed that in Thessaloniki in 2003. However, to recognize the need to further enlarge is one thing; to recognize that a country is 'ready' to become an EU member is quite another. As has been shown in this article EU aspirants from the region have tough issues that they still need to deal with. In the case of Macedonia, the so-called 'name issue' persists on the negotiation table, Turkey faces some daunting challenges, such as its relations with Cyprus over the status of the self-proclaimed Turkish Cypriot state, which only Turkey recognizes. There are some serious economic concerns. The Turkish agricultural sector makes about 40 % of the Turkish GDP. On these grounds alone, there are many years ahead and many tough negotiations will have been held before Turkey could be considered fit for the EU membership.[45]

It is important to bear in mind, however, that under the new circumstances even if negotiations, including the exercise of the POM, are successful and Turkey or any other candidate beyond Croatia is ready (i.e. the country meets the economic and political criteria and governments have no other objections to the Turkish candidacy), the result is not going to guarantee the actual membership. In some EU members, the popular vote will decide, and it is by no means certain which factors might lead people to vote for or against the membership of a candidate. Take for instance the role of religion in discussion of merits to allow Turkey to become an EU member. One should not forget that Turkey is a secular state, yet parts of the European public see the fact that the majority of the Turkish population is Muslim as prob-

lematic. Of course, religion is not listed as the criteria for EU membership. The EU law says so,[46] and so do for example Günter Verheugen, a Commissioner responsible for enlargement in the Prodi Commission,[47] and the current Head of the EU Commission, José Manuel Barroso.[48] Nevertheless, given the prominent role the religion has in Europe, the public may not be of the same opinion. If the argument of religion won the day (or in fact any argument relating to 'cultural' differences), it could prove costly for the future of Europe. One should not forget that the population in Albania is 70 % Muslim. The Kosovo Albanians, who aim at a full independence,

are Muslims. One third of the Macedonian populations are Muslims. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Muslims make roughly about 40 % of the country's population. Of course, there is no way to predict whether religion will in fact play a role at all when the public discussion about the future EU applicants begins. It remains the fact, however, that the continuation of the use of a traditional, historically proven method of 'Europeanizing' an EU applicant through regular negotiations, and even through the use of the POM would not have brought the EU to such dangerous and unpredictable waters toward which it seems to be set to sailing today. ∎

NOTES

1 The process in which a state internalizes norms and values enshrined in the constitutive documents of the European Communities is part of Europeanization, a 'set of incremental processes through which European political, social and economic dynamics become part of the logic of national discourse, identities, political structures and public policies'. John Borneman and Nick Fowler. 1997. 'Europeanization.' Annual Review of Anthropology. 1997, 26: 487-514; 489. Quoted in Lindstrom, N. (1992), "From Permissive Consensus to Contentious Politics: Varieties of Euroskepticism in Croatia and Slovenia. Presented to the Cornell Mellon-Sawyer Seminar, 'Towards a Transnational and Transcultural Europe", 9 April 2002, http://www.einaudi.cornell.edu/files/calendar/1748/Lindstrom_Paper.pdf. Note: all the webpages referred to here were accessible on 18 January 2008.

2 For the reason of simplicity, only the last part of the constitutional name of this ex Yugoslav republic – 'The Republic of Macedonia' – is used in the present article. In this context, it is also important to mention that in order to win the membership in major international organizations, the government in Skopje had to accept the name 'Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia'. The problems with the name of the country are discussed in detail later in the article.

3 Moravcsik, A. (2000), "De Gaulle Between Grain and Grandeur: The Political Economy of French EC Policy, 1958–1970 (Part I)," Journal of Cold War Studies, Vol. 2 No. 2, pp. 3-43; Moravcsik, A. (2000), "De Gaulle Between Grain and Grandeur: The Political Economy of French EC Policy, 1958–1970 (Part II)," Journal of Cold War Studies, Vol. 2 No. 3, pp. 4-68; Milward, A. S. "A Comment on the Article by Andrew Moravcsik," Journal of Cold War Studies, Vol. 2 No. 3, Fall 2000, pp. 77-80; p. 80).

4 "Britain: US Help for EEC a Must," Christian Science Monitor, April 30 1962, p. 2.

5 Moravcsik, "De Gaulle Between Grain and Grandeur (Part II)," Journal of Cold War Studies, Vol. 2 No.3, pp. 4-68; p. 7-8.

6 Moravcsik, "De Gaulle Between Grain and Grandeur (Part II)," p. 28.

7 "Paris Bangs Door on Britain," Christian Science Monitor, Jan. 26 1963, p. 1.

