

New CER pamphlet

THE CONSTELLATIONS OF EUROPE

How enlargement will transform the EU

By Heather Grabbe

Eastward enlargement will change the EU far more than its current members expect. Many people predict that the arrival of ten new countries will paralyse decision-making, but few have thought about how the newcomers will shape the EU's policies. In this new pamphlet, Heather Grabbe plots their positions in the emerging constellations of European countries – on the new constitution, the EU's budget, economic and regulatory policies, border controls, defence and the EU's role in the world.

The new members will not vote as an 'eastern bloc' in the Union. Rather, they will join 'coalitions of the willing' which cut across the old and new member-states. But enlargement will change the EU's future policies and ambitions:

- ★ Contrary to what many people believe, the poorer Central and East Europeans will not want a larger EU budget in future years. They cannot afford higher contributions and their own receipts from the EU's regional and agricultural funds are tightly limited until 2013.
- ★ The new members will join the economic liberals among the member-states, such as Ireland, the UK, the Netherlands and Sweden. For example, these countries will form a majority that fiercely opposes any harmonisation of tax rates in the EU.
- ★ The newcomers are not instinctive federalists, but they are very keen to prevent dominance of the Union by the largest countries. All except Poland want the EU's institutions to have a role that prevents the EU being run mainly through inter-governmental bargaining, which disadvantages small states.
- ★ The new members will be strongly Atlanticist on defence, wanting Europe to be a partner to the US, not a counter-weight in world affairs. The new members see the US as the guarantor of their security, and they fear Franco-German hegemony in Europe more than American power in the world.
- ★ The Central and East Europeans are keen for the EU become a regional power. They will push the Union to let the Balkans join and to give more help to its neighbours to the East.

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