

THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR ENLARGEMENT

PROGRESS REPORT # 13 [MARCH 2003]

The European Commission published in March 2002 its first report on the implementation of the communication strategy for Enlargement, covering the period since the launch of the strategy in May 2000. The following is an update of that report. It lists the various activities carried out as part of the communication strategy for enlargement in the candidate countries and member states, and provides background material, such as opinion polls. For more information on the situation of public opinion, please see the section on the enlargement web site at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/opinion/>

For more information on the activities of the Commission delegations and Representations, see <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/contacts/index.htm>

The DG Enlargement Information Team

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GENERAL

What the polls say

Commission publishes full results of autumn Eurobarometer survey in candidate countries, March 4, 2003

- This survey questioned 12,147 people in the 13 countries between 2 September and 16 October last year and initial findings were published in November (see IP/02/1682). The results show growing support for accession to the EU, with the level of opposition down sharply in the 10 countries due to join the EU in May 2004. However, the evidence shows there is a danger of low turnout rates in this year's referendums. For further information, click on: http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion

or <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/opinion/index.htm#eurobarometer>

Flash EB 140 "Enlargement of the European Union" (21/03/03-30/03/03) Report

- The survey questionnaire for this third Flash survey tackles the opinion of citizens in the European Union on the four following issues:
 - What European Union citizens know about the Enlargement,
 - Their level of preparation for the Enlargement,
 - The consequences of the Enlargement,
 - The future of the European Union.
- 15,031 interviews were carried out between 21 and 30 March, 2003 by the 15 institutes of the EOS Gallup Europe network.

See http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/flash/fl140_en.pdf

THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY BY COUNTRY

Austria

- To intensify media awareness of Enlargement, the Representation is currently working on a number of projects, as for instance a major public event on May 9th with Commissioner Verheugen, as well as journalist trips to Romania and Lithuania in June.

- Additionally, a number of Conventions, with the federal government, the city of Vienna, the countries of Lower and Upper Austria, Burgenland, Styria and Carinthia are currently under preparation

Czech Republic

Opinion Poll

- CVVM: Most Czechs (80 percent) would take part in a referendum on the Czech Republic's accession into the European Union if it was held in March, according to a poll by the CVVM polling centre. Of this number, 59 percent of respondents would vote for EU membership, and 22 percent would vote against it. The number of Czechs determined to take part in the referendum and the number of supporters of EU members and its opponents has not considerably changed, compared to a February poll. The number of respondents prepared to go to the polls has grown by 2 percent compared to February and this number has not considerably changed since last November, when 77 percent of respondents were prepared to take part in the EU referendum. Regarding the adoption of the joint European currency euro, one half of respondents in the March poll said they would want to use the euro instead of Czech crown, while one third of respondents were against the euro and 16 percent were unable to give any opinion on the issue.
- GfK: According to the recent GfK opinion polls, euro-optimists will be delighted about EU membership in a referendum. Currently, three fifths of Czechs would support EU membership. This represents the highest percentage since the measurements began. Another positive element is the decrease of the share of undecided people by 8 points to 19% from January/February 2003. The percentage of EU membership opponents remains rather stable on the level of 20% (a 3% increase since the recent polls). Sixty one percent of Czechs would take part in a referendum, 14% rejects to participate and 25% do not know. Seventy seven percent of those who intend to participate in the referendum would support the membership, 16% would be vote against and 7% are undecided.
- STEM: Most Czechs are unsure about what their standard of living and what the Czech economy will look like after EU accession. Despite moderate optimism, there is a lot of fear, so their answers differ, according to a survey by polling centre STEM. Less than 50 percent of Czechs are convinced that the situation of the Czech economy will get worse and only a third of the people expect an overall improvement. Although over 60 percent of Czechs fear that their standard of living might get worse, only one third believe that this will really happen, while 50 percent consider EU accession a chance for improving their standards of living. Young right-wing voters with higher education and higher incomes are more optimistic. In contrast, older people with lower education and voters of left-wing parties have expressed more worries about the future. Among segments with good outlooks, people named catering and other areas related to tourism, as well as banks, insurance and construction. People with the best chances on the labour market are doctors, state officials and others with high qualifications, and also artists, according to the poll. People who will face the biggest problems after EU

accession are blue-collar workers in industry, small entrepreneurs and farmers. Agriculture, steel production and other traditional industrial segments are likely to experience severe problems, and 70 percent of respondents are convinced that after joining the EU, Czech farmers will face a crisis. Respondents see foreign competition as a big problem for the Czech economy. More and more people are calling for protection of domestic producers against the imports of cheap foreign goods. Their worries do not differ with education, financial situation and age, but are in harmony only with their political orientation. Traditionally, leftists are more worried. Nearly half of the respondents expect the Czech Republic to catch up with Western European standards of living in ten years.

Media

- Visit to Brussels for Regional Journalists – 10 regional journalists from the CR travelled to Brussels during 15-20 March 2003. The group included journalists from both broadcasters (4 radio reporters and 1 TV news reporter) and the print media (1 stringer from ČTK wire service and 4 daily media reporters). The five-day programme consisted of visits to EU institutions (the European Commission – DG Enlargement, DG Regio, DG Agri, the European Parliament – meetings with parliamentary fractions and committees, etc.), think tanks (Centre for European Policy Research) and to regional interest groups (Prague House, Czech Business Representation, etc.). All journalists made positive assessments of the visit programme upon their return to the CR and stated that it was useful for their professional development.
- Press Lunch with Jan Kasl – a press lunch with Jan Kasl, former Mayor of Prague and current Chairman of the European Democrat Party took part on 17 March 2003. HoD Ramiro Cibrián also attended the press lunch. Roughly 14 journalists participated in the event.
- Media Support for DEC Events (Czech Radio) – DEC has made agreements for media partnerships with Czech Radio and its regional news programmes. Czech Radio has covered and made day-long broadcasts and pre-event announcements on regional events in Přerov, Prostějov, Žďár nad Sázavou, Chrudim; Kolín, Kutná Hora; Rychnov nad Kněžnou, Svitavy, Ústí nad Orlicí; Rokycany, Příbram, Domažlice, Plzeň.
- Media e-mail database – DEC regularly updates the media database operated through the DEC web page (<http://www.evropska-unie.cz/addressbook>). The update is carried out regularly prior to each press release distribution.

Press releases

Nationwide:

- 4.3.2003 – a Czech Interior Ministry press briefing on EU support for the technical implementation of Schengen Convention norms
- 5.3.2003 – EU twinning programme to support the development of the Czech energy sector (energy regulator) through the Strengthening Regulation and Enforcement of the Energy Acquis programme.

- 7.3.2003 – award of EU ISPA funds to support the renovation of the Brno City Sewage System.
- 17.3.2003 – 1st European Spring Day Programme and discussion in selected school attended by HoD Ramiro Cibrián.
- 18.3.2003 – Finance Ministry press conference on EU support for preparation of the Czech Insurance Sector for entry on the EU Common Market.
- 20.3.2003 – 2,2 billion CZK in EU ISPA support for transformation of Czech Railways.
- 21.3.2003 – EU support of 31 million CZK to the Czech Ministry of the Interior for the improvement of the Czech civil service.
- 27.3.2003 – The paper by former Dutch PM, Wim Kok, on measures needed for a successful enlargement of the EU.
- 27.3.2003 – European Union Youth Orchestra in Prague on 5 April 2003.

Regional:

- 26.3.2003 – EC Delegation, OBI joint information projects in the regions of the Czech Republic. Announcement of 1st event in Plzeň and further event in Ostrava.
- 27 and 29.3.2003 – contact information to OBI stores participating in the Days of European Inspiration information programme.
- Projects or co-operation with media

Articles Published in March 2003	Paper	Date of publication
“Assessment of implementation of EU’s broad economic political guidelines” by HoD	Ekonom weekly	6/3/03
International Woman Day by Commissioner Diamantopoulou	Pravo	8/3/03
“Preparation for EU accession does not end with closing of negotiations” by HoD	Hospdarske Noviny	12/03/03
“Summary of speech of RD in Zdar nad Sazavou on agriculture” by HoD	Zemedelec Weekly	17/3/03
“EU-US Partnership” by HoD	Lidove Noviny	20/3/03
“Europe, combien de divisions?” by Commissioner Barnier	Pravo	27/3/03

“Commission Opinion on future MS” by HoD	Stribrny Kruh monthly	28/3/03
“Europe wants Sustainable and Responsible Growth” by HoD	Pravo	31/03/03
“10 years of the Single Market” by HoD	Euro weekly	31/03/03

Press conferences

- 5.3.2003 – 10th Days of European Film – Press conference at the EUIC
- 10-11.3.2003 – Přerov and Prostějov (10.3) on the occasion of the HoD’s visits to these towns. 5 reporters took part in the regional press briefings.
- 13.3.2003 – regional events in Kutná Hora and Kolín.
- 18-19.3.2003 – Rychnov nad Kněžnou (18.3), in Ústí nad Orlicí and in Svitavy (19.3) on the occasion of the HoD’s visits to these townships.
- 24-25.3.2003 –DEC events in Rokycany and Domažlice.
- 29.3.2003 – media event for the launch of the Days of European Inspiration at OBI - Plzeň.

Information Events

- Lectures in the EUIC: During March the EUIC provided 6 lectures to students on EU issues. 218 persons attended these events. The first event in the EUIC’s spring seminar series took place on 27 March 2003 on the issue “The results of Czech-EU negotiations – the Terms under which the CR will join the EU”.
- Seminars in the EUIC: 7 March 10th Days of European Film – Round table with VIP participants of the DEF festival (Approx. 70 participants); 15-16 March
- Konrad Adenauer Foundation Seminar – Weekend Seminar on Personnel Searches for EU Institutions (Approx. 55 participants) ;
- 18 March Czech Centres -- Press conference at the EUIC about the Czech Centres communications programmes (Approx. 70 participants);
- 21 March NROS Special Seminar – Seminar programme for grant evaluators;
- 27 March Europeum Seminar – Presentation on Czech-Norwegian relations, Norway and US
- Regional Events promoting the knowledge of EU:

- 10./11.3.2003 – The HoD visit to Přerov, Prostějov, Žďár nad Sázavou and Chrudim (Olomoucký, Pardubický and Vysočina region), inc. meetings with regional leaders. 50 regional decision-makers attended a round table discussion in Přerov and 17 people in Prostějov, followed by a debate with senior citizens (approx 70 people) and with the general public in Prostějov attended by 70 local citizens. On 11 March DEC representatives visited Žďár nad Sázavou, where a seminar on structural funds was held for 60 representatives participated as well as a conference on agriculture. A meeting with senior citizens (approx. 50 people attended) and a general public debate (approx. 60 people attended) took place during the afternoon in Chrudim.
- 12.3.2003 – Participation of DEC representative in Czech-German-Polish cross-border event, organized by the Euroregion Nisa and Friedrich Nauman Stiftung, co-financed by the DEC.
- 13. 3. 2003. The HoD made a visit to Kolín and Kutná Hora to meet approximately 30 decision-makers from Kutná Hora, followed by a press conference. He visited Kolín during the afternoon, where a lunch was held with local political and business representatives (approx. 20 people attended this event). A meeting with seniors (approx. 25 people attended) and a general public debate took place afterwards (approx. 30 people attended) The HoD also visited the private secondary school for Roma students.
- 18./19.3.2003 Visit of HoD to Rychnov nad Kněžnou, Svitavy and Ústí nad Orlicí. Approximately 25 decision-makers from Rychnov nad Kněžnou and the surrounding area participated in a round table discussion, followed by a press conference. The HoD also visited together the Polish Ambassador to the Czech Republic Andrzej Krawczyk Solnice, where a debate with employees of Skoda Auto, a. s. Kvasiny was organised (approx. 120 people attended this event). Afterwards the HoD visited a Phare project site in Neratov (church + centre for handicapped children). A general public debate took place (approx. 60 people attended) in Rokytnice v Orlických horách. Finally a public debate took place in Rychnov nad Kněžnou (approx. 70 participants). Visits to Ústí nad Orlicí and Svitavy took place on the second day of the 18-19 March regional tour. The HoD led a round table discussion with approx. 30 participants (Euroregion reps, politicians, business leaders, NGOs, and journalists) in Ústí nad Orlicí, followed by a press briefing. Further a round table discussion was held in Svitavy (approx. 15 participants) followed by a meeting with seniors, attended by 50 participants and a public debate (70 participants).
- 24./25.3. 2003 Visit of The HoD to Rokycany, Příbram, Domažlice, Klatovy and Plzeň (Plzeňský region). 30 regional decision-makers attended a round table discussion in Rokycany, a press conference was held afterwards. The HoD led a debate with seniors (approx 130 people participated) and the general public in Příbram attended by 20 local citizens. On 11 March, Christian Bourgin held a round table discussion in Domažlice (approx. 40 people), in Klatovy (approx. 18 participants) and visited a wastewater treatment plant subsidised by Phare grants. The programme concluded with a meeting with seniors (approx. 100 people attended) and a general public

debate (approx. 50 people attended) in Klatovy. In the evening the HoD held a public radio debate on the regional radio station, Český rozhlas Plzeň.

