

Chapter 4

Distinctive and Recurring Features of Enlargement Rounds

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The Distinctiveness of Enlargement Rounds

At first sight, the 10 + 2 enlargement round appears to be rather like a larger and more challenging version of the Mediterranean round. Certainly, it shares some of the characteristics of that earlier round: applicants just emerging from dictatorships; applicants with low per-capita GDPs; applicants with proportionately large agricultural sectors; and an EU with no wish to rush the application process through.

However, further inspection reveals the differences between the two rounds to be far greater than the similarities: the Mediterranean dictatorships were internal in that they were not engineered or controlled by another country and they had a much less embracing grip on society than did the communist regimes in the CEECs; the Mediterranean applicants had most of the features of a market economy, whilst the CEECs were just emerging from centrally planned economic systems; the Mediterranean states were all firmly within the Western zone of influence in the post-World-War-2 era, not least through NATO membership, whilst the CEECs were part of the Soviet bloc; and by the late 1990s and early 2000s the EU was much more integrated in respect of both institutional arrangements and policy responsibilities than had been the EC in the late 1970s and early 1980s when the Mediterraneans were negotiating accession terms.

These differences serve to make the point that all enlargement rounds are unique. They are so, most obviously, in terms of:

- *The number of applicants.* There were four applicants in the first round – Denmark, Ireland, Norway and the UK – with all but Norway joining; one plus two applicants in the second round – Greece, plus Portugal and Spain; four applicants in the third round – Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden – with, again, all but Norway joining; and the 10 + 2 (or + 3 if Turkey is included) in the fourth round.
- *The characteristics of applicants.* These have varied enormously both

between applicants in the same enlargement round and, in more general terms, between rounds. Focusing just on differences between rounds, examples of variations include: geographical location – the first enlargement brought in northern countries, the second Mediterranean countries, the third two very northern countries and one central country, and the fourth central and eastern countries and two Mediterranean countries; political inheritance – the countries which joined in the first and the EFTAn enlargement rounds all had well-established and solid democratic political systems, whilst those that joined in the Mediterranean and 10 + 2 rounds had recent histories of authoritarian/military/one party rule; and GDP per capita – the EFTAns joined the EU with an average per capita GDP well above the EU average, whilst the average of the applicants in the first round was 90 per cent, in the Mediterranean round was 70 per cent, and in the 10 + 2 round was 40 per cent.

- *The level of development of the EC/EU.* As European integration has advanced, accession processes have necessarily embraced an ever wider range of issues and, in turn, have necessarily become more complex. So, for example, the first enlargement round did not stray much beyond market-related issues, and even on these the *acquis* was much narrower than it has subsequently become. The fact is that in the early 1970s the EC did not have a foreign and security policy, a justice and home affairs policy, coordinated macroeconomic policies and a single currency, or much in the way of environmental policies. In consequence, unlike in later enlargement rounds, especially the 10 + 2 round, these issues barely arose during the accession processes that led to Denmark, Ireland and the UK joining the EC.
- *The number and nature of policy issues creating difficulties.* All applicants come to accession negotiations with policy issues about which they are particularly concerned. This can create problems, on both sides, during the accession process. For example, a key issue for the UK was protection of its historically important trading links with Commonwealth countries; for Spain, the Common Fisheries Policy was an important issue because on entry it would have the largest fishing fleet in the EC; and for most CEECs – but especially Poland – there was a desire to secure early access to the full benefits of the CAP.
- *The length of the accession process.* It might be assumed that the process would have become progressively longer as the *acquis* has developed, but this is not so. It certainly is the case that the rapid completion of the first enlargement round – the negotiations themselves lasted only around 18 months – was assisted by the relatively undeveloped nature of the *acquis*, but of equal importance was the fact that the applicants were all well-established democracies with solid market-based economies. That is to say, though there were many specific points on which agreements had to be negotiated, all of the

