

The Eastward Enlargement and the Migration Space Revisited

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The failure of referendums on the ratification of the constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands in 2005 has caused an *impasse* in the harmonisation of national policies, while the enlargement and the redrawing of the EU outer borders has made the migration space of the continent extremely floating. Difficulties in the institutional development are therefore reflected on the process of political and geographical enlargement of the model of European *polity*. The lack of adequate policies with neighbouring countries both to the East and South of the new continent redrawn by the enlargement, instils migration flows, whose characteristics have a wide and changeable spectrum. The new joining members have to deal with migration outflows and the complexity of the management and control of new inflows, regular or irregular, of transit or of asylum seekers. The regional dimension seems to acquire importance and deserve special attention in the decision-making process and in the making of migration policies between the national and supranational level, between the ever present intergovernmentalism and the difficult genesis of proper European policies. The problem of EU borders is then inevitably linked with that of its political and cultural identity. The Eastward enlargement, redrawing the geographical map of the EU and its borders, opens new questions on European identity. The paper addresses these few open questions, building upon an ongoing research aimed at investigating the link between the post EU enlargement migration space and the process of the forming of a common EU immigration policy.

Keywords: EU enlargement, borders, immigration, Central and Eastern Europe, European identity, Turkey

This text stems from the analysis of the setbacks in the process of European integration and at the same time the consolidation of some migration trends which occurred in the aftermath of the Eastward enlargement. The failure of referendums on the ratification of the constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands in 2005 has caused an *impasse* in the harmonisation of national policies, while the enlargement and the redrawing of the EU outer borders has made the migration space of the continent extremely floating. Difficulties in the process of institutional development are therefore reflected on the process of political and geographical enlargement of the model of European polity. The EU remains an entity without a strong political identity, characterised by countries of fluctuating development, having economies with different growth rates and unsteady levels of employment. The lack of adequate policies

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with neighbouring countries both to the East and South of the new continent redrawn by the enlargement, instils migration flows, whose characteristics have a wide and changeable spectrum. The immigrant labour demand of the majority of the labour markets of the EU keeps concentrating mainly in the lowest-profile areas of the productive sector, the so-called 'dirty, dangerous and demanding' activities. This reflects the needs of the majority of Western economies, but moves European countries away from the challenges of societies with high technological, research and innovation development, included in the Lisbon agenda.

The new joining members have to deal with migration outflows and the complexity of the management and control of new inflows, regular or irregular, of transit or of asylum seekers. All the estimates of relative increase of post-enlargement migration outflows have proved to be correct. The direction of these flows has mainly concentrated towards those countries that, from the very beginning, have opened their labour markets to the citizens of Central-East Europe, i.e. Ireland, United Kingdom and Sweden. The regional dimension seems to acquire importance and deserve special attention in the decision-making process and in the making of migration policies between the national and supranational level, between the ever present intergovernmentalism and the difficult genesis of proper European policies.

The problem of EU borders is then inevitably linked with that of its political and cultural identity. The 2004 enlargement (and its 2007 completion with the accession of Romania and Bulgaria), redrawing the geographical map of the EU and its borders, opens new questions on European identity. On top of this complex scene are the migration flows, especially those coming from Muslim countries that change the socio-political geography of the continent. The EU has to manage new challenges with the candidacy of Turkey, a Muslim majority country. The models of immigrants' integration, either assimilatory or multicultural, are discussed almost everywhere in the European continent. Finally, in the autumn 2005, in the Paris *banlieues* violent ethnic fights flared up as evidence of the fact that second and third generations of Maghrebi immigrants are separated from the surrounding fabric of society and are far from being integrated in the imperishable French republican model.

1. The post-enlargement *blues* and the aspirations of the new joining countries

On 6 May 2005 in Timișoara, a conference on European integration was held, one year after the historic enlargement of the EU to the East and a few days after the signature of the entry treaties by Romania, which ratified its entrance together with Bulgaria on 1 January 2007.