- The Festival “Days of European Film” took part in Prague (6.-16.3.2003) and in Brno (17.-26.3.2003). DEC provided number of publications and information materials, which were placed for public in respective cinema vestibules. To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the festival 10 future member states joined the recent EU members in providing films for the festival. “Echos” of DEF were organized for the first time in the history of the festival in Ostrava (21.-23.3.2003), Olomouc (25.3.2003) and Plzeň (6.4.2003).
- 31.3.2003 Participation of HoD in conference on “Advantages and Disadvantages of the CR’s accession to the EU” held in Krnov (approx. 500 participants).
- 21.3.2003 Participation of HoD in discussion within the framework of the “Spring Day in Europe” project celebrations held in Prague, Secondary Grammar School Arabská.
- 29.3.2003 Opening of the joint project with OBI – “Days of European inspiration” in all 16 OBI stores in Czech regions during 3 Saturdays (29.3.-12.4.2003). This event is so far the largest EU-related event in the CR. The Delegation was present with info stands and quizzes. The opening took place in Pilsen in the presence of the CEO of OBI.
- 5.4.2003 Performance of EU Youth Orchestra concerts in Prague. On 4.4. the brass section of the EUYO performed for the general public in a shopping mall. The DEC arranged a sightseeing tour together with the Lord Mayor’s office. The Orchestra was received by the Deputy Lord Mayor on Friday evening. On 5.4. a press conference took place with Ms Bryer (general secretary of EUYO) and conductor Vladimir Ashkenazy with all the mayor press present. 250 seniors that arrived in 4 buses from different regions and Prague. The concert was sold out and visited by PM Spidla and a large number of EU-25 and non-EU Ambassadors. In co-operation with the Delegation, the Office of the Prime Minister hosted a reception for VIPs afterwards.

Internet

- 0,250 people visited the Delegation’s web-page during March, web-surfers made an additional 2.957 visits to www.eu.tiscali.cz, provided with content from www.evropska-unie.cz
- A new mechanism for on-line ordering of EC Delegation publications has been installed on the web-page.
- Four new mailboxes info-services@evropska-unie.cz; press-services@evropska-unie.cz; team-europe@evropska-unie.cz; and regiony@evropska-unie.cz were also installed. The addresses will be used for direct-mailing services.
- 54 new articles were added to both the Czech- and English-language pages, increasing the overall number of articles to 2020.

Publications

- Additional prints of the 10 Q&A leaflet on EU; print production of additional fact sheets (192.000 copies); print of additional argumentation sheets (96.000 copies); print of EU and seniors (50.000); print of EU and family (50.000); print of March edition of „EU Magazin“, distributed in Pravo daily (450.000); distribution of 52.000 additional copies to regional recipients.
- E-zines: The EUIC continues with its regular weekly distribution of Week in Europe to approximately 3.900 registered users. Information about seminars and other EU relevant activities, new articles and press releases are also mailed to registered users. Subscribers to the direct mailing service regularly receive information about newly added articles and also invitations to all EUIC's in-door activities.

Information Centre

- Visitors: The total number of visitors for March was 2649 people. Approximately 1898 people visited the EUIC during March 2003 and roughly 751 people attended events organised at the EUIC.
- Questions: EUIC information officers answered 403 complex and around 850 simple requests for information by e-mail and phone.
- Mailing: 60 requests for publications were processed, i.e. the EUIC dispatched roughly 300 publications by post.
- Team Europe members provided 14 lectures during March 2003:
 - 5.3.2003 Martin Šteiner in Dolany: The Impacts of EU Accession on Czech Seniors
 - 5.3.2003 Tomáš Doucha in Lipník nad Bečvou: The EU's Common Agricultural Policy
 - 10.3.2003 Luděk Urban in Brno: Comparative Look at EU and Czech Social Policy
 - 11.3.2003 Markéta Vylítová at the Solidarity Theatre in Prague: Free Movement of Persons in the EU
 - 13.3.2003 Karel Vít in Dobruška: The Impacts of Czech EU Accession
 - 13.3.2003 Martin Šteiner in Senice na Hané: Developments in EU Integration and the Impacts of Accession on Czech Seniors
 - 21.3.2003 Jan Hřích in Odolená Voda: EU and Opportunities for the Czech Republic
 - 25.3.2003 Martin Šteiner in Bouzov: Social Impact of EU Accession on Czech Seniors

- 25.3.2003 Markéta Pitrová in Brno: Control Mechanisms in the EU
- 25.3.2003 Josef Vochozka in Mladá Boleslav: EU Educational Programmes
- 26.3.2003 Josef Vochozka in Klášterec nad Ohří: EU Educational Programmes (Socrates)
- 27.3.2003 Jiří Blažek in Slaný: EU Structural Funds
- 27.3.2003 Tomáš Doucha in Klatovy: The EU's Common Agricultural Policy
- 31.3.2003 Josef Vochozka in Uherský Brod: Education and Communication in the EU
- 19.3.2003 Meeting open to all Team Europe members on EU Communication Strategy of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presented by Mrs. Jana Adamcová, Head of the Ministry's Communication Strategy Department.

Denmark

Media

- “The Commission fears more fraud” formed the headline in several papers as a reaction to OLAF's announcement of increased control of the budget in an enlarged EU.
- The outcome of the referendum in Malta was generally very positively perceived and covered fairly well both by the printed and the electronic media.
- The coverage of the different New Member States continues, mainly with a very positive focus (improved democratic reforms, good economic growth etc.).
- Croatia's request for membership has been mentioned in all major dailies, but with little attention or no attention from the political parties. Sources in the Polish government have been quoted for saying that Poland will use its membership to help Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova to become members.

Products

- We have distributed a considerable number of the three thematic folders from DG Enlargement. Our own publication EU rykker grænser, which has just been updated and printed in an additional 20,000 copies, is very much in demand.

Estonia

Opinion poll

- According to the most recent public opinion polls by EMOR, 55% of Estonian citizens supported or rather supported the accession in March, 36% opposed or rather opposed to it and 9% had not made up their mind. The positive referendum result in Slovenia did not have an impact on the results, since most of the respondents were interviewed before the referendum day. The support rate is currently the lowest among women and middle-aged people (35-50) who earn less than 1000 kroons per family member per month. In March 61% of the respondents would have definitely participated in the referendum. Out of those who would have definitely gone out and voted, 65% would have voted for and 35% against accession.

Press releases

- On 6 March, the national tabloid Õhtuleht published an interview with President Prodi.
- On 13 March, a joint press release by the Delegation and Ministry of Finance, reporting an increased role of the Estonian authorities in the management of EU projects in Estonia. The news was covered in radio news and online news portals.
- On 24 March, the launch of a new grant round under the Small Projects Programme in Estonia with a total budget of EUR 250,000. The news was covered in the national dailies and online news portals.
- On 26 March, a translated summary of Wim Kok's report on the consequences of EU enlargement. The report was quoted in nationwide and regional dailies.
- The national business daily Äripäev published the first EU insert "European Union entrepreneur". The insert carries practical information for the Estonian business sector, e.g. on agriculture, construction, trade & processing industry, and on lobbying in the EU. During the project, which is co-funded by the newspaper, the journalists visit Sweden, Germany, Ireland, Belgium and Portugal to find out how EU membership has influenced the life of businessmen in these countries. The series will continue until September 2003.
- The first broadcasts of a series of 15 half-hour EU-themed programmes were aired on Estonian Public Radio's Vikerraadio channel. The series concentrates on the impact of EU accession on Estonia and will be broadcast until June.
- The first 3-page insert in a series entitled "I and the EU" was published in Elukiri, the magazine for senior citizens.

Events

- On 19 March, the HoD, Mr John Kjaer, hosted a lunch for representatives of the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Estonian Employers Confederation and the Estonian European Movement. Activity plans for the

remaining period before the referendum on EU accession in September were discussed.

- During the reporting period, the EUIC released 4 weekly electronic newsletters, “European Union This Week”. The Newsletter is mailed weekly to over 3,500 recipients, including national and local politicians, the government sector, NGOs, entrepreneurs and the major media channels.
- The EUIC organised in cooperation with the Estonian European Movement an essay contest “My vision of the Future of Europe”. The contest was targeted to youth and was carried out in the framework of the Spring Day initiative.
- On 6 March, the EUIC organised in cooperation with the Valga County Government an EU Information Day for schools in Valga County. The EUIC gave lectures on the current state of play in Estonian relations with the EU and on educational programmes in the EU. The EUIC held a quiz for the 60 participants.
- On 25 March, the EUIC held a lecture on EU history, institutions, educational programs and implications of Estonia’s EU accession for 150 Mustamäe Gymnasium teachers and students.
- Preparations for the pre-referendum bus tour:
 - On 7 March, the EUIC organised the 3rd seminar for the volunteers of the bus tour. The following topics were covered: EU history, institutions, principles of EU law, and typical questions asked by the general public in the EU context.
 - On 13 March, the EUIC held a coordination meeting with representatives of the German Embassy and the German Cultural Institute in order to discuss in detail the activities during the bus tour in Tartu and Jõgeva counties.
 - On 13 March, the EUIC presented the state of play for the EU information coordinators in the counties who are the main coordination partners during the bus tour in the regions.
 - On 21 March, the EUIC visited Tartu and Jõgeva Counties in order to find the suitable places for the bus stops and events to take place and to agree on the details with the local organisers.

Finland

- The current state of national and international affairs has also changed the topics of conversation among the citizens. There was no discussion on enlargement on the Finnish Government web-site forum (www.minuneurooppa.fi). However, debate on the future of the Union, including the relative strength of different Member States and decision-making bodies, continued vigorously. In the future, interested citizens will find background information for their debates in the newly-opened website maintained by the Europe Information Unit of the Finnish

Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The site contains information on the Acceding Countries.

- Co-operation in enlargement communication activities between the Representation and the EP Office continued functioning well in the customary form of monthly meetings.

Opinion Poll

- Finnish citizens remain worried about the effects of enlargement. According to a recently published study by the Centre for Finnish Business and Policy Studies (EVA), some 45% of the people react negatively to EU enlargement, whereas only 19% look upon it with total approval. Farmers and people who live in the Northern parts of the country have more concerns than the others: they risk losing EU subsidies. Otherwise, differences of opinion between the various social groups remain minor.
- Results of the latest Eurobarometer reveal a more detailed picture. A majority of Finns (81%) believes EU decision-making will become more difficult after the enlargement. 71% believe that subsidies allotted to Finland will decrease. At the same time, the Finnish net contribution to the EU is expected to increase (72%). However, enlargement is also seen to have many positive effects: the EU is among others expected to gain in global significance (77%). It is considered to become culturally richer (76%). All in all, 58% of the people are reported to support the enlargement.
- Yet, the public attitude towards the EU and its enlargement seems to have shifted a little towards the negative. In comparison with the results obtained by EVA two years ago, Finns have become increasingly estranged from the Union: at present, 75% of them feel distant to the European institutions. The latest Eurobarometer confirms that 74% of citizens are “not at all” or “not so much” attached to the Union, whereas only 24% feel rather or very attached to it. The EVA estimates that the attitudes may in part result from the fact that enlargement has drawn considerably nearer: as the people are not certain about their future, they easily concentrate on the costs and possible ill-effects of the process.

Key new developments

- Analysis on the challenges facing the enlarging Union continued in March. The general tone of discussion appeared somewhat negative: the amount of discussion on the positive effects of enlargement decreased, while the number of concerned comments on the future of the Union increased. Much of the debate focused on the European states’ different attitudes towards the US Iraq policy, and the consequent difficulties the CFSP will be facing.

Media

- In March, most stories dealt either with the results of the latest Eurobarometer and other attitude surveys organised in the Acceding Countries, or the Maltese and Slovenian EU-referenda. As Malta was the first to arrange the referendum, it

attracted particular attention in both the press and the audio-visual media. The result was generally considered as a positive example for the rest of the countries.

- There were also some reports on the implications the enlargement will have on Finnish commercial and industrial life. In general, the estimates were rather positive: the enlargement was seen to open “new gates” for Finnish enterprises and investors. Many companies have recently expanded their foreign activities from the traditional trade partners Baltic states and Poland to new acquaintances such as Slovakia and the Czech Republic. The shift is presumed to reveal a possible future tendency: the people will not move to where the jobs are, but the jobs will move to where the people are.

Representation activities

- In March, the Representation concentrated mainly on the preparatory work for future information events and activities, such as the two-day seminar for prominent politicians, think tanks, and journalists on Finland and the enlarged European Union to be held in Kirkkonummi, in the Helsinki region in April. Hence, the number of organised activities remained limited.
- However, the series of regional Europe 2010 discussion events, which is organised in co-operation with Regional Councils and the IPE-network, continued on 14 March in Helsinki. The debate focused on the importance of the Uusimaa region as a centre of economic growth in the Baltic Sea area. Another theme to receive attention was the future status of the North in the enlarged European Union: the next enlargement will shift the focal point of the Union considerably north-eastward. The Head of Representation opened the event, which gathered some 70 participants representing towns and municipalities, employment and economic development centres, chambers of commerce, media, government offices, the European institutions, and alike. The next regional Europe 2010 event will be held on 15 April in Joensuu, Northern Carelia. The debate will focus on border co-operation of the enlarged EU.
- In addition, enlargement has continued to be a key issue in other Representation information activities such as the Europa-magazine, web-site, weekly newsletter and contacts with the media and other stakeholders.

France

Media

- L'intérêt pour l'actualité de l'élargissement stricto sensu, tributaire durant tout le mois de mars des événements en Irak, est plutôt maigre.
- Le référendum sur l'adhésion de Malte (8 mars) a bénéficié d'une assez large couverture médiatique (probablement parce qu'il ouvrait la phase de ratification du traité d'adhésion, mais aussi suite à l'incertitude sur ses résultats). La couverture du référendum sur l'UE en Slovaquie, dont les résultats ont souvent été

qualifiés de plébiscite, a manifestement été desservie par la focalisation des médias sur le conflit irakien (23 mars).