applicants were adjusted to the main bases of membership. Such was not the case in the second round, where the political and economic bases of the applicants were much less secure and where many more adjustments were necessary to meet the requirements of Community membership. In consequence, five and a half years elapsed between Greece's application and its entry, for Portugal the gap was almost nine years, and for Spain it was eight and a half years. For the 10 + 2 applicants the necessary adjustment were, of course, even greater than they had been for the Mediterraneans, with the consequence that for the CEECs the gap was on average 10 years, whilst for Cyprus and Malta – each of which had special problems – the gap was over 13 years. But, squeezed between the Mediterranean and 10 + 2 rounds was the EFTAn round, which was completed very quickly: the negotiations lasted only 13 months and less than three years elapsed between the last EFTAn application – from Finland in March 1992 – to the three accessions in January 1995. There were two main reasons why the round was completed so quickly: all the applicants more than met the broad political and economic criteria of membership, and many of the technical matters that feature in accession negotiations had been cleared in the earlier negotiations to create the European Economic Area (EEA).

All enlargement rounds, therefore, have been in important respects distinctive, indeed unique. They have been so because of features of the applicants on the one side and of the EC/EU on the other.

Recurring Features of Enlargement Rounds

Although all enlargement rounds have been distinctive, they have also displayed a number of recurring features. These features will now be examined.

Motivations of applicants

All states applying for EU/EC membership have done so for a mixture of economic and political reasons. The particular nature of, and balance between, these reasons has naturally varied from case to case, but all potential applicants have had to weigh the respective advantages and disadvantages presented by the two sets of reasons and relate them to their particular circumstances.

The prime economic reason for seeking membership has been that the EC/EU has been seen to be successful in terms of the usual benchmarks of economic success: promoting trade, growth, and prosperity. The main explanation for this success has been held to be the opening of the internal

market to an ever-increasing number of people. The main economic disadvantage of membership has been the restrictions placed on national economic manoeuvrability. Initially, the restrictions applied primarily in the sphere of trade, following the construction of the customs union in the 1960s. Later, restrictions also came to apply in many other spheres as, especially following the 're-launch' of the Community in the mid-1980s, most key economic decisions – on matters ranging from competition law to macro-economic management – have come to be either taken at, or at least be heavily guided from, the EU level.

Two main sets of possible political advantage have offered themselves to potential member states. The first has been to be part of an organization with the potential to exercise a considerable influence on the world stage. No EU state, not even Germany, which, with a population of over 80 million, is the largest member state by some 20 million, has the resources to be an international power of the first rank. The second possible political advantage for many applicants has been that the EU has offered the prospect of bolstering fledgling democracies and/or has offered soft security protection. Bolstering their newly-established democratic systems was important for all of the Mediterranean and CEEC applicants, whilst offering soft security protection has been important for the CEECs and also Cyprus.

Motivations of existing member states

Just as applicants have sought membership for varying mixtures of economic and political reasons, so have existing member states been willing to open the doors for such reasons. The central economic reason has been the perceived opportunities and advantages that have been anticipated as flowing from widening the internal market. However, other economic considerations have played a part too, as with, for example, the EC-6 welcoming the fact that the UK would be a net contributor to the EC's budget. Political reasons have included the potentially greater global role and impact for the EC/EU, the security advantages of bringing together the European continent – especially important in the 10 + 2 round – and, in the Mediterranean and 10 + 2 rounds, a strong desire to help applicants to consolidate their new democratic systems. Such has been the perceived importance of this last reason that in 1976 the European Council did not follow the Commission's advice that accession negotiations with Greece should be delayed because the country was not ready for membership in economic terms but rather instructed that negotiations should be opened so as to help underpin Greece's newly restored democracy.

But whilst existing member states have recognized reasons for being open to applicants, all enlargement rounds have also been accompanied by concerns that enlargement might create too many difficulties for the

EC/EU and/or might damage national interests. This has resulted in a certain hesitation, even reluctance, to embrace new members too quickly. It is a reluctance that is understandable. Existing member states have, after all, helped to build, and are part of, an organization they believe furthers their interests and they do not want to see this endangered. President de Gaulle's two vetoes of the UK were but a particularly blatant and overt instance of national considerations and calculations guiding reactions to attempts by outsiders to join the club. When de Gaulle's successor, Georges Pompidou, lifted the French veto he did so not because of any attachment to a pan-European spirit but because he judged UK membership would be useful to France by helping to open the British market and providing a counter balance within the Community to the increasingly powerful West Germany.