8 Bulgaria is unlikely to stand in the way of Turkey and Macedonia toward the EU membership. In the Cold War era, the situation had been very different. The Bulgarian regime denied a separate national identity to the Macedonians in Yugoslavia and claimed that Macedonia should be a part of Bulgaria. After the Cold War, Bulgaria has separated the cultural issue of national identity from inter-state relations. It was the first country to have recognized Macedonia as an independent state in 1992, and thus effectively made it clear that it no longer aspired to incorporate Macedonia within the Bulgarian borders. Bulgaria has sig-

nificantly improved its relations with Turkey as well. During the Cold War, the relations between the two states had been strained mostly because of the hostile attitude and policies of the Bulgarian regime against the Turkish minority in Bulgaria. Things have changed since the fall of the Berlin Wall. In 1997, the Bulgarian president Petar Stojanov visited the Turkish parliament and apologized for Bulgaria's treatment of its Turkish minority during the communist era. Dimitrov, V. (2000), "Learning to Play the Game: Bulgaria's Relations with Multilateral Organisations," Southeastern European Politics, Vol. 1 No. 2, pp. 101-114; p. 109. Bishku, M. B. (2003), "Turkish-Bulgarian Relations: From Conflict and Distrust to Cooperation," Mediterranean Quarterly, Vol. 14 No. 2, pp. 79-95; p. 92-93.

9 Roter, P. and A. Bojinović (2005), "Croatia and the European Union: A troubled relationship," Mediterranean Politics, Vol. 10, No. 3, pp. 447-454; p. 447-448. See also a web page created in support to Gotovina at http://www.antegotovina.com/.

10 Jović, D. (2006), 'Croatia and the European Union: a long delayed journey," Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans, Vol. 8, No.1, pp. 85-103; p. 97.

11 In fact, Croatia and Slovenia had already initialled a compromise in 2001 with which Slovenia would have gotten an access to international waters through a special corridor. However, the Drnovšek-Račan agreement (named after the prime ministers of Slovenia and Croatia respectively) has never been ratified by Croatia.

12 Roter, P. and A. Bojinović, "Croatia and the European Union: A troubled relationship", p. 452.

13 Dimitrij Rupel, 'Bi šlo brez diplomacije', Delo, 1 July 2006, http://www.mzz.gov.si/index.php?id=13&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=11895&tx_ttnews[backPid]=1019 (11 January 2007).

14 "Premierja za meddržavno sodišče v Haagu", RTV SLO, 26 August 2007, ttp://www.rtvslo.si/modload.php?&c_mod=rnews&op=sections&func=read&c_menu=1&c_id=150566&rss=1.

15 The data for Croatia are from the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, available at http://hgd.mvpei.hr/hr/gospodarstvo/. The data for Slovenia are from the Bank of Slovenia, http://www.bsi.si/iskalniki/ekonomski-odnosi-s-tujino.asp?MapaId=230.

16 Zahariadis, N (1999), "Greek Policy toward the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 1991–1995," Journal of Modern Greek Studies, Vol. 14, pp. 303-327, p. 311, 316.

17 It has been argued that the way the EU handled this issue at that time was rather controversial. The EU members, Greece included, have themselves appointed the so-called Badinter Arbitration Commission (BAC), which studied conditions for recognition of former Yugoslav republics. The BAC recommended

that the 'Republic of Macedonia' as the report called the new state, be recognized. Instead, Skopje had been faced 'with another painful and unjust decision of the major European powers regarding such existential question as the state recognition was.' Vankovska-Cvetkovska, B. (2006), "UNPREDEP in Macedonia: Achievements and Limits of Preventive Diplomacy," Online Journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution Vol. 1, No. 2, http://www.trinstitute.org/ojpcr/toc2_1.htm.

18 By resolution A/RES/47/225 of 8 April 1993.

19 (1995) *"Commission of the European Communities v. Hellenic Republic*, Case C-120/94; a commentary by Anne Peters," in The American Journal of International Law, Vol. 89, No. 2, 376-385.

20 Article 5 of the Interim Accord.

21 Zahariadis, "Greek Policy toward the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia," p. 320.

22 The data are for 2005. For an overview, go to http://www.nbrm.gov.mk/default-en.asp?ItemID=EA9313A61C028F44B00B681EF302F59D.

23 "U.N. Has Idea In Macedonia Name Debate," New York Times, April 9, 2005.

24 Article 11 of the Interim Accord.

25 Quoted from "Dispute over 'Alexander Airport'," BBC News, 29 December 2006, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6216225.stm.

26 "Brussels Macedonia in the dark on EU entry talks," Euobserver, 31. 1. 2007, http://euobserver.com/?aid=23384.

27 For a concise description of these open issues, see Axt, H-J (2005), "Relations with Turkey and Their Impact on the European Union," Southeast European and Black Sea Studies, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 365-378; p. 369.

28 "Greece's EU Presidency: Enlargement and Iraq loom large on the agenda," Europe, December 2002/January 2003; p. 11.