- Les difficiles négociations interinstitutionnelles sur le cadre financier de l'élargissement n'ont véritablement retenu l'attention que de la presse écrite.

Initiatives particulières

- Tant dans la presse écrite qu'audiovisuelle, on constate une augmentation des dossiers de fond sur l'élargissement, le plus souvent indépendamment de l'actualité immédiate.
- France 3 a lancé une nouvelle émission hebdomadaire, « Génération Europe », consacrée à la découverte des pays candidats.
- *Arte* consacre à l'élargissement une série de trois émissions du *Dessous des cartes*, pour une présentation très pédagogique des pays entrants et des enjeux de leur adhésion. Sur la même chaîne, le Forum des Européens a réalisé, sous le titre, « La Turquie, oui ou non ? », un entretien exclusif avec le leader de l'AKP R.T. Erdogan (1^{er} mars).
- RFI poursuit ses semaines « Elargissement », en mettant à l'honneur la Slovaquie (à partir du 31 mars).
- La Tribune a publié une enquête en cinq volets sur les défis de l'UE-25 (à partir du 10 mars ; enjeux politiques, institutionnels et économiques, immigration, conséquences dans le domaine des transports...).
- Le Monde a entamé dans ses pages « Horizon » une série de portraits des pays entrants (à partir du 15 mars) et son supplément Economie du 4 mars leur a été consacré (« Pourquoi l'Europe de l'Est vote George W. Bush »).

Mise en œuvre de la campagne d'information

- France 3 : à partir du 1^{er} mars, un nouveau rendez-vous d'information, « Génération Europe », présenté par Véronique Auger, familiarise le grand public avec les pays candidats et explique les enjeux de l'élargissement à travers des exemples concrets. Chaque émission inclut un éclairage technico-politique de François Poulet-Mathis (processus de ratification, critères de Copenhague...), ainsi qu'un reportage illustrant les liens entre la France et un des futurs membres. L'heure de diffusion est le samedi aux environs de 20h00, après le journal télévisé de début de soirée.
- Institut des relations internationales et stratégiques : consacré aux « Nouveaux visages de l'Europe élargie », la 5^{ème} édition des Journées européennes de Lille Nord-Pas-de-Calais s'est tenue le 27 mars (Lille, Grand-Palais), en présence de quelque 400 personnes (principalement des lycéens et étudiants de la région). Trois tables rondes ont été organisées : « les retrouvailles européennes : les éléments d'une culture et d'une identité partagée » ; « une Europe plus forte ? Les défis économiques et sociaux de l'élargissement » ; « penser ensemble la future Europe élargie : visions politiques et stratégiques ». Bronislaw Geremek, invité à

la 1^{ère} table ronde, n'a pas pu faire le déplacement pour raisons médicales, mais a cependant animé un « chat » sur internet depuis Varsovie dans la journée.

- Ecole normale supérieure : inauguré par Pierre Mirel (DG ELARG), le colloque « Frontières d'Europe » a réuni, du 27 au 29 mars, un public d'une centaine de personnes (principalement universitaires et étudiants) dans les locaux de l'ENS à Paris. Les interventions ont interrogé l'évolution des définitions historiques et géopolitiques de l'Europe, du XIX^{ème} siècle à nos jours, et permis de présenter la vision européenne de chacun des pays en passe d'adhérer. Le colloque a été annoncé par un entretien de Michel Korinman (co-responsable scientifique de la manifestation) aux Enjeux internationaux de France Culture (26 mars).
- Fédération française des Maisons de l'Europe : la réalisation du programme d'action de la FFME sur l'élargissement se poursuit. Une première session de formation des responsables et permanents des Maisons de l'Europe a eu lieu à Paris, dans les locaux du Sénat, le 14 mars, avec la participation des représentants en France de 6 pays entrants. Face à la demande des participants, les organisateurs ont abordé, en lien avec les enjeux de l'élargissement, ceux de la Convention sur l'avenir de l'Union. La constitution d'un réseau d'étudiants-conférenciers originaires des futurs membres est achevée dans la moitié des structures participant à l'opération, et en cours dans les autres. La FFME a été contactée par la société Mostra, sous-contractant de la DG ELARG, qui envisage de réaliser un reportage télévisé sur ce volet de l'action.
- Maison de l'Europe de Normandie : le programme de travail de la MEN entre dans sa phase finale, avec le lancement d'un jeu-concours sur l'élargissement par la radio locale Résonance et auprès des associations ayant participé aux volets antérieurs de l'opération (association des Aînés ruraux, association d'élus locaux). En marge de l'opération soutenue par la Représentation, une conférence publique a été consacrée à l'élargissement et à l'avenir de l'Union (28 mars, Le Havre, avec W. de Lobkowicz et de G. Legris).
- Région Pays de Loire : la première phase de l'opération de sensibilisation des publics scolaires a été menée à bien, avec le lancement de l'exposition XXL (tournée dans les lycées de la région à partir de début mars), et la réalisation d'un concours dont les gagnants ont été désignés le 28 mars. Le 1^{er} lauréat (Lycée agricole de Château-Gontier) se voit attribuer un séjour d'une semaine sur le lac Balaton, et les quatre autres classes lauréates bénéficieront d'un voyage d'une journée à la maison de Jean Monnet (hors subvention communautaire). Un CD-Rom sur l'élargissement est cours de finalisation. L'opération soutenue par la Représentation, qui culminera avec une rencontre européenne des jeunes (lycées de la région + pays candidats) le 22 mai, trouvera son prolongement à la rentrée 2003 dans un plan de communication destiné au grand public.
- Carrefour rural européen – Rhône Alpes (coordination) : l'action de formation « Europe et territoires ruraux : les enjeux de l'élargissement » se met en place (1^{ère} réunion de coordination des CRE le 4 mars à Paris). Une première formation auprès d'élus locaux, de responsables associatifs et économiques a eu lieu à Boën (Loire) le 18 mars (CRE - Rhône Alpes)

- Union paneuropéenne de France : une deuxième réunion consacrée à « L'élargissement, une chance pour les entreprises françaises » s'est tenue à Roanne le 28 mars, en présence d'un public de plus d'une cinquantaine de personnes (élus locaux, responsables économiques, représentants des pays candidats). La ministre déléguée aux affaires européennes Noëlle Lenoir et son homologue espagnol Ramon de Miguel, ainsi que le commissaire Barnier, sont intervenus au cours de la manifestation. La Représentation a participé à une table ronde faisant le bilan de la progression des pays candidats vers l'adhésion.
- CGT - Force ouvrière : le troisième séminaire de formation à destination des cadres syndicaux s'est tenu du 10 au 14 mars. La participation de la Représentation à une session du séminaire (pour une présentation historique de l'élargissement et une session de questions-réponses sur la construction européenne) a permis de constater la prépondérance des interrogations sur les conséquences sociales de l'élargissement.

Mise en œuvre de la stratégie de communication du gouvernement

- Le 7 mars en Avignon, Jean-Pierre Raffarin a animé, avec son homologue hongrois Peter Medgyessy, le 2^{ème} « Forum Europe », consacré aux questions sociales. A cette occasion, le premier ministre a prôné, en référence à la crise irakienne, « une attitude de dialogue et d'ouverture » avec les pays d'Europe centrale et orientale (7 mars).
- Le contractant du SIG pour la campagne sur l'élargissement au premier semestre 2003 a finalisé un dossier d'information très complet (présentation générale de l'UE, argumentaire, présentation des pays en passe d'adhérer) à la rédaction duquel la Représentation a été activement associée. Le dossier sera expédié en avril à un public de relais d'opinion (journalistes, décideurs) et auprès des réseaux d'information sur l'Europe.

Initiatives autonomes

- L'exposition mobile « de Tallinn à Nicosie », mise en place par les éditions Sépia, en partenariat avec Sources d'Europe et la CASDEN, a été diffusée dans les relais et réseaux de la Commission. Sources d'Europe a organisé une exposition sur Istanbul.
- La Fondation de France a lancé un appel à projets (« l'Europe, en plus large ») visant à soutenir les initiatives de coopération entre organisations non gouvernementales françaises et des pays entrants.

Germany

Media

- The dawn and finally the start of war in Iraq has overshadowed news on the EU enlargement process in the German media. Coverage focused very much on the split between England, Spain and a number of candidate countries on one side and

Germany, France and the Benelux States on the other side. At the same time Turkey's role in the conflict was disputed, with most papers concluding that an invasion of Northern Iraq would lessen Turkey's chances of accession to the EU in the near future.

- Another prominent topic was the positive outcome of the two accession referenda in Slovenia and Hungary. The wide-scale support was widely interpreted as a positive sign, especially regarding the upcoming referendum in Poland. The paper's expectations whether the referendum in Poland will fail or not diverge especially between the "Handelsblatt" (positive) and the "SZ" (negative).
- In an editorial on global politics and the positioning of the Eastern and Central European candidate countries the "FAZ" writes that these countries do not want Europe to be based on opposition to the US. The fears of a hyperpower from the other side of the Atlantic are regarded less significant than the fears of an EU with the goal of deliberately contradicting the US.
- Along with basically all the print media the "Tagesschau" has offered the analysis that Turkish participation in the Iraq war would have a negative impact on her efforts to gain accession to the EU. However, in an interview with the "Handelsblatt" Prime Minister Gül rejects this accusation and says that the EU has no reason to criticise Turkey because, unlike the EU, they want to take in 100.000 refugees from Iraq. In an editorial the "FAZ" concludes that the Turkish government at least seems to be capable of passing the reforms demanded for EU membership.
- Regarding the latest referenda the "FAZ" is convinced that the wide-scale support in Slovenia can be interpreted in line with smaller countries' typical desire to become a member in larger organisations in uncertain times. The Hungarians' move into the EU is interpreted as a first step towards overcoming the political division of the country. The "NRZ" calls the admission of the new members an enrichment for the EU whose current members are at odds with each other at the moment. The ten CSU-MEPs' vote against the accession of the Czech Republic in the European Parliament did not attract any coverage beyond the "SZ".
- The "Welt" has warned in an editorial that the development of Eastern and Central Europe will be determined decisively by the economic future of Germany.

Information events and own initiatives

- On March 24, a discussion within the "Europe – my Vision" series took place at the Heinz-Schwarzkopf-Stiftung in Berlin. The venue gathered about 120 people. The Prime Minister of the Federal State Brandenburg, Matthias Platzeck acted as a dialogue partner, in the discussion on expectations, wishes and fears in an enlarged European Union.
- In the Bonn Representation a seminar for a German-Polish group of young people (40 participants) took place, on the general subject of the European Union, held by a member of the Team Europe and former MEP Marlene Lenz. Two groups of secondary school students, one from a school in Bochum, the other from Bonn, held lectures on the subject of enlargement respectively the Convention and the

Future of Europe – the latter in connection with European Spring Day- in the rooms of the Representation.

- Bonn Representation organised a panel discussion in co-operation with the “Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik” (German Society for Foreign Affairs) on 10 April with the title “The European Convention – way into a federation or a confederation of states?” In the panel: Ulrike Guérot, a historian from the German Society for Foreign Affairs, Berlin, Claas Knoop from the Permanent Representation of Germany to the EU, and Michael Reuss, European Commission, Secretariat General, moderated by the regional daily General-Anzeiger chief editor Joachim Westhoff. A very lively debate with about 170 participants. Coverage by General-Anzeiger on 11 April.

Grant Programme

- EFEU is a project of RKW “Rationalisierungs- und Innovationszentrum der Deutschen Wirtschaft” (rationalisation and innovation centre of the German economy), which aims at promoting a sustainable successful commitment of small scale German companies in the framework of the forthcoming EU- Enlargement. The project is supported by the European Commission, Representation in Germany, within the framework of the “Information and Communication strategy for enlargement” in Germany. The project ended on March 28th.

Internet

www.mehr-europa.de Page Impressions: 31 742; Visits: 12 004; Average number of guests per day: 387

Information centres and relays

- On March 27th a panel discussion was organised by the “Europäische Akademie Berlin”. The discussion was opened by Juliane Freifrau von Friesen, former minister of the Federal State of Berlin. Participants on the panel discussion were Prof. Dr. Andras Inotai, General director of the Institut for World Economics, Budapest, Prof. Dr. Kazimiera Prunskiene, former Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania, member of the Lithuanian Parliament, Lithuanian-European Insitut Vilnius and Dr. Wolfram O. Martinsen, coordinator of the governing mayor for central and eastern Europe. Dr. Stephan Schütze, chamber of commerce in southern Sweden, Berlin Economic Talks Club, chaired the panel. The discussion took place under the heading of “Convergence and Competitiveness of the central European new EU – member states. Where do the new coming states really stand?”.
- The “Europäische Akademie Berlin” and the “Deutsche Welle” organised on April 14th a discussion evening in which Jiri Grusa, the Czech Ambassador to Austria and author and also Prof. Dr. Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, former polish foreign minister participated. The occasion of the evening was the signing of the accession treaties by the accession countries at the Athens summit on April 16th. Discussed were the political, cultural and economical changes that will occur with enlargement.

- In the Center for European Integration a conference took place on “Cooperation and cooperation possibilities with Bulgaria in the field of energy”, with the head of the Bulgarian embassy office in Bonn, Mr. Hristo Tuparov. 30 participants.