In the EFTAn and 10 + 2 rounds, the concerns of some member states have been such as to lead the EU to attempt to satisfy applicants with arrangements that have stopped short of accession. In the EFTAn round, the concern – which was encouraged by the then President of the Commission, Jacques Delors – was that an enlargement at that stage might deflect the EU from its efforts to forge further political and economic deepening (the latter including the EMU project.) Such concerns lay behind the creation of the EEA. In the 10 + 2 round, the main concern was that the applicants were so far from being prepared for membership that their accession would be both hugely disruptive and too expensive. This concern formed part of the background to the Europe Agreements and the assumption by existing EU member states in the early 1990s that these would serve to help put CEEC EU memberships on a long hold. Of course, such was the attraction of EU membership for the EFTAns and the CEECs that the EEA and the Europe Agreements did not delay membership applications, or indeed membership itself.

Managing applications

The ways in which membership applications are handled have become progressively sophisticated and fine-tuned over the years. So, in the 10 + 2 round, innovations included the increasingly elaborate pre-accession preparations, the devising of a 'roadmap' to provide target dates for the closing of chapters, and the creation in the Commission – at the beginning of the College that assumed office in September 1999 under the Presidency of Romano Prodi – of a DG for Enlargement.

But although the mechanics of dealing with enlargement have been developed, they have mostly conformed to a similar overall pattern in each round. The 1973 enlargement was the most 'rudimentary', but then the EC was much less developed in institutional and policy terms at that time and had no 'template' from which to work. However, even that enlargement displayed many of the central features that are still very much present

today: the decision to open the round was taken at a summit of national leaders (the Hague summit of December 1969, which was an informal summit since the European Council had not then been created); the detailed negotiations were conducted by teams of expert officials from the applicant states on the one side and from the Commission and Council on the other side; and final decisions to conclude negotiations were taken by politicians on both sides (on the EU side, key political decisions of this nature usually were taken in the Foreign Ministers Council, but since the creation of the European Council in 1974 they mostly have been taken at summits).

The accession procedures as they applied in the 10 + 2 round were described at some length in Chapter 3, so only an outline of the main stages as they have become 'standardized' will be given here:

- The European Council decides whether an application is acceptable in principle. Only one application has been rejected to date – that of Morocco because it is not a European state.
- When an application is deemed to be acceptable in principle, the European Council asks the Commission to produce a report on whether the applicant meets the conditions of membership and to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the application.
- The Commission's report on an application, which normally takes some months to produce, is known as its Opinion (or *avis*). All Opinions contain a recommendation on whether or not to proceed to accession negotiations. Amongst the recommendations that have been made are: that accession talks be opened in the near future – Spain and Portugal, the EFTAns, and the first wave CEECs; that applicants are not ready for negotiations and should wait until they are further developed – Greece (the only Commission recommendation to have been rejected), Turkey, and the five second wave CEECs; and that a state is ready according to the normal criteria but circumstances suggest the opening of negotiations should be delayed – Cyprus and Malta.
- The European Council sets the date for the opening of accession negotiations.
- The negotiations are divided into sectoral areas. Before detailed negotiations between the applicants and the EU can begin in any sectoral area, the latter must agree, by unanimity, on its common position. The most difficult and longest part of the negotiating process is usually not the exchanges between the EU and applicants, but these internal deliberations in the EU as the member states search for common negotiating positions.
- The negotiations between the EU and applicants are overseen by the Council of Ministers (Foreign Ministers) working with the Commission on the EU side and by national governments on the applicants' side. The detailed deliberations and exchanges – most of which

are conducted through memos, papers, and documents rather than through across-the-table discussions – are handled by subject specialists.

- When all of the negotiations are deemed by Ministers to have been finalized, they are referred to the highest political level – the European Council on the EU side – for formal completion. The European Council sets the date for the signing of an accession treaty and a target date for EU admission.
- Accession treaties must be ratified by the EP and by all existing and applicant states according to their own preferred procedures.