The conference confirmed some tendencies in the process of adjustment of the Romanian Law to the EU parameters, and in the making of migration policies. Secondly, the possibility of discussing about enlargement and European integration with the students attending the Master of European Studies of the Timișoara West University, gave the opportunity of collecting some considerations on the expectations that the process of enlargement had created, on the structural delays of Romania, and to a certain extent it mitigated the post-signature euphoria of the treaties with some rational considerations.

Indeed, only a few days before, the 30 April 2005 issue of the British Economist (2005b), had announced disaffection in the public opinion of central-east European countries due to the EU enlargement. Essentially, the hopes of political and social stability had turned into a surprising but turbulent economic growth, into a feeling of widespread social instability and impoverishment, and into an ill-concealed unease towards the EU, its policies and its imperative approach towards the countries that had found their national pride again after a long time. Such a feeling of unease was reflected in a greater aspiration to emigrate, although definitely limited if compared to some pre-enlargement exploitations. In some electoral segments of the new joining countries, this feeling led to the convergence of the political answers towards those fringes or those populist or conservative movements that appealed to the injured national pride and openly sided against European integration policies and against the former-communist parties that endorsed them. The Polish case is a blatant example of this, with the affirmation of the twins Lech and Jaroslaw Kaczynski of the Law & Justice centre-right populist party (Pis) both at the presidential and the following parliamentary elections in September 2005.

The enlargement showed a continent, Europe, characterised by different speed of development, shaping a leopard's spots map, where the relative western convergence on values and the battle of ideas often diverged from the countries of Central-East Europe. The latter were characterised by the rebirth of nationalist movements and sometimes by a renewed need for religiousness, reflected in the choice of those movements or political fringes often openly sided against the EU. As far as migration movements are concerned, all the estimates on the potential of the new joining countries towards Western Europe resulted in a sound, though not exponential, growth of these flows. Such a growth, as a result of the acquired freedom of movement but not of employment which was sanctioned by the treaties, especially concerned those countries that had decided to open their markets since the 1 May 2004, that is

Ireland, United Kingdom and Sweden (Traser, 2005). Basically, this phenomenon reflected two different trends: 1) the increase of skilled labour emigration towards the productive sectors of these countries that most needed it, like the agricultural and the industrial sector, the hotel industry, and the sector of common services; 2) the brain-drain in Poland, Latvia and Lithuania towards better life opportunities with the consequent depletion of the productive potential of the countries of origin.

The publication of a European Commission report on the functioning of transitional periods, quoting a series of administrative sources and surveys on the occupational power of the countries of the EU, denies any causal relationship between the mobility from the new joining countries of Central-East Europe and the presence of periods of transition in the access to the labour market in force in the majority of the member states. Apart from Ireland, where the dimensions of the migration intra-Europe post-enlargement phenomenon would be greater but of a more complex statistic evaluation, according to the report of the European Commission, the flows towards the United Kingdom and Sweden would be comparable or even lower than those towards the countries that have adopted restrictive measures, such as Austria (CEC, 2006). It is not easy to evaluate the overall phenomenon statistically, because not all of these workers register themselves in order to find work in the UK, while others thanks to the enlargement would have taken the opportunity to come out of a situation of past irregularity (CEC, 2006). The report of the European Commission on the functioning of transitional periods estimates at 0,4% the growth of applications for residence and employment permits that were applied for in the UK by citizens of the new member states from May 2004 to September 2005 (CEC, 2006).

According to statistical figures recently released by the British government, 447,000 workers of Central-East Europe have applied to work in Britain over the two years after the enlargement - of these 427,095 applications have been approved. As the biggest of the new member states, Poland also accounts the largest number of workers in Britain with well over left coming - 264,560 - from the country. The next in number are Lithuanians and Slovaks (Mahony, 2006). The majority of migrant workers from Latvia went to the United Kingdom (23,030 between 1 May 2004 and 31 December 2005) and Ireland (22,018 between 1 January 2000 and 31 December 2005)¹. According to Lithuanian official statistics, in 2005, a total of 15,571 Lithuanians emigrated to the European Union, while migration to Lithuania from the

¹ Other preferred destinations of Latvians were Norway, Denmark, Italy, Belgium and Germany.