Other information activities or events

- Commissioner Schreyer was in Bonn on 21 March to take part in the European Spring Day of Konrad-Adenauer-Gymnasium (a secondary school). She discussed the Convention but also all other European subjects including European foreign policy and the Iraq conflict and enlargement with about 150 students from the upper grades and then visited different classrooms with European projects done during a whole week and presented on Spring Day by the younger grades of that school. This event was covered by the two regional/local papers General-Anzeiger Bonn and Bonner Rundschau.
- The city of Cologne (Köln) organised a panel discussion on the subject of “Enlargement and the European Union – are citizens sufficiently informed?” on 26 March. In replacement of Commissioner Verheugen, Mr Matthias Ruete, Director of DG Enlargement Directorate D, sat on the panel. The discussion (about 200 participants) was the final event of a campaign called “Interactive meeting and information campaign”, Cologne’s contribution to the European Commission information strategy. Young people from 6 candidate countries called “cultural assistants” had participated in different cultural projects to provide information about EU enlargement to young people of the Rhenanian region.
- The 53rd Europe-discussion group, which took place on Monday the 31st of March 2003 was organised by the Info-Point Europe Leipzig and the Leipzig Government Praesidium. During this event the head of the unit for European politics of the Saxonian prime minister’s office (Staatskanzlei), Dr. Mackeldey discussed the topic whether Saxony was sufficiently prepared for enlargement. More than 40 people from businesses, institutions and unions, but also students and other interested people had the chance to get familiar with the newest guidelines and measures of the state government in the enlargement context. Main discussion point was the concern of Saxony in reference to chances and risks in the economy, trade, transport and internal security. Also discussed was the situation of the structurally weaker areas and the possibly three different development areas after 2006 in the Federal State. The Prime Minister’s office hopes for an improvement of public relations through its newly created web page: www.erweiterung.sachsen.de, which incorporates a calendar of events regarding EU-Enlargement.

Information activities on the Convention

- The Heinz-Schwarzkopf-Stiftung organised on March 27./28 the III. Schwarzkopf-Kolloquium: “The EU-Convention: approach, options, first results”. About 120 people attended. In the discussion on “Fundamentum Europae – A European Union in proportion to nation states”, Prof. Dr. Hagen Schulze, director of the German Historical Institute, London, talked about European unification plans developed throughout European history. Prof. Dr. Klaus Hänsch, member of the European Parliament and member of the Praesidium of the EU- Convention, Dr. Christoph E. Palmer, minister of European affairs of Baden-Württemberg and

Elmar Brok member of the European Parliament and deputy of the European Parliament in the EU-Convention, discussed the tangible results of the work in the convention: Institutional reforms, competence regulations (Kompetenzordnung) and the draft constitution.

- The Bonn office of MEP Ruth Hieronymi organised a conference on the subject of the Convention. The panel comprising Mrs Hieronymi, MEP Elmar Brok and Ludger Kühnhardt from “Zentrum für Europäische Integration” (Center for European Integration, part of Bonn university) discussed with about 150 participants.

Greece

The issues that generated great interest are:

- During March 2003, there were numerous comments and views about the issue of Enlargement and the Future of Europe, projected in the majority of articles dealing with EU’s cohesion due to its reaction and position on Iraqi crisis.
- While the Greek public opinion in its vast majority is against Iraqi war, the fact that there were different positions within the EU on the issue, resulted to a change of hearts by the Greek public opinion concerning the support of the accession of some candidates countries. These tendencies are supported by relevant articles dealing with EU’s cohesion, which concerns various issues, (e.g the relation of USA with the candidates countries, the US concern for the European integration, the competition between Euro and Dollar, the “war” of the markets etc.). It is worth mentioning, as an example, the referendum on EU accession in Slovenia that was presented only one day after it took place while at the same time press articles focused on EU’s difficulty to form a common stand on Iraqi crisis.

Press Releases

- Enlargement publications: Referendum on EU accession in Malta; Referendum on EU accession in Slovenia; Budget of Enlargement; Financial aid to Turkey in order to support its accession process; Relations between EU and Balkans; Resolution of European Parliament on the integration of Cyprus.
- Enlargement and the war in Iraq: Turkey’s accession process in relation with its position on the war in Iraq; Enlargement, EU’s cohesion and the ‘Letter 8’ movement declaring support to US policy on Iraqi war.
- Enlargement and the Cyprus issue: Turkey’s and Cyprus’s accessions in relation to developments on the Cyprus issue,
- Enlargement effect in various life sectors of EU citizens; Enlargement and Unemployment

Articles to the local press:

- Article on structural funds and immigration
- Article on the repercussions of non enlargement
- Article on agriculture and environment
- Contacts with journalists in order to organise their trips to the candidate countries under enlargement campaign.
- Subsidies of audio-visual programmes: Second call for tender has been prepared to be launched beginning of April 2003.

Events

- The results of the ‘Standard Eurobarometer Autumn 2002 (EB58)’, and of the ‘Candidate Countries Eurobarometer Spring 2002 (CCEB 2003)’ were presented, and have attracted great attention. Detailed dissemination material was handed out during the press conference; was sent by electronic mail upon request; and was posted on the Representation’s website.
- A focused public research concerning the opportunities deriving from enlargement, as well as problems arising by it, in the rural sector is under implementation.

Internet

- Website is daily updated with enlargement issues and related latest news.
- Internet campaign concerning Enlargement and the Future of Europe is online. Also a campaign study evaluation (February-March 2003) carried out by PRINCE consultant.

Hungary

Public Opinion

- As the latest date for publishing the results of public opinions on accession was 3 April, all the major public opinion companies polled the support of accession in the second half of March. The results were overall positive, both concerning the turn-on at the referendum and the support of Hungary’s accession.
- According to the survey conducted by Gallup Research Institute 64% would vote yes at the referendum on Hungary’s accession, 16% would vote against, 11% are undecided and 8% are decided not to go voting. 58% of the respondents were decided to participate at the referendum. Amongst them, 78% are for Hungary’s EU accession.
- According to Szonda-Ipsos’s survey, 64% of the population are decided to participate at the referendum. Amongst them, 80% would vote yes for the

accession at the referendum, 20%. Answering to the question “How would you vote on a referendum about Hungary’s accession to the EU?” 59% of the respondents said yes, 21% said no, and 15% were undecided.

- According to Tarki’s results 66% of the respondents were decided to go voting. Amongst them, 73% intended to vote with yes, 15% with no and 12% were undecided. Amongst the whole sample, 65% supported accession, 10-12% were against it and 23-25% were undecided.

Media

- EU accession from Farmers’ point of view; THE ROBERT SCHUMAN AWARD TO HUNGARIAN JOURNALISTS 2002; Günter Verheugen, EU Commissioner for Enlargement visits Hungary on 31 March-1 April 2003; EU Roadshow’s programme; European Union Library Programme
- Press conference of Commissioner Verheugen; Signing Ceremony of EIB Loan and SME Finance Facility
- Com. Verheugen’s interview in ‘Figyelo’ (business weekly); Com. Verheugen’s interview in Magyar Hirlap; Com. Verheugen’s interview in Duna TV (public TV); Com. Verheugen’s interview in Radio C (Roma Radio); Mr. Köppen’s interview in ‘Industry and Environment Magazine.

Information events for the elderly

- A few EU-forum was held in Pest county in the organization of the National Association of Pensioners called “Life to the years”. These events took place in the following places: 3 March – Gödöllő; 11 March – Pilis; 25 March – Érd. These forums were well organised and also well attended.
- On 7 March a conference took place on social policy in the Pest County Assembly. The Delegation was invited to speak about elderly-related topics.
- On 10 March a video conference was held on the EU for the employees of social/elderly homes. It took place in a social home of the XVII. district of Budapest, and through video connection other 11 social homes could follow the conference. The Delegation was invited by the Ministry of Social Affairs to participate at this event and to deliver a lecture as well as to answer the relevant questions.
- On 12 March the Delegation was requested to attend the conference of the National Board of Pensioners of the Teachers’ Trade Union and to inform them about Hungary’s accession to the EU.
- The Head of Info Section was invited to Hajdúszoboszló as well, on 27 March to inform the local pensioners and inhabitants about the EU-accession. Although it was well heralded, just a few pensioners appeared (around 20). Despite of the low attendance, the forum was quite interesting and liberal, they were much more courageous to talk and ask questions.

- The local European Information Point organised an informal forum for pensioners in Szentmártonkáta on 28 March. According to the small size of this village, it was a well attended forum and achieved a great interest on the EU-accession.

Women in Hungary – Women in Europe

- The informal round-table discussion panel involves women with different background – politician, business sector, historian and lawyer. Several questions are raised about the status of women in Hungary and in the EU, social rights, birth giving, labour rights, etc. The Delegation organises the event and moderates it in co-operation with the MoFA, which is also present. In the months of March there was a great need of more information and more tailored information as well, as the public opinions coming out at the beginning of March, showed that 39 % of women couldn't say anything concrete about the EU, while the percentage among men was 29 %.
- In March there have been three events of that kind organised. The first one took place on the 11th, in Kesztehely. (Lake Balaton) There, mainly representatives of NGOs were present, with about 40 participants. Both local written and electronic media reported on the event. The discussion was characterised by the high level of questions and comments coming from the women present with different kinds of views and background. The second one was organised on the 25th in Jászberény (North great Plain region). The heated discussion (mainly because of the mayor present) was reported several times in the local newspaper. The meeting was successful with a lot of questions, nevertheless only about 30 participants were there. The third event was held in Szekszárd (South Transdanubia). There were also about 30 participants, and the difference of views concerning the EU in general, the social right, equal rights were clearly separate following the different generations being present at the discussion.

EU-accession seen by farmers – Roundtable discussion for farmers

- The series organised for farmers in the form of a roundtable discussion received very good echoes recently. The Ministry of Agriculture and Regional development has also started a series where they tried to follow our concept, mainly being informal, avoiding the form of a conference and giving space and time for questions, comments coming from the farmers themselves.
- On the 13th of March, together with the European Information Point of Szolnok, we organised a discussion in the evening. This time not only the agricultural advisor of the Delegation, but also the agricultural expert from Hungary team, DG ELARG was present at the meeting. The two-hours long discussion gave space to many questions coming from the 50 participants.
- On the 27th of March, the second event of this kind was organised in Tamási, South Transdanubia. As this was the first day with good weather, an unexpected low turnout was reached. (Before March those events had an attendance of 100 persons average)

Study trip to Brussels for information providers

- Study trip to Brussels for the staff of information networks working in Hungary has the aim to make the participants understand the function of the different institutions and information offices. During the visit that took place between the 5th and 9th of March, we have made contacts and listened lectures from DG ELARG, DG AGRI, DG REGIO. The group had also the possibility to visit the European Parliament, the Committee of Regions and their information services. The programme gave a main focus on regional policy, therefore there has been a visit organised to the representation office of Hungarian regions in Brussels and they also had the chance to meet representatives of regions from the MSs. The participants' main focus was also on the information work, therefore both the visit in IPE in Brussels and in the Enlargement Information Centre was a great success.

Regional visit of the Head of Delegation

- The so-called regional visits aim at mixed formal and informal contacts with regional, local and county-level politicians and officers and is one of the most important programmes for “networking”. The 3-day long visit to Debrecen and region (North Great Plain) gave the possibility to a wide press coverage. Two public address was held by the HoD (University of debrecen and for 80 mayors of Hajdú-Bihar County). An exclusive interview was taken by the regional daily, hajdú-Bihari Napló. During the visit we visited several Phare projects – Refugee Centre in Debrecen, elementary school in Hajdúhadháza, Industrial park in Debrecen and the European Study Centre of the University. The programme included informal discussion as well. This programme is a great mean to get messages go though on the spot and learning more about the interests and concerns of the regional people. It was a successful visit.

Discussion forums at Universities

- From March we launched a new programme focusing on young people. We had the experience that the group of the 16-18 had a greater interest and choice of information concerning EU-information, than those who go to universities and whose opinion has a leading role. It is because of that we started the series, which first was organised on the 12th March in the Budapest University of Economics. The debate is organised in co-operation with a youth organisation and in the form of debate with a moderator. The first subject had the following topic: “Will Hungary lose its sovereignty in the EU?”. Two politicians discussed the question from the governing and the opposition side. There were about 150 active participants. The series continues in April.

Library programme

- Opening of European Union Information Corners in 19 county libraries and in the Central City Library of Budapest
- On 20 March, the Delegation launched its Library Programme to be carried out in 2003 in the framework of the Enlargement Communication Programme.
- The MoFA launched its library programme in 2001. In the first two years, 65 city and village libraries won financial support from the ministry at a tender for acquiring EU information materials. In co-operation with the Delegation, the

MoFA has started an EU training programme for those librarians representing the 65 selected libraries.

- The primary goal of the Information Corners is to answer enquires about European matters with special attention to Hungary's accession to the EU, by providing assisted and guided access to appropriate and accurate sources. The second goal is to increase access to information sources of the EU institutions. A wide range of books, brochures and legal resources have to be held by the Information Corners in order to be able to answer citizen's questions on the different EU matters, as well as a range of free leaflets published by the Headquarters, which are intended as introductory guides to the EU's policies and programmes.
- On 20 March 2003, an event was organised in the Delegation's big meeting room. The event was dedicated to the official launch of the Library Programme. Beyond the representatives of the county libraries and the Delegation, the MoFA and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage took part also at the event. The MoFA was represented by Ms. Judit Gyárfás, Head of EU Communication Department, who spoke about their experiences in working with libraries and about EU communication actions of the Ministry as well as their willingness to co-operate with the Delegation's new programme. The other ministry was represented by Ms. Kocziánné dr. Szentpéteri Erzsébet. She mentioned the new library strategy of the Ministry in which EU integration is a key area. One of the main action lines of call for proposals that the Ministry has just opened for libraries in EU accession: they wish to support those library services promoting information on the EU and the accession process.
- After the event the Delegation distributed information packages to the libraries, which consist of the official publications of the EU; HU publications on the EU; free of charge brochures both in HU and Community languages; subscriptions to two HU language databases on the EU; subscription to a HU periodical that deals with European issues.
- The second part of the library programme is a training series in all the 19 counties. Main objectives of the training: to provide librarians with comprehensive and practical information on EU and accession related issues; to train librarians to be able to use the main official documents and information sources in their daily reference work. Main subjects covered by the training:
 - Introduction to European integration issues – milestones of EU history, the institutions and their roles
 - Hungary's accession to the EU – historical background and state-of-the-art report of the accession process
 - European integration and the libraries – from a strategic point of view
 - Communication of accession – the role of Hungarian libraries
 - Official publications of the EU's institutions – an introduction

- Electronic information sources of/on the EU – community databases and websites (with practice)
- Exercises (distance learning)
- The third part of the programme will be two study tours for librarians to Brussels to be organised in May/June and September of 2003. The main aim of the study tours is to enable the librarians to get the EU information sources used by “Community librarians” known and to see how the main libraries of the Institutions operate.