An elite-driven process

Decision-making in European liberal democratic states is elite-driven and elite-managed. Citizens do input into decision-making – most obviously and commonly through elections and public opinion soundings – but they do not directly control decisions, except in the rare circumstances when referendums are held. Elected decision-makers are expected to provide a lead, and because they are representatives rather than delegates they are able, and arguably are obliged, to take what they believe to be the best decisions in the circumstances they meet even if their electorates are sceptical or are opposed.

All EU enlargement rounds have been controlled by political elites, in both existing and applicant states, on the basis of the principles that have just been outlined. Or at least they have been so up to the point of ratification of accession treaties. Even though EU membership has immense implications for acceding states and important implications for existing member states, no government has ever consulted its electorate on whether accession negotiations should be opened. Moreover, no existing member state has ever consulted its electorate after the signing of accession treaties: ratification has always been channelled via national parliaments.

In existing member states this control by elites has been especially important in the 10 + 2 round. It has been so because opinion in the EU-15, for most of the period of the accession process, has, on average, been reasonably evenly divided for and against enlargement, though in a minority of states it has leant against. So, for example, in 2001, *Eurobarometer* (which measures opinion in EU states) reported that, across the EU-15, 43 per cent of respondents indicated they were in favour of enlargement, 35 per cent were against, whilst 22 per cent expressed no opinion. Support was strongest in Greece, Ireland and Spain, and weakest – there were majorities against – in Austria, France and Germany (*Eurobarometer*: 55, October 2001).

Occasionally, the government of an existing member state has indicated that it might hold a referendum on accession ratification but this

has tended to be done either to deflect a temporary domestic problem or to put pressure on applicants that are causing ‘difficulties’ in negotiations to be more compliant. Whatever the reason for indicating that a referendum might be possible, the fact is that no such referendums have been held, even when particular enlargement rounds have had major and very direct implications for existing member states, as when borders are shared with applicants. A key reason why they have not been held is that, as with the very limited use of referendums in domestic politics or on such important EU subjects as treaty reforms and the introduction of the euro, governments prefer to remain in control of events and they lose control if they permit referendums to be held. That this is so is seen in EU governments having lost referendum votes on the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty (Denmark in 1992), the adoption of the euro (Denmark in 2000 and Sweden in 2003), and the ratification of the Nice Treaty (Ireland in 2001). So, even when some thought has been given by governments of existing member states to holding referendums on accessions, and this itself has been only an occasional occurrence, it has in the event been judged to be just too risky to go ahead.

The most significant exception to the pattern of elite dominance is the ratification of accession treaties in acceding states. With the exception of the UK in the 1973 round, all three states that made up the Mediterranean round, and Cyprus in the 10 + 2 round, all acceding states have held a referendum on the terms of accession. The rules of these referendums have varied greatly, including in respect of whether their outcome has been binding or merely advisory and also in respect of whether a specified percentage of the electorate has had to vote in order for the referendum to be valid. Though there have been concerns in some states as to whether the necessary majority would be obtained – Malta was seen as being the most doubtful in the 10 + 2 round – the only country which has rejected accession terms negotiated by its government is Norway – in both 1972 and 1984 (see the Chronology for all referendum results).

The impact on widening and deepening

The nature of the relationship between the widening and deepening of the European integration process has been raised and debated at every enlargement round, but especially since the Mediterranean round. Widening refers to the accession of new member states whilst deepening refers to the extension of EU-level policy competencies and the strengthening of EU institutions.

The debate has focused particularly on whether, to what extent, and in what ways widening and deepening are in potential conflict with one another. The essence of the case that widening threatens deepening is that the larger, the more diverse, and the less cohesive the EU becomes then so

does decision-making become more difficult and, therefore, policy development more problematical. All member states have recognized that there is at least something in this case, whilst the UK, for long the member state least willing to support integrationist advance, has also *hoped* there is much in the case. Because of the concerns of most states that widening might threaten deepening in this way, a cautious approach has tended to be taken towards new applicants. So, for example, as noted earlier in the chapter, a major reason the EU promoted the EEA with the EFTAs and Europe Agreements with CEECs was a hope that these would postpone membership applications.

