

*Enlarging the European Union:*  
from 15 to 25, what  
does it mean for us?



**TOMORROW'S EUROPE**

**THE KEY ISSUES**

THE FIRST OF MAY 2004 REPRESENTS AN HISTORIC AND UNPRECEDENTED MILESTONE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU). BY WELCOMING IN 10 COUNTRIES FROM CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN, THE EU NOW BINDS 25 MEMBER STATES TOGETHER THROUGH OUR COMMON VALUES OF FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY, THE RULE OF LAW AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. THIS ENLARGEMENT IS A UNIQUE ACHIEVEMENT – IT SIGNIFIES UNITY IN DIVERSITY AND A COMMITMENT TO PROMOTING THE PROSPERITY OF OUR CONTINENT THROUGH PEACE, SECURITY, SOLIDARITY AND STABILITY FOR ALL ITS CITIZENS.

*What*

## does enlargement mean for the ‘former’ Member States (EU15)?

Enlargement is a natural evolution, bringing an end to the division of our continent – a consequence of World War II – and having an impact on all facets of our continent. The extension of the zone of peace, stability and prosperity that the EU has brought to Europe will enhance the security of all its peoples. With a population of 450 million, the Union now represents the largest internal market in the world; this enlarged Single Market accounts for some 19% of world trade. The accession of 10 new countries is expected to lead to an increase of the EU25's overall gross domestic product (GDP) by 4-5%, while at the same time reducing the average GDP per capita to 92% of the former EU15. However, this loss in GDP should quickly be compensated for by the implementation of the Single Market rules and improved market access for business, which are expected to lead to increased efficiencies through greater competition. Increased competition should also be positive for European consumers in terms of prices, variety and quality of supply of goods and services, while also ensuring a consistent, higher degree of consumer protection. The overall conditions for business have been improved through a largely liberalised framework for investment and macroeconomic stability. A safer legal environment as well as solidarity with less developed regions will contribute to sustainable overall economic growth. The Union's role in world affairs – in foreign policy, citizen protection, trade policy, and other fields of global

governance – will be strengthened. The new Member States will enrich the EU with their wealth of different cultures, traditions, heritage and languages. So the Union is bigger and better for their joining us.

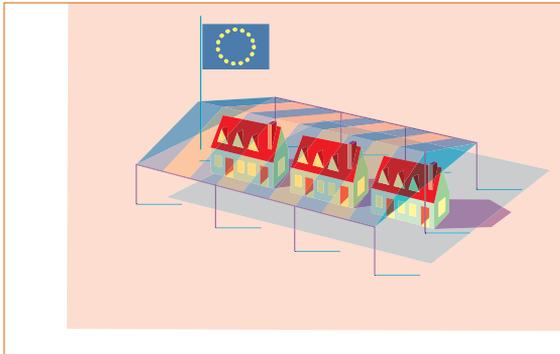
## What is the impact of enlargement on daily life?

From now on, all EU citizens will be able to live, travel, work and study with greater ease throughout a territory that stretches from the Baltic Sea to the Eastern Mediterranean. For instance, students from the 25 Member States can study in their university of choice in any given country. EU legislation implemented in the new Member States will guarantee adherence to current standards on matters such as the safety of products and services, advertising, e-commerce, fair commercial practices, environmental rules and food safety. At the end of the transitional period (see below) on freedom of movement of workers, people from across Europe will be able to reap the benefit of improved employment policies by increasing labour skills, labour market flexibility, mobility of workers, business climate, adaptation to new technologies and equal opportunities. There will also be a better quality of life through common EU policies for the protection of the environment, and more security for all European citizens through joint efforts in the fight against crime, drugs and illegal immigration.

During the initial years of this enlarged Union, the Accession Treaty has foreseen transition periods so that 'old' and 'new' Member States can gradually become accustomed to the new economic and social dimensions of the EU. This will smooth the integration process in such matters as the free movement of workers, acquisition of land and secondary residences, VAT and excise matters, as well as in the area of environment.

EU STANDARDS APPLIED IN ALL  
25 MEMBER STATES FOR  
A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE.





“OLD” AND “NEW” MEMBER STATES HAVE BROUGHT IDEAS AND PRIORITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CONSTITUTION FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION.

## *What* effect will enlargement have on the EU Institutions?

The 10 new Member States have been involved from the beginning in the work of the Convention to determine a Constitution for the European Union, updating the founding Treaties. Each country brings its own priorities and ideas and the Convention has taken these as well as the goals and needs of its members, old and new, on board. This Constitution will reinforce the European Institutions, simplify decision-making procedures, and incorporate fundamental citizen's rights. The enlarged EU now faces a new common challenge: the Governments and citizens of its Member States should approve this Constitution.