Publications

- In March, preparing for the referendum, the Delegation reprinted its main Hungarian language publications. Data on the reprints follow: FAQ general 37.500 copies; FAQ agriculture 37.500 copies; FAQ Convention, 7.500 copies
- The Delegation published its FAQ leaflet on Hungary’s accession to the EU in a Roma language, Lovari, in co-operation with the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities. The leaflet is provided to Roma community houses, schools as well as the other EU information providers, libraries.
- Reprint of three Commission brochures in Hungarian started in March: How the Commission works? 10.000 copies; Europe – Still enlarging 20.000 copies; What? Me a racist? 5.000 copies

Information Centre and Relays

- All regional activities are built on the co-operation with the different information networks (European Information Points or others)
- Visitors of EUIC in March: 1600
- There was a significant raise in numbers of visitors and phone calls before the referendum. Also high priority on questions related to daily life and possible changes.
- In the framework of the monthly series “Let’s talk about Europe” the topic of the March event was the “Europe on the way of reforms. Treaty of Nice – consequences for citizens”. 20 participants.
- The Centre organised the second meeting for the network of information providers from Budapest and surroundings. Around 20 participants from various general and specialised information offices. A half day programme was organised with speeches and discussions related to pre-referendum information activities.
- The Centre, together with the Pest County Information Point, organised a half day information and training session for the staff of the recently created 11 EU-corners in libraries and cultural houses in Pest county. The Centre also supplies the corners regularly with material.

- The Centre received 2 groups from secondary schools, 6 student groups
- Lectures at events: Pensioners forum in Vác (RK); Pensioners Forum in Szentendre (RK); Pensioners Forum in Tápióság (RK); Youth Event in Angyalföld (RK); Public Forum in Akasztó (RK); Public Forum in Kecel (AB); Technical University (AB);
- IC staff participated in: Jour Fixe (NP, RK); Cultural Jour Fixe (RK, RP); Europe Club lecture (LCz)
- Publications: preparation of the Centre's events calendar for April, revision of fact sheets, up-dating of "EU tender possibilities".
- 2 members of staff (NP and AB) participated in the annual 2-day seminar for EUICs in Brussels.
- One member of EUIC staff participated in a 3-day study trip to Brussels, organised by the Delegation for information officers from all over Hungary.

Other information activities or events

- Road show organised by the Hungarian National Assembly: In order to show the national and political consensus in Hungary about the country's accession, a road show has started in Hungary with the participation of all 4 parliamentary parties. One of the patrons' of the event is the Delegation and supported it with information materials. The first kick-off meeting took place on the 11th of November and was followed by several ones in November and December. In 2003 50 new venues are foreseen for this event.
- Jour Fixe: The Jour Fixe of February was held on e-Europe. The moderator Mr. János Kis, Editor in chief of euroAstra web-magazine, who is also an expert on informatics. The participants of the debate was: Mr. Csaba Varga, President of the Institute for Strategic Research, Mr. Vilmos Bognár, IST expert of the Ministry of Education and Mr. Róbert Pintér, sociologist, the Information Society Research Institute. This event was not so well attended like the previous Jour Fixes (approx. 40-45 persons), but we could hear a very good and interested debate on the given subject.
- Public speeches given by information staff members

3 March	Public forum on the EU, Pellérd
4 March	EU forum for Pensioners, Gödöllő
6 March	VI. Conference for Women, National Association of Hungarian Trade Unions, Budapest
7 March	Farmers Forum, Hercegszántó
8 March	Launch of county campaign Szeged

10 March	Conference of social workers Budapest
11 March	Pensioners Forum Pilis
11 March	Book presentation University of Economics
11 March	Women in Europe-women in Hungary, Keszthely
11 March	Public Debate Forum University of Economics, Budapest
12 March	Teachers Trade Union, Pensioners section
13 March	Farmers' forum, Szolnok
14 March	Speech for local govms and their cultural institutions, Budapest
20 March	Library Directors Budapest
21 March	Farmers Forum Nagyréde
20-21 March	Regional visit in Debrecen
21 March	Budapest International Workshop
24 March	Book presentation Budapest ETK
24 March	Mayor and business community, Szentendre
25 March	Women in Hungary-women in Europe, Jászberény
25 March	Pensioners Forum Érd
27 March	Farmers' forum, Tamási
27 March	Pensioners Forum Hajdúszoboszló
28 March	Pensioners Forum, Szentmártonkáta

Grant Scheme Launched

- The Delegation launched a grant scheme in order to finance activities under the following activities: 1) Audiovisual sponsorships; 2) Information activities for the youth; 3) Convention on the future of the Europe and Referendum on accession; 4) EU support for journalists; 5) Support for cultural programmes, events. The evaluation committee have decided to support 14 projects for the total value of €205.000

Latvia

Media

Main topics concerning European affairs:

- Public information about the EU. The Management group for the development and implementation of government information strategy has developed and presented the Strategy and work programme for the government communication programme in the pre-referendum period. Planned activities received large publicity however most of the positions were critical.
- The Internet portal *Apollo* has opened a separate news section “Ceļš uz Eiropu” (Way to Europe)
- Media reported about the referendums in Malta and Slovenia, especially about Malta as this was the first referendum.
- Wide attention was devoted to the changes in the law on purchase of land - the changes foresee stronger restrictions to eligibility of persons for purchase of land

Press releases

51 press releases prepared and sent to mass media

- March 3, Regional Information day in Bauska; March 3, Seminar for furniture producers at EUIC; March 4, Eurobarometer results; March 5, Regional Information day in Bauska; March 6, Fair Skola 2003/Book 2003; March 10, Annual Political Strategy; March 10, Final contest for Riga City Ziemeļu Municipalities schools; March 10, The 2003 Natali Prize for Journalism; March 11, Cyprus questions will not stop enlargement; March 12, 14 Seminar for Tukums Region Municipalities; March 12, EU Posters promotion in the Post offices; March 13, School contest results; March 14, Seminar for EUIP's; March 14, Seminar “Public Information about Latvia's Accession in EU”; March 17, 18 Conference on public information; March 19, 20 Internet conference on future of European Union; March 19, Visit of vice president of European Parliament to Latvia; March 20, Regional Information day in Sigulda; March 21, Summary of the Internet conference; March 25, Regional Information day in Valmiera; March 26, W.Kok report on EU enlargement; March 28, European Dialogues “Human cloning”;

Information Events

- Participation in the fair Book 2003/School 2003 took place March 6-9. More than 1000 persons visited the stand of EUIC. EUIC stand was very centrally located, that also helped to attract the visitors of the exhibition. Information materials were distributed to the visitors of the stand. Information about EU member states and EU institutions were the most frequently asked information.
- Regular Europe Day has taken place in Talsi on 26.03.2003. It has been organised in co-operation with European Integration Bureau and Non Governmental

Organisations. EUIC have organized exhibition “ European Union – how it works?” which stayed all the February in the municipality of Talsi. EUIC also participated in the Euro buss tour through the Talsi region..

- During the April three Regular Europe Day’s have taken place in Livani, Saldus and Ludza. They have been organised in co-operation with European Integration Bureau and Non Governmental Organisations. EUIC have organized exhibition “ European Union – how it works?” which stayed all the April in the municipality of Saldus. EUIC also participated in the Euro buss tour through the Livani, Saldus and Ludza regions.
- Europe days are organized since the September 2002 and are held every month. Euro buss tour as well as exhibition are the activities which have been recognized as good and should be continued in the future. As it was decided earlier Europe Days project would end with the Europe Week 2003, so these were the last Europe Days.
- Information Day in Tērvete library has taken place on 01.03.2003 and was organized in cooperation with the local library. Information about conditions negotiated in the accession negotiations and other relevant topics about EU enlargement were presented. Agriculture and the fear that the EU is the same as USSR were among the questions posed by the audience. Discussion about the role of the municipality in the case if Latvia will become the member of the EU also was active and many questions were asked. Head of Municipality, farmers and representatives of local NGO’s were in the audience.
- Seminar for Heads of municipalities of Tukums region was organized on 14.03.2003. Seminar was organized in cooperation with Tukums region municipality. Tukums region municipality is encouraging all municipalities to take an advantage of EU funding and to start to prepare for that. Representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture and Finances were among the lecturers of the seminar. Special lecture on how to write the projects for EU funding was also prepared - although there are already many possibilities for municipalities to get the funding from the EU, municipalities are not very active. The main task of the seminar was to encourage them to start to work in this area as well as introduce basic information about EU.
- Information events in Mazole Secondary School have taken place on 14.03.2003. Event was organized in cooperation with the library of Mazole. Basic information about history of the EU, policies and enlargement of EU. After the presentation questions about what will be the consequences if in the referendum Latvian society would vote NO. What will be the possibilities for the youth? What is the public opinion in other countries and how EU may help to fight corruption in Latvia?
- Spring Day in Kraslavas region was supported by the EUIC and it has taken place in 20.03.2003. During the day three meetings in Asunes, Dagdas and Kraslavas schools have taken place. Basic information about history of the EU, policies and enlargement of EU as well as information about EU member sates and candidate countries was presented to the pupils, teachers and representatives of the local

society. Attitude towards EU at the beginning of the event was very sceptical, but at the end many have admitted that the information have changed some of the arguments. Despite that pupils of the primary school are not main target audience such an events are very useful because in the remote places like Kraslavas region events in the schools are important for the whole village. In the most cases these are the first times ever someone comes from the RIGA and discusses important issues.

- Seminar for Pensioners for Līvāni district was organized in Līvāni on 26.03.2003. Seminar included lecture about social issues. Mr. A.Gobins from the European Movement Latvia was the lecturer at the seminar. Seminar was well attended not only by the representatives of local organization but also pensioners from Riga, Ogre and Salaspils participated in the event. Although there were many questions about future prospects of the pensioners in the EU and rather pessimistic views about the future were also expressed, pensioners agreed that there may be more positive than negative things from the Latvia's integration in the EU.
- Information Day in Inčukalns library has taken place on 27.02.2003 and was organized in cooperation with the local library. Information about conditions negotiated in the accession negotiations and other relevant topics about EU enlargement were presented. Agriculture and the fear that the EU is the same as USSR were among the questions posed by the audience. Discussion about the role of the municipality in the case if Latvia will become the member of the EU also was active and many questions were asked.
- EU Information Day in Sigulda has taken place on 21.03.2003. Information Day included seminar in the Municipality of the Siguldas district and events in the schools of Sigulda. Information Day was organized in cooperation with Municipality of Sigulda district and NGO "Ideja". To attract the participants to the seminar Lottery was organized at the end of the seminar. Local entrepreneurs were invited to donate prizes for the lottery. More then 30 entrepreneurs responded to this invitation. Seminar was very well attended. Lottery and the activities of the NGO "Ideja" made this Information Day one of the best Regional Information Day's of this year.
- Seminar for EUIP has taken place on March 18 at the EUIC. Lectures about the current issues in the EU, how to answer questions about EU and how to address the public were organized
- The yearly conference for all information providers was organised on March 18. Mr.Rasbash took part in the event with opening speech. More than 100 persons participated. Most of the information providers in Latvia presented their plans for the pre-referendum and post-referendum activities in public information including government, Parliament, NGO's, ECD in Latvia and some of the political parties. Most of the speakers emphasised need for discussions and provision of neutral, objective information. Only representative of Peoples party expressed their intention to provide clear "yes" campaign.

Italy

Séminaires et conférences

- La Conférence organisée par la Représentation en Italie de la Commission européenne en collaboration avec l'Institut Affaires Internationales (Iai) a eu lieu à Turin au Palazzo Carignano le 28 mars 2003. Il s'est agi de la dernière étape d'un cycle de conférences qui avaient comme objectif la promotion du débat public italien sur l'avenir de l'Union et de ses institutions et qui a touché Bologne et Catane. La Conférence de Turin a eu comme thème "Le rôle des pouvoirs régionaux et locaux dans l'Union: fédéralisme et subsidiarité dans une Europe élargie". Les trois sessions du matin ont été consacrées à: "La division des compétences entre l'Union et les Etats membres", "Le rôle des régions dans l'Ue et le principe de subsidiarité" et "Le fédéralisme fiscal". Dans l'après-midi, s'est tenue une Table ronde sur le thème "La division des compétences entre l'Union et les Etats membres et le rôle des pouvoirs régionaux". Ont participé, entre autres, à la rencontre: Gianni Bonvicini, Directeur du Iai, Fabrizio Grillenzoni, Directeur f.f. de la Représentation en Italie de la Commission européenne, Giorgio Napolitano, Président de la Commission Affaires constitutionnelles du Parlement européen, Cristiana Moscardini, Députée au parlement européen et Sergio Chiamparino, Maire de Turin. La Conférence a été conclue par une intervention du Ministre des Politiques Communautaires Rocco Buttiglione.