Because of their concerns that widening might endanger deepening, the more integrationist states have taken a lead to ensure that precisely the reverse happens. This has been achieved by preceding, or at least accompanying, each enlargement round since the Mediterranean round with treaty reforms that have had as at least part of their purpose advancing institutional and policy deepening before they can be threatened by widening: the major component part of the Mediterranean round – the Spanish and Portuguese accessions – was accompanied by the SEA; the EFTAn round was preceded by the Maastricht Treaty; and the 10+2 round was preceded by the Amsterdam and Nice Treaties. All of these treaties provided for both institutional deepening – including provisions for increased supranational decision-making – and policy deepening, including by adding new policy areas to the treaties and by making it easier for many policy decisions to be made. Furthermore, the 10+2 round provided an important part of the background to the convening in 2002 of the Constitutional Convention on The Future of Europe, followed by the convening in 2003 of an Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) charged to finalize a constitution for the EU. Widening has thus been an important factor in driving deepening.

The case that deepening threatens widening rests mainly on the argument that deepening raises the barriers for would-be member states by making the conditions of entry look too intimidating and the *acquis* ever more difficult to meet. That the barriers are raised by deepening is indeed indisputable, but there is little evidence to indicate that this discourages possible applicants. On the contrary, deepening has promoted widening by increasing the importance of the EU and hence the desirability/necessity of joining before deepening proceeds even further. This does, of course, create the possibility of states seeking membership not so much for the ‘positive’ reason of what is to be gained but more for the ‘negative’ reason of fear of being excluded. In turn, as Redmond and Rosenthal have observed (1998a: 5), this possibility ‘raises the specter of some of the newer member states not wanting to pursue integration beyond a certain point and/or in certain areas; from here it is but a short step to “variable geometry”’.

Far from being in conflict, widening and deepening have therefore

proceeded hand-in-hand – indeed have even promoted each other. This is not, of course, to suggest that they have been the *only* promotional factors. Deepening has also been promoted by the pursuit of greater economic prosperity, of greater security, and of a greater voice for the EU in international affairs. Amongst other factors promoting widening have been changing international power balances (which encouraged the UK, and in its slipstream Denmark and Ireland, to join), the end of authoritarian dictatorships (the Mediterranean round), the end of the Cold War (the EFTAn and 10+2 rounds), and economic interdependence (all rounds).

But though deepening and widening have proceeded alongside one another, the nature of the deepening has been changed in some respects by widening in that it has had to assume a more flexible character. As EMU, Schengen, and the Amsterdam and Nice provisions for enhanced cooperation show, it has come to be accepted that beyond the internal market core there are circumstances in which it is permissible for institutional and policy development to occur without all member states participating. This development is a direct consequence of the EU becoming larger and taking on a more heterogeneous membership. Most observers and practitioners believe the 10+2 round will, because of the number and diversity of the acceding states, greatly boost this movement in the EU towards flexibility or differentiation.

Impact on the European Union

It is evident that all enlargement rounds have had a significant impact on the nature and operation of the EU. They have done so, most notably, in terms of institutional composition, the rules and functioning of decision-making processes, and policy development.

Institutional composition

The most obvious impact of enlargement on EU institutional composition has been the need to incorporate representatives and officials from acceding states into the EC/EU institutions. At the ‘political’ level, this incorporation was, until the 10+2 round, relatively straightforward, with acceding states given their ‘due’ allocation of a Commissioner (or two in the case of the UK and Spain), an ECJ judge, a seat in the European Council and Council of Ministers, a proportionate number of MEPs, and appropriate allocations in the other institutions. The 10+2 round, however, was more problematical, with many practitioners and observers taking the view that if the institutions were to be able to operate efficiently after such a large intake there would have to be a radical re-think of their composition with, for example, an end to the system of

each member state having at least one Commissioner and a tight cap put on the overall size of the EP. In the event, the IGCs leading up to the Amsterdam and Nice treaties, which were established largely to tackle the institutional implications of the 10 + 2 round, failed to provide for fundamental reforms (unless the restriction of all member states to one Commissioner and the cap on the size of the EP can be so described) and largely settled for the customary 'easing in' arrangements.