## *Are* there limits to enlargement?

Past EU Treaties and Councils have stated that “Any European state may apply to become a member of the Union” and “Accession will take place as soon as an associated country is able to assume the obligations of membership by satisfying the economic and political conditions required”. At present, two candidate countries – Romania and Bulgaria – have closed accession negotiations with the objective of joining in 2007. Two other candidate countries – Croatia and Turkey – were admitted to opening negotiations in March and October 2005 respectively, provided some remaining conditions are fulfilled. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has expressed its wish to join the Union and the possibility of EU Membership has also been opened up to the other countries of South-East Europe.

*What*

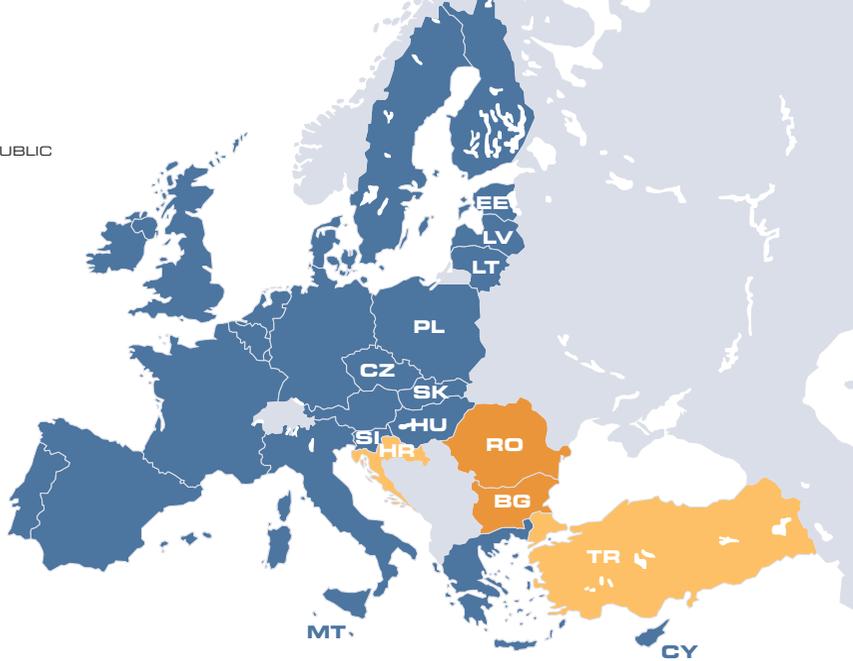
## about the new neighbours of the enlarged Union?

In order to avoid creating new dividing lines within our continent, the EU has further cooperation mechanisms to offer to its neighbours: a European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) has been proposed, with the vision of sharing the EU's fundamental values and objectives with a ring of countries, for example Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and other nations in the Middle East and North Africa. The objective is to build a mutual commitment with these neighbouring countries to common values, principally within the fields of the rule of law, good governance, respect for human rights, including minority rights, promotion of good neighbourly relations, and the principles of market economy and sustainable development.



A EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD  
POLICY TO SHARE  
THE EU FUNDAMENTAL VALUES  
AND OBJECTIVES.

<b>BG</b>	BULGARIA
<b>CY</b>	CYPRUS
<b>CZ</b>	CZECH REPUBLIC
<b>EE</b>	ESTONIA
<b>HR</b>	CROATIA
<b>HU</b>	HUNGARY
<b>LV</b>	LATVIA
<b>LT</b>	LITHUANIA
<b>MT</b>	MALTA
<b>PL</b>	POLAND
<b>RO</b>	ROMANIA
<b>SK</b>	SLOVAKIA
<b>SI</b>	SLOVENIA
<b>TR</b>	TURKEY



## The new and the future member states



*The fifth enlargement of the European has taken place on 1st May 2004, after the ratification of the accession treaty. After six years of thorough negotiations, the EU had agreed to admit 10 new members from central Europe and the Mediterranean who meet the political criteria – stable democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. As full market economies, they will implement all the EU's common rules and policies. Meanwhile, Bulgaria and Romania closed all their negotiation chapters, with a view to complete accession preparation in 2007. The same negotiation process will start with Croatia and Turkey in 2005.*

If you want to know more about the enlargement of the EU or anything else on the EU, visit the Commission's website:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/>

Look for the nearest information point at:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/networks/eic/eic.html>

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/relays/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/relays/index_en.htm)

or call Europe Direct from anywhere in the EU: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11