Produits

- Brochure. La Représentation en Italie a poursuivi la sélection, à travers des consultations de marché, du projet graphique de la brochure sur l'élargissement et de l'imprimerie qui s'occupera de l'impression. La brochure sera tirée à 150.000 exemplaires et sera diffusée à l'occasion des événements qui auront lieu au courant de l'année 2003.

Luxembourg

l'opinion publique

- Selon l'étude réalisée le 4 mars 2003 pour le compte de la Représentation de la Commission européenne au Luxembourg, une majorité des citoyens du Luxembourg souhaite limiter l'élargissement à certains pays candidats. Le pourcentage des opposants à l'élargissement a augmenté légèrement.
- Placés devant le choix de savoir dans quelle mesure l'Union européenne devrait s'élargir, les habitants du Luxembourg ont une opinion décidée et en même temps restrictive: selon 61% (+4 points par rapport à mai 2002) l'Union devrait se limiter à intégrer certains pays candidats (contre 46% au niveau UE), pour 15% (+1 point) seulement, elle devrait s'élargir à tous les pays qui souhaitent en faire partie (20% au niveau UE). 18% (+1 point) s'opposent à un élargissement.

- Par rapport à l'Eurobaromètre précédent (57.1), effectué en mai 2002, les résultats relevés au Luxembourg ont changé: le pourcentage des partisans de l'élargissement à tous les pays européens a augmenté de 14% à 15%. Le pourcentage des personnes s'opposant à un élargissement a légèrement augmenté au Luxembourg, passant de 17% à 18%, alors qu'au niveau communautaire, il a baissé, passant de 21% à 19%.
- Est-ce que la réticence trouve son origine seulement dans le manque d'information sur l'élargissement? Plus d'un tiers (37%, +5 points de pourcent) des habitants du Luxembourg se déclarent bien ou très bien informés à propos de l'élargissement, la moyenne européenne se limitant toutefois à 21% (+1 point).
- En ce qui concerne l'impact potentiel de l'élargissement, au sein de l'Union et au Luxembourg, la tendance observée est identique, le taux des personnes se disant d'accord avec la proposition étant toutefois pour tous les cas de figure supérieur au Luxembourg à la moyenne UE. Au Luxembourg, 86% des sondés (UE: 66%) estiment que le processus décisionnel sera plus difficile avec plus d'Etats membres, 79% (UE: 66%) pensent que l'Union gagnera en importance dans le monde. Pour 77% (UE: 64%), l'Union s'enrichira sur le plan culturel, pour 66% (UE: 58%) elle n'échappera pas à une réforme de ses institutions avant l'élargissement, pour 50% (UE: 51%) le maintien de la paix sera mieux garanti (seule affirmation où le taux UE est supérieure à celui du Luxembourg).
- Parmi les appréhensions devant l'Europe qui se construit, les citoyens du Luxembourg citent en premier lieu la crainte que le pays recevra moins d'aides financières de l'Union (51%, UE: 52%), l'augmentation du chômage (50%, UE: 44%), et une diminution de l'importance du pays (46%, UE: 39%). L'élargissement coûtera-t-il plus cher aux Etats membres actuels? 26% sont de cet avis au Luxembourg, 24% au niveau de l'UE.
- Les conclusions du nouvel eurobaromètre sont aussi publiées et commentées dans la presse luxembourgeoise : L'éditorialiste du Quotidien (05.03.2003) en tire la conséquence que les résidents du Luxembourg sont les mieux informés sur l'UE, et leur regard sur l'élargissement est plus nuancé, plus pragmatique que celui d'autres Européens. D'autres messages stratégiques de Juncker ne seraient cependant pas passés : alors que pour le Premier ministre luxembourgeois, l'élargissement est la *conditio sine qua non* de la paix en Europe, les citoyens luxembourgeois seraient plus réticents à considérer l'élargissement comme un facteur de paix. L'éditorialiste du Luxemburger Wort (10.03.2003) compare les résultats à ceux constatés en Allemagne, un des cinq pays avec le moins de connaissances sur l'UE. Le « Karlspreis » alloué en 1986 aux citoyens luxembourgeois pour leur esprit européen aurait également aujourd'hui sa raison d'être.

Autres événements

- Les autres événements relatés dans la presse luxembourgeoise sont:
- le référendum en Malte: La presse est nuancée : les uns parlent d'une « belle victoire du oui au référendum » (LQ 10.03.2003), d'autres d'un « oui à l'Europe contesté » (LV 10.03.2003) ou d'un « petit oui à l'Europe » (T 10.03.2003) ou

d'un « petit résultat » (LW 10.03.2003). Avant le référendum, la presse avait rendu compte des passions « déchaînées » et « intactes » (T 06.03.2003) à Malte. Parmi les éditorialistes commentant le résultat du référendum, l'éditorialiste du Luxemburger Wort (10.03.2003) voit un signal positif dans ce résultat qui, bien qu'il n'atteigne pas les « Malte – douze points » connu du Grand Prix de l'Eurovision de la chanson, renforcerait la position du gouvernement pro-européen Fench-Adami. L'éditorialiste du Tageblatt (10.03.2003) voit peu de raisons pour fêter le résultat du référendum. Les euro-sceptiques auront la main haute, vu la petite majorité en faveur de l'adhésion à l'UE. Elle attend un signal plus déterminé des prochains référendums. Un vote négatif dans un des pays candidats serait regrettable, mais pas catastrophique. Il serait par contre grave si deux ou trois ans après l'élargissement, la moitié des nouveaux Etats membres souhaiteraient à nouveau quitter l'UE.

- la visite de Lydie Polfer en Slovaquie: Avant le référendum du 23 mars 2003, le Vice-premier ministre luxembourgeois Lydie Polfer s'est rendue en Slovaquie le 13 mars 2003. Devant les journalistes slovaques, elle a souligné l'intérêt et les avantages que des petits pays ou deux de taille moyenne tirent de l'UE et de l'OTAN et des avancées auxquelles lesdits pays ont contribué dans le cadre de ces institutions. Les relations bilatérales, l'Irak, la Convention européenne et l'avenir de l'Europe, de même que la candidature de la Croatie à l'adhésion à l'UE, étaient par ailleurs au centre des discussions avec le Ministre des affaires étrangères et le Président de la République slovaque.
- les discussions au Parlement européen: La presse estime qu'un report de la signature des traités d'adhésion, à la suite du souhait du Parlement européen d'obtenir le retrait ou la réécriture de l'annexe, serait particulièrement malencontreux au moment où les dix futurs membres sont engagés dans le processus de ratification de leur adhésion.
- la visite du Premier ministre portugais au Luxembourg: Dans un entretien exclusif au Luxemburger Wort (11.03.2003), José Manuel Durao Barroso, dans le contexte de l'élargissement, estime que deux principes sont chers au Portugal : l'égalité entre tous les Etats membres et le respect de la logique communautaire avec la Commission dans le rôle de défenseur de l'intérêt général de l'Union européenne.
- l'échec des négociations sur la Chypre: L'éditorialiste du Quotidien (11.03.2003) estime que s'il n'y a pas bientôt un oui clair des deux communautés à la réunification de l'île, quelques pays de l'UE devraient trouver le courage de dire clairement non à Chypre. « Car à quoi bon importer ce conflit dans l'UE ? ». La candidature de la Turquie sera rendue plus difficile en l'absence d'accord sur l'avenir de la Chypre (T 12.03.2003).
- le discours de Louis Michel à Luxembourg: Louis Michel, lors de la conférence organisée par l'Union européenne des fédéralistes, groupe Europe, a estimé le coût de l'élargissement dérisoire au regard des avantages de l'élargissement, et surtout comparé au coût du non-élargissement. Il s'est prononcé pour l'élargissement de l'Union, sans oublier cependant l'Europe de la défense. (LW 14.03.2003).

Poland

Note: The Report of Poland is a summary of January, February and March 2003

- On the 14.02. the Polish Parliament passed the new law on referendum, which will be applied for the first time during the June accession referendum. At that stage no final decision on the two most controversial issues were taken: the length of voting and the wording of the question. The ultimate decision on the question will be taken by a body announcing the referendum (the Parliament or the President, with the consent of the Senate). If the turnout does not reach 50%, there are three options: (1) the decision will be taken with 2/3 of votes of the National Assembly (the Parliament and the Senate) (2) the referendum will be repeated (3) the government will re-negotiate the Treaty. Additionally, on the 17.03. the Polish Parliament approved the Senate proposal that the voting can last for one or two days (it will be each time decided by the body announcing the referendum). In case of the two-day referendum – it will take place on Saturday and Sunday.

Public opinion

- According to the poll carried out by the CBOS centre for public opinion research in January, 74% of Poles planning to vote in the EU referendum would support the integration while 18 % would oppose it.
- These figures remained more or less stable throughout February, as shows the latest “Rzeczpospolita” Euro Barometer of 8-9 March: out of those declaring participation in the referendum, 73% would say “yes”, 19% are against. In general (among those declaring voting and those staying at home), 61% of Poles support the membership (drop by 3%) and 23% are against (drop by 1%). 16% remain undecided. Most importantly however, the number of those intending to participate in the referendum has decreased by 4% within a month and is now 54%. Another 23% would “rather vote”.
- A CBOS opinion poll (1-4 February) is analyzing these figures: 47% of respondents to the question whether accession is beneficiary for Poland still think that from the point of view of the condition of economy Poland is not yet ready for EU membership. 41% feel that entering the Union will bring Poland more benefits than losses, while 31% think otherwise. 47% of respondents hold the view that the hitherto relations were more beneficial for the EU (9% have an opposing view). *About a fifth of those declaring voting “yes” in the referendum is more worried than optimistic about the process. “Bearing in mind that the expectations regarding consequences of integration are one of the key factors influencing the voting, it might be assumed that the real support in the referendum will be lower than the declared one.”* –conclude authors of the survey

Media

- Commissioner Verheugen briefly visited Warsaw on the 09.01. to participate in the ceremony of granting a title of “A man of the year” of a popular political weekly “Wprost”. He shares the title with PM Miller. The title was given to them for “capturing Poland to Europe”, and was well-covered by Polish media.

- The visit of Commissioner for Enterprise and Information Society Erkki Liikanen (31.03.) received wide media coverage, particularly his participation in two big conferences “Polish Entrepreneurs in the EU” and “ III Telecommunications Forum”. The Commissioner gave 3 individual interviews: 1. published in the supplement of Rzeczpospolita daily “Our Europe”, 2. in “Businessman” - an economic monthly magazine, 3. in “Unia&Polska” –a bi-weekly magazine related to European issues.
- Secretary General of the Commission David O’ Sullivan visited Poland on the 20.02. to discuss preparations of Polish administration to the EU membership with his counterparts in the PM Chancellery, Foreign Ministry, UKIE and the Office of Civil Service. However, the press conference and reports in the media focused entirely on the system of recruitment of new members’ nationals to the Commission.
- Press releases were issued on the three conferences organized by the Delegation in March (see below), as well as on following subjects:
 - For the project: “Water pipeline and water purification plant for Piła”, as well as for the project co-financed by the EU; “reclamation of the Maslice municipal landfill site” – a project co-finance within the EU ISPA fund within the programme “Wrocław solid waste treatment (Stage I)”. The Head of ISPA Section participated at the official opening ceremonies of both projects.
 - Furthermore press releases were prepared for the official inauguration of the modernisation of the Łyna wastewater treatment plant (Olsztyn), attended by John O’Rourke, First Counselor at the Delegation and representatives of the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Environment, voivodship and city authorities, delegates of the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, Contract Engineer and the contractor, the launch of the first European Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) the adoption by the Commission of the Second Progress Report on economic and social cohesion the organisation of a competition „Euroscola”, open to all candidate countries, organised by the the European Parliament Representation in Spain in cooperation with the Representation of the European Commission in Spain.
 - A competition organized by the European Commission for pupils from member state countries as well as from candidate countries on the occasion of the “Green Week” (2-5.06.2003)
 - The Head of the Phare Section went to the regions of Dolnoslanskie and Lubelskie to promote EU pre-accession funds - media coverage by local and regional media.
 - In the framework of the Information strategy a camera team of the national private television channel TVN filmed examples of the Irish success story related to accession to the EU. The purpose of the film is to show individuals – real people, and to find possible similarities between Poland and Ireland. The episodes are being broadcast in April and May.
 - The most widely read regional media (Dziennik Zachodni, Dziennik Wschodni, Gazeta Pomorska, Gazeta Olsztynska, others in preparation), in cooperation with

their regional counterparts in television and radio are preparing for the broadcast of combined programmes on EU enlargement in April, May and June, including next to informative columns question and answer programmes, competitions and games, public seminars and interviews.

- The first Polish Public Radio is broadcasting from March until May 16 radio programmes on “how to be a European farmer” in the framework of two programmes very popular with inhabitants of the country side (the “Green market” radio programme every day at 12.30, and the “agriculture various news”, between 5.10 and 5.59 am).
- The first Polish Public Radio has also started in March to broadcast 16 radio programmes in the morning (6.46 for 7 min) and in the evening (17.30 – 18.00), inviting guest speakers such as SME’s owners, politicians, experts and transmitting short foreign correspondences. At the end of the cycle two 30 min summaries are planned with a special audience of invited guests and listeners (via telephone).