At the administrative level, the number of additional posts created depends on the number and size of new states acceding plus the outcome of budgetary negotiations between the EU's institutions. In the 10 + 2 round, for example, the Commission recruited 500 temporary staff in the period leading up to enlargement – primarily to deal with languages work and with agriculture policy and regional policy (*European Voice*, 2–8 October 2003). In the first year of enlargement (2004) the Commission was assigned an extra 780 permanent posts, whilst the Council was assigned 286 and the EP 355 (*EUobserver*, 20 December 2003). Further additions were planned to be phased-in over a five year period.

Some senior administrative positions have virtually been assigned to new member states in the early post-accession period, which has led to pressure on some established officials to take early retirement and also to (seemingly justified) complaints about people being appointed who would not qualify in the normal way. However, in a short space of time, officials from acceding states have become subject to the same entry and promotions requirements as established officials. An important effect of enlargement on the EU bureaucracy has, of course, been to make it more multi-national and multi-cultural in composition, which has led to suggestions that the work of the bureaucracy has been increasingly influenced by the existence of different national administrative cultures (see, for example, McDonald, 2000).

The changed composition of the EU's political and administrative institutions has served to undermine the dominance of French as the EU's, and especially the EU bureaucracy's, working language. The 1973 enlargement brought in two countries (the UK and Ireland) which had English as their first language and one (Denmark) which had it as its second language. The 1995 enlargement brought in three countries in which English was much more the second language than French. Of course, the increasing role of English as the language of international communication has been important in this context too, but English would not have made such an 'advance' without enlargement.

The rules and functioning of decision-making processes

The approach to adapting the rules and functioning of decision-making processes so as to accommodate new member states has, for the most

part, followed a similar pattern to the adjustments made to the composition of institutions. That is to say, changes that have been judged to be necessary to enable new members to join have been made, but they have stopped short – until the 10 + 2 round at least – of using enlargement as the occasion for radical re-structuring.

Little was done to decision-making rules or functioning at the time of the 1973 enlargement round. However, subsequent enlargement rounds have always been accompanied by calls for reforms in the interest of improving decision-making capacity. Attention has focused primarily on the anticipated greater difficulties of achieving unanimity in the Council with more members at the table. Concerns that this would lead to decisions not being taken in key policy areas provides much of the explanation for the convening of IGCs and for the intense focus at IGCs on QMV. Some changes made to QMV rules consequent upon enlargement have been unavoidable, including the allocation of Council votes to new member states and setting the number of votes that constitutes a qualified majority. Other changes, however, have been more discretionary, including determining the treaty articles to which qualified majority voting (QMV) should be extended and the political willingness to actually use QMV when it is available.

Because member states had avoided making certain much-needed difficult decisions on rules and functioning in previous rounds, and because too of the scale of the round, it was generally recognized by the EU-15 that the 10 + 2 round would require attention being given to neglected aspects of the rules and operation of the EU. The Amsterdam and Nice IGCs were supposed to do this but, in the event, they largely limited themselves to the bare essentials to make enlargement possible. However, with significant, and arguably fundamental, reform clearly required, the Constitutional Convention on the Future of Europe that was convened in March 2002 to help lay foundations for the next IGC was charged by the 2001 Laeken European Council meeting with the task of taking a broad view of the nature and functioning of the EU's institutions and decision-making processes. As was shown in Chapter 3, several of the most important recommendations of the Convention – which were formally presented to the June 2003 Thessaloniki summit in the form of a draft constitution – stemmed directly from the increasing size of the EU. These included recommendations for a new European Council President, for the abolition of the rotational Council presidency, and for a smaller College of Commissioners. Most of the recommendations were duly accepted by the IGC, which convened the following October. However, recommendations on Council voting – centred on abolishing national voting weights and basing majorities on a majority of member states representing at least 60 per cent of the total EU population – were not accepted, which led to the IGC being, in effect, suspended at the December 2003 Brussels summit.