29 Diez, T. (2005), "Turkey, the European Union and Security Complexes Revisited," Mediterranean Politics, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 167-180.

30 Axt, "Relations with Turkey and Their Impact on the European Union," p. 371.

31 "Greek-Turkish Trade Soared in the 1990s," Athens News Agency, 7 November 2002; http://www.hri.org/news/greek/apeen/2002/02-11-07_1.apeen.html#04; "Foreign trade," The Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, http://www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/en-US/Policy/Economic+Policy/Foreign+Trade/.

32 Müftuler-Bac, M. and A. Güney (2005), "The European Union and the Cyprus Problem," Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 41, No. 2, 281-293; 289. "Analysis: Make or Break for Cyprus," BBC News, 12 November 2002, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2455705.stm.

33 "Analysis: Make or Break for Cyprus."

34 See, for instance, Stavrinides, Z. (2005), "A Long Journey to Peace: The Dispute in the Republic of Cyprus," Harvard International Review, Summer, pp. 83-84; Richmond, O. P. (2004), "Shared sovereignty and the politics of peace: evaluating the EU's 'catalytic' framework in the eastern Mediterranean," International Affairs, Vol. 82 No. 1, pp, 149-176; "The Cyprus Stalemate: What Next?', Presentation of a report on the outcome of the referendum, Centre for European Policy Studies, 28 March 2006," http://www.ceps.be/wp.php?article_id=524. See also an interesting analysis of the 2006 parliamentary elections in Cyprus which the author found to be centred on the 2004 referendum outcome rather than on, say, whether and how to start new negotiations for reunification. Ker-Lindsay, J- (2006), "A Second Referendum: The May 2006 Parliamentary Elections in Cyprus," Mediterrranean Politics, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp. 441-446.

35 Stavridis, S. (2005), "The Cyprus Problem and Cyprus' Accession to the EU: the role of the Cypriot House of Representa-

tives (Vouli)" Eliamep Occasional Papers, OP.02.05, http://www.eliamep.gr/eliamep/files/op0205.PDF.

36 It has to be pointed out that the Turkish Cypriots' perspective on what a bi-zonal, bi-communal arrangement has turned out to be somewhat different from that of the Greek Cypriots. Rauf Denktash had a confederation in mind. In 1998, for example, he suggested "a bi-zonal, bi-communal state, composed of two sovereign entities" (emphasis by the author). Müftuler-Bac and Güney, "The European Union and the Cyprus Problem," p. 288.

37 "Commission proposes comprehensive measures to end isolation of Turkish Cypriot community" Europa Rapid Press Releases, 7 July 2004, http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/857&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en.

38 "Glimmer of Light on Cyprus," BBC News, 8 August 2006, http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/5256414.stm.

39 Protocol to the Association Treaty between Turkey and the European Communities signed in Ankara in 1963. The Treaty was ratified in 1964. For the Protocol, see Official Journal of the European Union, L 254/58, 30.09.2005.

40 "New EU 'consensus' over enlargement highly fragile," EU Observer, 15 December 2006.

41 "Schüssel glaubt nicht an EU-Vollmitgliedschaft der Turkei," der Standard, 12 December 2006.

42 "Klares Bekenntnis Sarkozys zur EU," Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 8 September 2006.

43 One often forgets that serious and often traumatic debates about the effects of 'Europeanization' on Turkey had begun well before Turkey has officially begun accession negotiations with the EU – Turkey seemed more engaged into this debate internally than the EU policymakers were prepared to do the same with Turkey on an EU level. See, for example, Bilgin, P. (2005), "Turkey's Changing Security Discourses: The Challenge of Globalisation," European Journal for Political Research, Vol. 44, pp. 187-194.

44 See his Declaration on the opening of accession negotiations with Turkey, http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/1219&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en.

45 The voices that the EU might benefit more from the Turkish membership that it is generally recognized seem somewhat silenced. See, for instance, Font, N. (2006), "Why the European Union Gave Turkey the Green light," Journal of Contemporary European Studies, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 197-212.

46 According to Article 49 of the Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the European Union, "any European state which respects the principles set out in Article 6(1) may apply to become a member of the Union." These principles are liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law.

47 He went on to say that his vision of Europe is broad enough to include states such as Turkey, simply because the criteria for accession 'are not religious, but those of democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and so on. "EU: Verheugen guarantees standards," Financial Times, September 13, 1999. In Šterbenc, P. et al. (2006), "Enlargement Watch 2/1999 (Slovenia)" Bonn, Institut für europäische Politik, February 2000', p. 4.

48 "M. Barroso favorable ŕ l'adhésion de la Turquie," Le Monde, 15 July 2004. Cf. "Calm Summit Before the Storm," BBC News, 15 December 2006, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6183449.stm.