Conferences

- This year’s Information Provider Conference “How to inform on accession and future membership of Poland of the EU at the wake of the Referendum”, organized by the Delegation, took place on 05.03. More than 200 information providers from all over Poland attended the conference and discussed pre-referendum activities. Minister for European Affairs Danuta Huebner presented the government information campaign, Hans Torrekens, DG Agri and Jean Marc-Trarieux of the Delegation informed about information on The European Union in the regions, Charles White, DG Regio presented information on Structural Funds.
- The Delegation organized two conferences in March on the use of pre-Accession funds: The conference on social society projects, well attended by Polish press, gave visibility to the ACCESS and SFP programmes by giving grant beneficiaries the opportunity to present their successful projects. In addition the grant programmes starting this year in April were presented.
- Commissioner Liikanen was guest speaker on the conference for small and medium-sized companies “Polish Enterprises in the EU”, organized by the Delegation with support from the Ministry of Economy, and attended by more than 600 participants from private and public sector and 35 journalists. Next to presentation of the pre-accession programmes for SMEs, the possibilities for the use of Structural Funds, research-related programmes and credit programmes were outlined.
- The monthly Info Point meeting was held in March on the Accession Treaty with the participation of Mr. Tomasz Nowakowski from the Office of the Committee for European Integration, Head of EC Delegation and Mrs. Katarzyna Żukrowska, professor from the Warsaw School of Economics.
- On the 16.03. Under the auspices of Primate Glemp and Abp. Muszynski, responsible in the Episcopate of Poland for Europe-related issues, and with financial support of the Delegation, a major international conference “Quo vadis

Europa”, took place in Gniezno with the participation of some 500 Polish and European priests, politicians and intellectuals. Within the framework of the Conference, the bishops met with the Polish delegates to the Convention. About 600 representatives of catholic movements and organizations, priests, intellectuals and politicians participated in the international conference. The main message was that the catholics are not afraid of an enlarged Europe, but want to be involved in shaping its moral dimension. They have also appealed to the leaders of the EU for the legislation respecting human dignity.

- The Delegation participated in and co-financed the annual conference “European Conference of Farmers’ Organisations” on February 8-9. Among the participants were 100 leaders of farmers’ organisations from 25 countries. Approximately 500 people took part in the conference and accompanying events of the Polish Agriculture Association.
- The First Counselor and Head of Phare Section outlined the pre-referendum information programme of the Delegation at the occasion of a national conference on the pre referendum information campaigns, organized by the Office of European Integration.

Information events

- With a press conference Prime Minister Miller and EC Ambassador Dethomas opened the school competition “Europe of my dreams”, organized by the NGO “young people without borders”. All the 6000 high schools in Poland have received information kits, inviting pupils to present their vision of Europe, in form of essay, poster, web page or postal stamp. The winners will be announced the 16.05. in an official Gala transmitted live by national television and radio. The Delegation as co-organisator will participate in the selection of the winners, and finance and present prizes (the first prize being a trip to Brussels for the authors of the 48 best creations). More information can be found on the web site www.konkurs-ue.org.pl
- The cooperation with the Association of Polish Powiats (local authorities) on information for local authorities and farmers continues. From January until March 12 conferences have been organised in different Polish regions on the use of SAPARD and the future Structural Funds, on the result of the negotiations on agriculture and the consequences of CAP reforms for Polish agriculture. The average turnout per conferences has so far been more than 170 participants.
- In January the call for proposals was launched for projects under the heading Information Campaign for Farmers. Three projects have been retained, and preparations are currently finalised: Firstly “Top Agrar”, a specialised magazine, widely read by farmers, will start printing supplements on EU integration until the referendum, describing the conditions for Polish accession to the European Union and its consequences for Polish farmers in detail, in addition to organising conferences on this subject. Examples of specific farms from various regions of Poland will present the principles for obtaining EU funds as well as the conditions, which the farmers will have to meet after EU membership. Journalists will visit and compare similar farms in the European Union and mainly in Poland to show the principles of using the instruments of the Common Agricultural

Policy and what standards will be in force in the future. Two more projects are going to be realized on a national basis with the National Agriculture Advisory Centres and the Local Self Government Agriculture Organisation.

- The cooperation with the Polish Catholic Church is being intensified before the referendum. One programme, which has already started includes supplements to a news bulletin, which is sent out by the Catholic Information Agency to all parishes, called “Christian Europe”. Further information is given on the web site www.europa.e.kai.pl
- The research project on the attitude of catholic church towards European integration “Polish parish priests and European integration”, initiated and financed by the Delegation in the framework of the Information and Communication Programme and carried out by the Institute of Public Affairs, was announced in a press conference in January, and very well covered in the media, including national and private television and the most renowned Polish newspapers. The survey reveals that 59% of parish priests would vote “yes” in the referendum, while 20% are against and 16% choose to stay neutral. The level of support has dropped since the previous survey, carried at the beginning of 1998, by 25%. At the same time, 100% of priests declare participation in the accession referendum.
- In cooperation with the Chancellery of the President and the Foundation of Assistance Programmes for Agriculture, the Delegation sent the laureates of a nation-wide local media contest and winners of an agriculture school competition on the European Union to a study trip to Brussels, where they met representatives of DG Agri, the European Parliament and COREPER. The school competition started in September 2002 with a regional elimination, in the final contest the 6 best candidates from each Polish district participated. Media representatives were chosen on their contributions on European topics.

Internet

- In addition to the regular updating of the web site of the Delegation, the new database of the Delegation is being uploaded onto the website. It includes addresses of all important government bodies and non-governmental and international organizations linked to European integration, European Information Centers, embassies etc., and is freely accessible.

Info Point

- The Info Point received 1820 visitors and answered 3540 phone calls and e-mails in the first three months of 2003; 685 sets of publications were sent to schools, European Clubs, local authorities, libraries, regional centers of information on EU and NGOs all over Poland during this period. In addition 1100 sets of publications were distributed at the conferences organized by the Delegation (see above).
- Whereas the most frequently asked questions in January were related to the selection of auxiliary staff for pre-enlargement tasks organized by EPSO, to the conclusions of the European Council in Copenhagen, provisions of transitional periods for Poland in such negotiation chapters as agriculture, tax policy, free movement of persons and capital, in February and March interest was focused on

pre-accession funds for Poland, structural funds, EU legal acts concerning environment, education and transport, free movement of goods, tax policies, advantages and disadvantages for Polish citizens after EU accession.

- The staff of the Info Point gave 41 presentations in the first three months of the year mostly for students, teachers, librarians and local authorities. The issues presented at the meetings concerned benefits and costs of EU enlargement, role and competences of EU institutions, state of negotiations, EU Regional Policy, information strategy of the European Commission. Info Point staff participated in a conference for teachers organized by the Education Center of Mazowsze region, and also took part in a series of presentations on Enlargement for a total of 200 officers of the Warsaw unit of the Polish Army. A training seminar on EU sources of information and the activities of the Info Point was given for group or Press and Government officials from Ukraine.
- The Info Point organized a competition in cooperation with the NGO Interklasa, launched on the Spring Day in Europe, and provided prizes.
- In cooperation with the Embassy of Greece, the Info Point prepared exhibition on Greece in order to promote the country holding EU presidency.
- Two exhibitions were displayed in 7 schools, in 3 libraries and in 2 local authorities.

Government Information Campaign

- The Delegation is at the moment elaborating common projects with the Polish government and with the Chancellery of the President – next to the already implemented journalists and agriculture school contest, planned are so far the second edition of the Cycling Rally of farmers to Brussels, a CD Rom with the Accession Treaty and a set of useful information connected to Poland's accession to the European Union, which will be made widely available to all those interested (e.g. post office etc).
- Concerning the Information activities of the government, Lech Nikolski, hitherto head of Prime Minister political cabinet became Minister without portfolio on the 07.01., his responsibility being the preparation of the EU accession referendum. The position of the Government Plenipotentiary for EU information was cancelled and its holder Wiatr became Nikolski's deputy on the 15.01. Nikolski outlined his information strategy pointing to its four aims: 1.enhancing the importance of the EU referendum and encourage people to take part in it; 2.informing about costs and benefits of Poland's membership in the EU; 3.informing about Poland's future position and its role in the EU; 4.to informing about the country's preparations to accession. He would like to see EU information point in every gmina where he also intends to organize series of debates. About 5.000 currently unemployed graduates would work in these centres. The project is called "The first job" and the graduates were to be trained in February. Each gmina is to organize at least one meeting on the EU by the end of April. The government also plans to organize EU information events in supermarkets and to prepare a special information programme for the army.

- In addition in March, a major information programme directed at the rural population was to be launched. Within two months, specially trained lecturers are supposed to visit all 40.000 *solectwa* (the lowest level administrative units in rural areas). Minister Nikolski plans furthermore that government representatives visit all gminas before the referendum.
- at the beginning of May every household in Poland will receive a brochure and a letter of the President, encouraging Poles to participate in the accession referendum. This is the key element of the Presidential referendum campaign. The campaign will begin after signing the Accession Treaty and is to last for six weeks. In that period, the President intends to visit all provinces.
- On the 01.03. PM Miller and other SLD leaders launched the SLD referendum campaign. Also on that date, the campaign was launched by the Freedom Union (UW) in Cracow and Gdansk.
- At the same time, an anti-EU campaign was initialled in Cracow by the All-Poland's Youth, strongly connected with the League of Polish Families. One of the key elements of the campaign are posters depicting Hitler as the creator of the idea of the EU. This group had already placed an advertisement in the newspaper Rzeczpospolita. The full-page add presented the EU as anti-catholic and anti-religious.
- The Citizen's Initiative "Yes in the referendum", grouping several influential NGOs, known personalities, but also the Association of Advertising Agencies, inaugurated on the 16.03. a wide referendum campaign.

Romania

Public Opinion

- On March 18th, the European Integration Minister attended the Round Table on "Romania after Prague and Copenhagen: opportunities and challenges for the economic and social sector". The round table was organised under the joint patronage of Romanian PM, Mr Adrian Nastase, and UNDP Regional Director for Romania and CSI, Mr. Kalman Mizsei.

Media

- Total articles and broadcasts: 3811 (national newspapers, in local press and broadcasts on A/V media): 2205 articles were published in the national newspapers: 1449 news, 434 stories, 113 commentaries, 65 analyses, 96 editorials, 6 feature stories/investigations and 42 interviews; 1174 articles were published in the local press: 884 news, 145 stories, 30 commentaries, 16 analyses, 65 editorials, 7 feature stories/investigations and 27 interviews; 432 broadcasts on A/V media: 432 news
- The main topics covered by articles and A/V broadcasts:

Topic	No. items
EU Institutions / reactions	798
EU assistance programs	953
Romania's accession process	2145
EU enlargement process	462
Children (Romania's actions in tackling this issue)	21
Corruption	81
The Delegation of the European Commission	106
Total	4566

- Press releases

Topic	Date
Faster trains with ISPA funds	5 Mar
Natali Prize for Journalism – 2003 edition	12 Mar
Launch of 8 Calls for proposals - Civil Society	21 Mar
Launch of Integrated Monitoring System (Min. of Eur. Integration)	26 Mar

- Press conferences

Topic	Date
Launch of "Thinking enlarged" study (+ debate)	11 Mar
Launch of Integrated Monitoring System (at EI Ministry)	26 Mar

- Press interviews

Topic	Date
HoD on social affairs (Social Workers Magazine)	4 Mar
TM on programme for mining regions (Swiss journalist)	21 Mar

Information events

- At the Information Centre were held meetings of a group of EU journalists dealing with environment matters, organised under a DG Enlargement programme. During their one-day presence at the Centre, they met with Romanian officials and

the Head of EC Delegation. The next day, they have had further meetings at the Environment Ministry. The programme is managed by the European Journalism Centre, from Amsterdam, Netherlands.

- One press conference was held, for the publication of the “Thinking Enlarged” paper, edited by the Bertelsmann Foundation, about the future institutional framework of the EU. The conference was followed by a debate.

Internet

- The website www.infoeuropa.ro has reached the threshold of more than 25,000 single visits. This record is the highest registered within the website existence.
- The monthly usage grew with 20.8%, compared to previous month, and 67.1%, compared to March 2002. The most active day was March 26th (1 356 visits/day); the most downloaded file was the publication “PHARE Programme of the European Union”; the most accessed website page - the “Small Projects Programme” (B7-030) – 1 723 visits -, within the “Financing Opportunities” section.
- The electronic version of the publication “The PHARE Programme of the European Union” ranks top of downloads with 14 315 copies, long after the printed edition ended.
- The top three Romanian keywords used to retrieve information from the site database were: ‘PHARE’, ‘SMEs’ and ‘financing’.
- 3 800 is the total number of subscribers to the value added service of e-mail alert “PriorMail”.

Products

- The range of information and documentary publications, in Romanian, grew to add more titles, to answer needs and questions of Information Centre clients.
- The “European Issues” titles launched were No. 20 - “Negotiation chapters - Romania’s accession to European Union” and No. 21 - “Maastricht Treaty”.
- During March, 8 ‘Launching fiches’ were edited, covering 8 actions to be financed under the Civil Society Programme 2001. Also, the Information Centre prepared and offered the public the programme fiche for the SPP B-7030. A ‘Programme fiche’, offering general and explanatory information, was also edited on the Civil Society Programme 2001 (RO0104.03).
- The No. 9 Newsletter of the Information Centre, covering its activities, hot EU issues and promoting EU information resources, was produced in 2 500 copies, out of which around 1 000 were mailed to network multipliers and others (based on subscriptions).
- *Ms. Starlet* video was multiplied, in 50 CD-ROM copies, and distributed to schools participating in the “Ms Starlet” contest, to be concluded in May.