EU-25 was 5,116. The number of non-official emigrants (i.e. those not registered by population statistics) is estimated to be 69,800 with around 22,600 in the United Kingdom, 17,200 in Ireland and 8,500 in Germany. 70% or about 49,000 of these migrants went abroad for work purposes (Traser, 2006). Finally, a depopulation of rural areas in the new member states is reported (Economist, 2005a), due to the fact that the search for better working and earning conditions drive, for instance, many Latvians either to leave the country or eventually to search for job in the fast-growing economy of the capital Riga, thus filling the places left vacant by outmigrating (to the West) Riga residents. Shortages of qualified labour occur, however not only due to outward migration, but also a very common phenomenon of a decrease in numbers. Lithuanian employers are more and more often bound to hire workforce from third countries (e.g. 78% more in 2005 than in the year before (Traser, 2005).

All in all the migration potential, which after all remains reasonable in Central-East Europe, shows the uselessness of transitional periods (Weil, 2005), the relative stability of pre/post-enlargement flows and the positive and complementary effects that the arrival of skilled workers from the new joining countries has had on the labour markets of the old member states (CEC, 2006). A discussion took place at community level on the abolition of restrictions, as it was the case with the announced decision of Finland (Kubosova, 2005c)², or on their renewal for three more years, up to the 30 April 2009, as it was the case with Germany and Austria. Further discussion took place in the context of the scheduled accession of Bulgaria and Romania in 2007. Of the EU-15 who chose restrictions in 2004, only Finland has decided free access in this second round of enlargement. Sweden, which had a liberal regime in 2004, opened again to labour migrants. The UK and Ireland, which allowed free movement to EU-8 workers, have announced restrictive measures (Drew, Sriskandarajah, 2007).

The alternative on the ground is a widespread growth of undocumented immigrants, as the result of the restrictive measures for the new member states and of the entry barriers for citizens of the neighbouring countries. From this last point of view, it seems that the experience of the 2004 enlargement has not proved to be an example for the making of migration policies of the following candidate countries into the EU. The conflict on the logic of externalization of outer borders on the one hand and the restrictions to the flow established

² Spain and Portugal were among the first countries following suit Finland by announcing the removal of restrictions towards EU-8 workers.

within the European polity on the other, seems to be perpetuated in the case of Romania, which has a high migration potential and at the same time it is a country of transit for other post-soviet republics located on its eastern borders. Romania, in fact, is slowly adapting its migration legislation to the *acquis communautaire*, repeating a script of policy making imposed from above and similarly adopted by the eight new joining countries of Central-East Europe. Also in this case, it seems that the discussions among the EU bodies and the parts that are effectively involved in the process of migration policy making of the country does not proceed on equal terms, and that the process of policy making acquires characteristics that are more reactive than proactive. The limits of reactivity in the making of migration policies are well known and should lead the EU bodies to more than one reflection which takes into consideration the specificity of the candidate states. The example and the continuous complaints of the new members, which are still shaping their policies in the prospect of adhering to the Schengen treaty, seem unable to confute the current state of things concerning Romania and Bulgaria. Furthermore, the lack of a common European policy on this matter often drives the various parts to negotiate on bilateral terms or to the conclusion of agreements among the accession countries, the neighbouring countries and the single countries of the European Union.