Policy development

EC/EU policy development has been affected in many ways by each enlargement round, with all newcomers bringing their own policy preferences, priorities, and needs with them. One of the effects has been to intensify the importance of some policies. Such was, for example, the case with the Common Fisheries Policy after the UK and Ireland became members. Another effect has been to add new dimensions to existing policies, as, for instance, with Greece, Portugal and Spain seeking to shift the balance in CAP spending from northern temperate produce to Mediterranean produce. And a third effect has been to make it more difficult for all members to be full partners in policy initiatives, for the more member states there are the more diverse are the interests and policy preferences that have to be accommodated. The differentiated character of EMU and of Schengen illustrate this, as do many foreign and security policy actions.

Regional policy provides, as Preston (1997: 138–43) shows, another good example of how a policy area can both assume salience and also be changed as a result of enlargement. A Directorate General for Regional Policy was created in the Commission in 1967, but it was only with the 1973 enlargement that regional policy assumed real significance. It did so because the enlargement resulted in the establishment of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which was devised not only to assist less prosperous areas, including Ireland, but also to enable the UK to receive transfer payments that would partially offset its budgetary deficit with the EC caused by its relatively small agricultural sector. The Mediterranean round then led to a major upgrading of regional policy, and, more broadly, 'cohesion' policy, with the Single European Act adding a new 'Economic and Social Cohesion' title to the EEC Treaty, and with the 1988 'Delors 1' package of budgetary reforms doubling the size of the Structural Funds (composed mainly of the ERDF and the European Social Fund) between 1988–1992. As Preston observes of this period, 'The focus on 'cohesion' was part of the grand bargain underpinning the development of the Single European Market and it was the price exacted by the poorer, mainly southern, EC members for their consent to further internal deregulation' (pp.140–1). In the early 1990s, the four poorest member states – Greece, Portugal, Spain, and Ireland – bargained hard again over the replacement to the Delors 1 package, and were instrumental in securing another doubling of Structural Fund expenditure in the 1993–1999 financial perspective. Even the EFTAn enlargement round affected regional policy, not in its case by leading to an increase in expenditure but by producing an additional criterion for Structural Fund payments: under the new Objective 6, areas with low population density in Arctic and Sub-Arctic regions were to qualify for financial support.

External policies – both economic and political – also serve to illustrate how enlargement can impact on existing EU policies. The main impact here has been in the way new member states have sought to protect many of their pre-accession external arrangements and interests, either by seeking to persuade the EU to enter into new arrangements with third parties and/or by seeking to raise the profile and importance of issues, interests and geographical areas already on the EU's external policy agenda. As Cremona (2003: 185) has noted, examples of this phenomenon include the following: the 1973 enlargement promoted the negotiation of a free trade agreement with the remaining EFTA states, an increased engagement with the Nordic states arising from Denmark's membership, and a similar increased engagement with the ACP states and the US arising from the UK's membership; the Mediterranean enlargement stimulated the development of policy towards Latin America and the Mediterranean region; and the EFTAn round led directly to the so-called Northern Dimension initiative and raised interest in relations with the Baltic states and Russia. It can be anticipated that the 10 + 2 round is unlikely to have much impact on the EU's relations with the 'far abroad', but is likely to heighten the importance of relations with the (in many cases new) near neighbours of the Western Balkans, of the former Soviet Union, and of the southern Mediterranean.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has compared enlargement rounds in order to bring out a number of differences and similarities between them.

Differences between rounds have been occasioned by a number of factors related to both the applicants and to the EC/EU. Regarding applicants, amongst important factors that have been different between rounds have been their number, their levels of political and economic development and their historical legacies. Regarding the EC/EU, the key factor has been that it has become much more integrated over the years and so has imposed ever expanding membership requirements on applicants.

The similarities between rounds are such as to testify that, notwithstanding the many distinctive features each round has displayed, there is a considerable measure of continuity and evolution in the enlargement process. This is seen, for example, in the motivations of both applicant and existing member states, in the necessity of all newcomers having to make many domestic adjustments before admittance, and in the elite-driven and elite-dominated nature of enlargement processes. The 10 + 2 round may not have proceeded in quite the classical manner described by Preston (1995 and 1997) and may have required more adaptations on both the applicant and member states sides than had been seen before, but much of it was still conducted within a recognizably inherited framework.