- Catalogues for “100% Natural” cartoons exhibition were produced, in order to accompany it, while being showed in several European capitals.
- 10 000 copies of the headed paper for Information Centre correspondence were produced.

Information Centre

- 920 clients were welcomed and served in the Information Centre and 404 participants stepped in for various events, hosted at the Centre’s premises.
- The newly inaugurated ‘call centre’ answered 474 phone queries for EU information. 523 copies of publications and 50 kgs of information and promotional items were mailed to the regions to answer the requests. More than 49 000 pages of information were offered to clients at the Information Centre or through the mailing.
- 15 events and programmes were hosted and / or organised at the Information Centre. ‘EUROpatru’ Children programme was organised for 4 elementary classes, from 4 different schools. 4 group visits were hosted, of which three involved librarians on professional training programmes, and one a group of EU journalists within a DG Enlargement programme aiming at increased knowledge about accession countries for the media within EU.
- One press conference was held and the Information Centre offered its premises and support for two events within the framework of twinning programmes, one on wine issues and one on commercial matters, for five days. At the same time, programme with regular customers was performed as usual.

Other information activities

- The EC Delegation organised an open, three-parts, debate, at the Xenopol High School, with the occasion of the opening of a European information cabinet, within the High School. The first part of the debate focused on the 15-25 youth campaign and some basic information on EU history. The participants were supposed to design a poster, representing Europe in 2025, using old magazines and newspapers. In the second part, all the posters produced were discussed with the Head of EC Delegation. The last part was dedicated to questions and answers on issues, such the future of Europe, opportunities for youth in Europe, the enlargement process.
- The third training dedicated to the Information Centres and Points, funded under the Europa Fund, took place in Iasi (9 -11 March). It was attended by representatives of Iasi (7 rural info points) and Adjud (2) networks, as well as the Info Officer from the Cluj Centre. The aim of the training was to familiarize the beneficiaries both with EU general information and practical information, on how to set up and run an information centre/point, and also to give them the feeling to be part of a network. Basic training was provided, through interactive session, on EU history, institutions and information sources.

- Buzau and Cluj Information Centres have been opened, so far, for the public. From the Arad network, two Information Points have been opened (Curtici and Pancota).
- The last training session (out of four) for European Integration Experts (EIEs) from Prefectures and County Councils was held in Timisoara (6-7 March 2003). The total number of participants was 24. The same training format was used as for the previous sessions: EU institutions, accession negotiations, EU programmes, EU sources of information, communication techniques, Extranet. Nevertheless, the format was slightly changed to accommodate request coming from the participants, i.e. introduction of the topic of designing an information strategy. Most topics were dealt with in an interactive manner (working group).
- At the end of March 2003, the Extranet (as IT communication tool to be used by the information multipliers, members of the network) had registered 150 members, who were actively involved in exchanges of EU information.
- A special media coverage service (all local papers and all references in national press to counties visited by HoD) was set up in view of HoD local visits in the month of April.
- As the EU “Spring Day” was heavily promoted, over 125 schools had registered and asked for guidance, information materials, promotional materials and support. Permanent contact was provided for all schools which requested the above. A special fiche (including, mainly, information from the official site) was prepared (in RO) for the use of schools and delivered through special mailing, together with information materials. Mailing (including the dedicated fiche and information/promotional materials) was prepared for about 120 schools.
- The new green line number, for the use of EU information multipliers, has become operational. It was promoted through the Extranet.
- The “100% Natural” cartoons exhibition was promoted, amongst EU Delegations and Representations, and was booked for Madrid, Vilnius, Helsinki and Brussels. It will be sent by diplomatic pouch, in April.
- The number of network entities, registered in the Information Centre database, has increased in March to 321.

Sweden

- In March, the EMU continued to be the dominant EU theme in the national debate. This is obvious with a view to the upcoming Euro referendum on 14 September. There was, however, increasing interest in the enlargement process again, thanks to the upcoming referenda in the Candidate Countries. The public opinion continued to be favorable for the enlargement in Sweden.

Public opinion

- The Eurobarometer 58 – Standard National report on Sweden, which was prepared in January, showed that 65% of the Swedes support the EU enlargement while the average figure for the EU-15 is 52%. There was no shift in the public opinion in this respect in March.

Media

- The media reported on the referenda in Malta and Slovenia. Moreover, the press described Malta's aspiration to become a bridge between the EU and Northern Africa. Another enlargement topic was the failed UN reunification plan for Cyprus and its negative consequences for the Turkish EU application. Furthermore, the Swedish press published a joint column article by two important labor union representatives and one trade and industry representative which called for the Swedish government to allow free movement for the citizens of the CC countries right from the beginning of their membership. Finally, Wim Kok's report was quoted in the press by saying that the enlargement is the EU's largest success process thus far.

Information events and initiatives

- A follow-up meeting to review the progress of the framework project with the Swedish foreign policy institute (SIIA) was held on early March. The program is progressing according to the original plan and schedule.
- In specific, the planning for the two remaining seminars in the framework project with the Swedish foreign policy institute (SIIA) continued. One of these two seminars is foreseen to be held in early May and will center around the security policy situation of the Baltic States.

Internet

- The updating of the separate web pages for the EU enlargement project with SIIA continued (see www.ui.se). As regards the Web magazine, new articles were continually added on this site.

Products

- The Representation announced 39 study visits for Swedish journalists to the Candidate Countries. The visits will be carried out in the course of the spring, financed from the information budget.
- The negotiations with the nationwide TV channels, including SVT, continued in order to broadcast the TV documentary on the EU enlargement. The interviews for this program have been carried out in Estonia, Poland, Denmark, and Sweden.
- The work on a youth conference and on pedagogical material continued. The target date for the youth event is the 9 May. It will be arranged at the University of Gävle.

Information centers and relays

- The Representation continued to back up its relays in the information work on the enlargement by sending them relevant information and material.

Other information activities or events in the country

- The Candidate Country embassies in Stockholm continued to promote the awareness of their respective countries through various cultural events and other occasions.

Information activities related to the Convention

- The Swedish ministry for education, the Governmental 2004 Committee, the School authority, the EP office and the EC Representation promoted jointly the participation of schools, parliamentarians and other actors in the Spring Day (21 March) celebrations in Sweden. For example, Mr. Hans Alldén, the Head of the EC Representation visited a gymnasium in Skellefteå on that day. Overall, Sweden was the most active among the current Member States (in relation to its size) in enrolling schools for the Spring Day activities. The coordination among the actors for the Spring Day encouraged them to continue similar cooperation towards the Europe Day on 9 May.

United Kingdom

Public Opinion

- The findings of the Standard Eurobarometer EB 58, carried out in face-to-face interviews during October and early November are stark: the UK has the highest percentage of people in any current Member State (45%) considering themselves not at all well informed about enlargement. Moreover, the UK showed the lowest level of support for it (42%) and the highest level of “don’t knows” at 26%. 58% of those polled in the UK said they had not contributed at all to the political debate on EU enlargement and more than half (54%) admit to never looking for information about it.
- More sophisticated in terms of sample size and geographical breakdown are the enlargement opinion polls carried out in the English Regions last year. The latest was a 12 x 500 telephone sample per Region carried out in November 2002. This showed 56% in favour of EU enlargement and 35% against. Significantly, support does not vary with level of knowledge – i.e. among those who confessed to knowing little or nothing about the EU, there was the same percentage in favour and against. However, there is significant variation by age (62% of 15-24 year olds in favour, only 31% among over the 65s), by education (those leaving school at 16 or younger are only 39% in favour, those leaving at 21 or later, 60%) and by Region (Northern Ireland, London and Scotland most in favour; the South East and West Midlands least in favour).

Media

- Press coverage: there was a peak in coverage of EU enlargement issues in UK national newspapers over the first weekend of March, with three significant events making the news. First, the collapse of the coalition Government in Poland and its potential impact on the enlargement referendum was a matter for speculation on 7 March (Telegraph, Guardian, FT). Second, over that weekend, the looming UN deadline for the negotiations on the reunification of Cyprus was widely covered, as were the consequences of the failure to reach agreement.
- Finally, the positive result of the referendum in Malta on 8 March generated the largest press reaction (Daily Mail, Daily Telegraph, Guardian, Times, FT), when taken with subsequent reports about setting the date for the general election there. The Daily Telegraph saw the referendum as a “Maltese double-cross”. It took the view that the result simply reflected unbalanced resourcing, with EU funding, national Government, press, business and NGOs all campaigning in favour. “The debate was eerily reminiscent of our own common market referendum”.
- The following points are also noteworthy in relation to press coverage in March: The landslide result of the referendum in Slovenia on 23 March was widely reported the following day (Guardian, Telegraph, Independent, FT); and The “Sunday Express” tabloid twice highlighted the potential consequences of EU enlargement on future structural funds in the UK regions (9 & 23 March).
- Broadcast media: There was no significant radio or television coverage of EU enlargement during March. Regional broadcasters took an interest in the HM Treasury paper on post-2006 Structural Funds, in which the UK Chancellor proposed that only new Member States should be eligible and the remaining SF budget be “repatriated”.
- Internet: From Commission press materials on enlargement (4 items during February), a selection was made and given a specific UK flavour for “The week in Europe” (<http://www.cec.org.uk/press/we/latest.htm>) which is distributed to the UK media. Colleagues in Cardiff provide a similar (but more specific) service with “Website Wales”.

Information Events & Initiatives

The following enlargement-related events have taken place in the UK during March:

- 3/03/03 Bulgarian national day (reception organised by the Embassy)
- 3/03/03 Foreign Office Minister Bill Rammell receives Pavel Bem, Mayor of Prague
- 4/03/03 Commissioner Verheugen takes part in a seminar for UK Parliamentarians organised by the Foreign Office (with Jack Straw and Denis MacShane)
- 4/03/03 “Sustainable regimes of capital movement in the accession countries” CEPR seminar with Jurgen von Hagen (Bonn/Indiana Universities)

- 7/03/03 Institute for Citizenship Youth Speak Out event on Enlargement and Future of Europe, Stormont
- 10/03/03 Start of UK Minister for Europe Denis MacShane's visit to Poland
- 12/03/03 Minister for Europe Denis MacShane's "Poland & Britain together in Europe" speech in Poznan
- 13/03/03 Visit of Laszlo Kovacs, Hungarian Foreign Minister to London, meeting Foreign Secretary Jack Straw; European Information Network Conference on EU enlargement, Belfast;
- 14/03/03 London information providers conference at the European Commission Representation in London, with briefings on enlargement by Alex Ellis (FCO) and Minister Counsellor Constantinos Bitsios (Greek Embassy)
- 17/03/03 Belfast Telegraph reports on future of structural funds and the impact of enlargement
- 18/03/03 Foreign Office advises against all non-essential travel including holiday travel to south-eastern Turkey
- 19/03/03 Europe Minister Denis MacShane and DTI Minister Melanie Johnson jointly hosted lunch at Lancaster House for the business media
- 25/03/03 Visit of Romanian Foreign Minister Mircea Geoana to London, including meetings with Jack Straw, Denis MacShane and Baroness Symons;

Feature on Northern Ireland and Europe (Enlargement, Convention, CAP etc) in News Letter Commercial Review

- 26/03/03 Europe Minister Denis MacShane lunch with candidate countries scheduled to join the EU in 2004, hosted by the Polish Embassy
- 27/03/03 Europe Minister Denis MacShane meets Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot Women, House of Commons

Further to the Call for Proposals published on 10/10/02, six projects are now underway:

- London 3-4 July: International seminar and creation of a trans-European network among Member State and Candidate Country parliamentarians (Chatham House);
- Regions: themed enlargement publications and seminars in Leeds (22/05/03 on free movement of workers), Nottingham (19/06/03 on rural development), Chelmsford (15/07/03 on single market) and Swansea (environment, date to be confirmed). This project is jointly organised by the Foreign Policy Centre & Local Government International Bureau;

- Regions: “Regional panels”, rather like the BBC’s “Question Time” programme in Leicester (19 May), Cambridge (16 June), London (early July), Birmingham (15, 17 or 22 July), Manchester (10 October), plus one (Federal Trust);
- N. Ireland: enlargement “roadshow” for schools began at the beginning of February and will continue through to the end of June (British Council);
- Scotland: bi-monthly insert in Chambers of Commerce bulletins and journals followed by a seminar in Edinburgh later in the year (Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce);
- Scotland: 2 business debates & 4 workshops on enlargement (Highland Opportunity).
- The European Commission Office in Northern Ireland is organising a travelling exhibition for the enlargement display stands (accompanied by a range of other promotional materials). The launch event will take place in Belfast on 7 May.

Internet

- The Representation’s website now has an experimental “portal”/single entry point for information on Enlargement (www.cec.org.uk/info/enlargement). This includes an Enlargement “weblog” - a diary-style site with links to other web pages, most notably those on the DG Enlargement site.

Products

- The series of brochures about the impact of EU enlargement on various parts of the UK (Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the 9 English Regions) is planned for 2003.

Information Centres & Networks

- The UK has probably the most comprehensive range of EU information providers in Europe. Networks targeting the general public, business and the education sectors operate in partnership with indigenous public sector organisations. In terms of events for information providers:
- The European Commission’s enlargement website won an award at the European Information Association annual conference in Cambridge on 31 March.
- The UK network of European Public Information Centres in libraries across the UK will be an important recipient of the “Enlargement information stands”. These were used during March by the Foreign Office for the Parliamentarians seminar and are available for use by Embassies/High Commissions, as well as information providers at any time