The image of a fragmented picture emerging from the implementation of European policies concerning migration phenomena, does not testify for the even braver challenges that the EU intends to carry out with the possible entrance of Turkey in a near future. As far as this last issue is concerned, in spite of the October 2005 agreement for the beginning of negotiations, divisions seem to prevail on the search for a unity of aims, not only at a government level but also at the level of public opinion. A survey of the French TNS Sofres, published on 30 November 2005 for the Ukrainian Yalta European Strategy Network, a lobby group which supports the entry of Kiev into the EU, claims that 51% and 45% respectively of the interviewees of the six biggest EU countries (Germany, France Italy, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom) supports the entry of Kiev and Moscow, against 40% of people in favour of the entry of Turkey (Beunderman, 2005a). It is of course a survey commissioned by a Ukrainian lobby group, but the reflection that implies is very significant. The survey finds an overall lower support to the next stages of the process of enlargement in all the six countries interviewed, regardless of the name and features of the next candidate country.

The Turkey issue will force Europe to face itself and its identity features, and maybe, at last, it will stimulate the search and implementation of an open, inclusive and plural model of citizenship. If it were not like that, and if the slow entry process of Turkey had to reach a deadlock some day, the danger of paralysis would risk again stopping the process of European integration, or dramatically diminishing its level and ambitions. The paean of after-enlargement revisionists has actually already begun. According to them, in fact, the EU would have made a too reckless step with the enlargement to the East and the constitutional impasses are evidence of the fact that the European public opinion as well as the institutional machinery and are not ready to face other and more ambitious goals. In the meanwhile, the arrest of the war criminal Ante Gotovina in the Canary Islands on the 7th of December 2005 and his following extradition to The Hague court, seems to smooth the way for Croatia to join the EU in 2009 and shifts the attention to the troubled Balkan theatre and the process of stabilisation that is under way (Kubosova, 2005a). In spite of the conflicting signs and the clear difficulties of the nearby future, it seems that the selective use of the enlargement processes as the only effective EU foreign policy tool is not going to stop.

2. Migration typologies and new outer borders of the European Union

Within the complex picture that has already been outlined, the new borders of the European Union spark off a series of migration typologies that must be carefully analysed. In other papers we have had the chance to observe how, because of the enlargement to the East, the 'buffer zone' between East and West has moved more to the East forcing the Central-East European Countries to strengthen their new border, which is now border of the EU in sight of the access to the Schengen area planned for October 2007 (Ruspini, 2005; Gelatt, 2005; Kubosova, 2006). Our evaluations on the regional lack of balances caused by the reshaping of borders, seem to be correct to such an extent that, in the meanwhile, a group of 40 regions of North, centre and South-East Europe, including Finland, the Baltic countries, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Greece and the neighbouring Russian, Ukrainian and White Russian regions have decided to form the Network of Eastern External Border Regions (NEEBOR), just to avoid the creation of a new Iron Curtain to the East, and to help the co-operation and exchange of information on environmental projects or activities supporting democracy (Kubosova, 2005b).

After the summit held at Hampton Court in November 2005, during the six-month premiership of the UK, a new communication of the European Commission shifts the

attention of policies to the South, reasserting the need for dialogue and co-operation, and not only on a bilateral point of view, between the two sides of the Mediterranean Sea and between the European Union and the African countries (CEC, 2005a). There are many unknown factors to be carefully examined, produced by the geographical closeness with countries that both to the East and South are not going to join the EU in the nearby future. On several occasions we retain the impression that the EU does not have an adequate neighbourhood policy, that the emphasising of entry controls is necessary but not sufficient to manage the complexity of the new borders and of the related migration issues.

The migration typologies both to the East and South, before or after the enlargement, have varied features. We will try to summarise them briefly, generalising the terms but not the correctness of the classifications: (1) illegal and undocumented migrations; (2) transit migrations; (3) circular and commuting migrations.

The first category is the one on which the attention and the greatest efforts of the EU countries are gathering. But, often the external control measures that are adopted do not answer the real needs of contrasting the phenomenon within the labour markets of the European countries. The most widespread measure of contrast remains the systematic regularisations whose limits are clear and widely examined by the literature. The other two categories instead, are increasingly acquiring importance in Europe putting traditional classifications of inflows and outflows under discussion. They are present both to the East and to the South, particularly to the East in the case of circular and commuting migrations. It is interesting to note how in a brand new joining member like Romania, it is possible to identify migration features of circularity and transnationalism among various rural areas of the country and the corresponding urban areas of the receiving countries, being them Italy, France, or Spain, that is the countries that are most affected by this type of flows (Sandu, 2005a and 2005b). Furthermore, it often happens that the most relatively developed areas of Romania are the ones that provide Western countries with the largest migration reservoir, proving another time the thesis according to which poverty is not a sufficient reason to emigrate (Wallace, 1999) and demonstrating the importance of the presence of other factors both at departure and arrival.

The observations of Dumitru Sandu (2005b) lead to planning policies that are adequate to regional development, and aimed, above all, at reducing poverty. According to our point of

view, the issue of regional policies requires special attention and interventions that are commensurate to the current processes of EU borders reshaping. It seems to us that adequate interventions can be applied successfully both to the East and to the South of the European continent, completing and not replacing the interventions planned by the multilateral forums of international organisations, which instead have to be strengthened and provided with a real and actual capacity both of dialogue and intervention. Imminent challenges are binding, but still there is confusion and extreme vagueness of intentions by the EU.

Symptomatic at this point is the case of Ukraine. The high representatives of the European Commission themselves seem to contradict each other showing from the one side 'caution in undertaking new commitments' as it is the case with the Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn (9 November 2005), and from the other side, instead, implying that 'the doors of the European Union remain open to Ukraine, whose future is in Europe', as it was declared in October 2005 by the present president of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso (Beunderman, 2005b). The unquestionable element seems to be the reasserted achievement of 'absorption capacity' by the EU in financial, institutional terms and in terms of consensus by the public opinion of member states, which, following the will of Austria, on 3 October 2005 led the European Commission to the inclusion of a similar clause within the negotiations with Turkey (CEC, 2005b).

As a result, the Ukrainian puzzle is left unsolved creating a geopolitical gap to the East and leaving this key country under the authoritarian pressures of Moscow. One year after the orange revolution, disillusion took over also in Kiev following the break-up of the revolutionary front and the government agreement between the two parties which had been antagonists a short time before, that is the coalition of the president Yushchenko and his rival Viktor Yanukovich. The political frame remains fragmented, with a country in the grip of power oligarchies and not properly tolerated in its aspirations by the EU (Pidluska, 2005). The risk is that the group of the so-called 'new technologists' of Moscow, led by Sergei Markov, who aim at gaining control not only of the regimes but also of the civil societies of the neighbouring countries through the availability of an infrastructure of NGOs, could influence the Ukrainian shift towards a direction that is in favour of Moscow (Kratsev, 2005).

In terms of management of migration policies between the EU and its neighbours a possible 'loss' of Ukraine would be an hypothesis to strongly avoid, given the role of bridge it has

between East and West and the migration and transit reservoir it represents (Malynovska, 2006)³. It seems that the value at stake is not understood by the European Union, which seems to struggle between the Ukrainian aspirations and the claims of the Russian neighbour, apparently without the will of doing either country wrong, but in fact abdicating Ukraine.

The European Union seems to shun the problem of adequately facing the challenges set by the Euro-Asian migration system. This system, in the light of the enlargement to the East, must be seen in terms of actual continuity. According to our point of view, the challenges it sets should be faced on equal terms by the EU and Russia within adequate multilateral meetings. Currently, Russia seems to be more interested in solving its migration idiosyncrasies rather than in considering the external dimension. The EU instead, is torn by its identity and constitutional *post-débâcle* dilemmas without having the strength and tools to activate adequate mechanisms of consultation of all the parties involved in the implementation of adequate migration policies, both at national and supranational level. It is not, of course, through an investment in technology and systems of satellite bearing that imminent problems and challenges are sorted out. In fact, the number of migrants who manage to illegally cross the land border of the EU is limited⁴.

Indeed, Russia and the other former-soviet republics would need a greater number of adequate laws and policies in order to regulate the work-flows of the Euro-Asian migration space. The involvement of these countries in active neighbourhood policies of the EU would facilitate the task of providing effective examples for the processes of regulation of the internal labour market. It seems in fact that, despite the complex political situation and the current authoritarian change through the attempt of legislative control of the NGO's, some positive elements can be found in the decision taken by the Federal Migration Service of the Russian federation of focusing on regularisation of undocumented migrants, beginning from the results of some pilot projects of mini-regularisation promoted in 2005 in the districts of Moscow, Krasnoyarsk, Irkutsk e Primorsky Kray. The adoption of regularisation mechanisms can be seen as the first step towards a more adequate management of the phenomenon, and as a way to give the possibility of coming out of irregularity to those 4 or 5 million illegal

³ Between 1991 and 2003, some 100,000 illegal migrants were held in the western border of Ukraine. The number of people arrested has grown from 148 in 1991 to 14,600 in 1999 (Malynovska, 2006).

⁴ For an accurate estimate of the phenomenon of illegal immigration and human traffic at Central-East European borders, consult, for example, the annual report of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) of Vienna.

immigrants that, according to the most reliable estimates, are in the Russian federation (Ivakhniouk, 2003).

In the light of the pieces of information collected during a work trip in Siberia and Moscow between the end of November and the beginning of December 2005, the major problem remains the ‘porosity’ of the Russian borders, for example of the border with Kazakhstan, through which 90% of illegal immigration into the country passes, crossing 7600 kilometres of border which is almost unguarded (Iontsev, Ivakhniouk, 2004). The news of a forthcoming regularisation on a large scale in Russia - though being subject to legislative checks and delays highlighted by the mini-regularisations - as well as the inclusion in the Russian criminal code, starting from the 15 January 2007, of an article on the responsibility of employers who irregularly hire immigrant manpower seem to be the first positive news also for those who have to manage problems created by the proximity caused by the new borders of the EU.

Perhaps it would be necessary to make a further step forward so as to facilitate other positive results in the field of neighbourhood policies. At the moment though, it seems that the financial efforts both to the East and South are not so adequately directed towards an easier political repercussion, and that the problems connected to the migration phenomenon, in spite of declarations of principle, keep on being faced mainly in bilateral terms with useful but extemporary tools, like agreements of readmission, or with local agreements for the circulation of goods and people through the land borders of the EU.

3. The post-enlargement migration space and its open questions

In this paper, we will confine ourselves to summing up a few observations on the migration phenomenon within the enlarged European Union, and outlining some reading variables that could enable us to provide some interpretation for future developments. It is indeed difficult to make predictions in the field of migrations, because the variables at stake are many. Our evaluations are still influenced by contingent factors, like the observation of the dynamics of the Eastward enlargement, and they still lack sufficiently adequate elements for a wider vision of the phenomenon.

In order to shed light on the whole issue, first of all let’s try to focus the attention on a series of considerations (Ruspini, 2004b):

- the migration space has expanded and it will further expand to the South-East;
- the buffer zone between East and West has moved to the East;
- the borders are not so porous as before, at least as for the eastern border of the EU;
- Russia and the former-soviet republics still lack adequate infrastructures and laws in order to play the role of ‘buffer zones’, covered, before the enlargement, by the Central-East European countries for a long time;
- former-soviet migrants and migrants coming from the extremity of Asia pass through the broad spaces of Russia and of the ex-soviet republics looking for a way to the West;
- centrifugal migration dynamics (towards the West) add to centripetal dynamics (towards the core of Russia), making the whole Euro-Asian migration space extremely fluctuating.

In this context, demographic differentials and differentials of economic growth among boundary regions of the soviet universe make migration flows unstable. The absence of inbound controls and the severe outbound controls to the West sometimes make the transit within the post-soviet space of indefinite duration. At the South borders of the continent, the Mediterranean separates opposite poles of development. The Maghreb presses for forming tighter relationships of co-operation with the countries of the North shore of the Mediterranean, while migrants coming from the sub-Saharan Africa desperately try to ‘ferry’ towards the Schengen space (Barros, Lahlou, et al., 2002). So, Maghreb countries are becoming countries characterised by transit migrations, like other already-known geographic areas of the continent.

Which is the answer of the EU to the dynamics we have just described? The accordance of permits of ‘facilitated transit’ granted with the purpose of regulating disputes like that of Kaliningrad, enclave between the East and West of the enlarged Union (Ruspini, 2003; 2004a), or with the aim of enabling the Russians of Ivangorod to visit their neighbours of Narva (Visetti, 2004), represent extemporary solutions to controversies of small or medium intensity. These solutions surely offer examples of best practices to face similar cases in other areas of Europe, but their complexity and limited operative sphere represent undoubted limits. The so-called neighbourhood policies planned for the enlargement of the EU, which are the object of a careful constructive analysis of the Commission, show instead characteristics that even now are a little bit too generic. The EU has identified special financing lines for the implementation of these policies, taking advantage from the experience developed with previous financial tools like Phare, Tacis and Meda (CEC, 2004). Anyway, it is not only a

matter of identifying and placing at disposal financial resources that are adequate for the implementation of these policies. It seems, in fact, that these 'strategic' documents, which should smooth the way to proximity policies, still lack a real vision. Indeed, they do not seem to be able to avoid the methodological superficiality and the scientific vagueness of expressions like 'circle of friends' to define the countries which border on the European Union. Actually, the term does not always refer to 'friends' if, for example, we think about the strongly authoritarian regime of Alexander Lukashenko in Byelorussia.

The presence of an unstable and insecure world at the EU gates should lead us to face the challenges and problems of 'neighbourhood' with a political perspective, and not only with a perspective of exchanges and economic co-operation. As far as migration policies are concerned, from now on it is necessary to think about multilateral solutions, which can actively involve all the parties concerned in the processes of policy-making. A possible solution could be that of using 'the open method of co-ordination' (CEC, 2001) for the EU migration policies not only 'horizontally', which means involving all the actors at national level in the creation of migration policies, but also 'vertically', involving the non governmental and international organisations, the associations of migrants and ethnic minorities acting at transnational level. This co-ordination should also work encouraging, at the same time, the participation in the process of harmonisation of all the countries concerned, either old, or new members of the EU or neighbouring countries that maybe will not become members in a nearby future.

In front of us we have the challenge originating from recent and future enlargements: the 2007 enlargement to Romania and Bulgaria, the possible 2009 to Croatia and the enlargement to Turkey whose date has still to be determined. Turkey seems to cause more problems, because of its demographic potential and its identity of a predominantly Muslim country placed between East and West. It is worth remembering that only a few years ago the fear that some millions of Turkey citizens who had been resident in Germany for a long time could acquire a double nationality and then assert their electoral weight, inevitably led to the adoption of a model of compromise in the reform of the nationality law. For the first time, this law adopted elements of *ius soli*, but the hypothesis of a double passport which had originally been envisaged in the reform advocated by the red-green majority was rejected (Ruspini, 2000). In the following years, the Christian-democratic and social democratic parties opened a debate on the identity of the country and on the concept of *Leitkultur*, as the German reference

culture whose roots, according to the leaders of the two parties, sink into the Christian tradition of the country (Ruspini, 2001).

Germany is just an example. Other western countries are living strong conflicts of identity as well, worsened after the events of September the 11th. The conditions of immigrant communities and ethnic minorities in the EU have become more serious. Multicultural practices are brought into question and find more and more difficulties of concrete implementation (Rex, 2004). The Turkey issue adds to a complex picture, forcing the EU to rethinking itself, its identity and borders. The Turkish Nobel prizewinner, Orhan Pamuk, author of the novel 'Snow', overturns widespread perspectives saying that the economic disparity, and not religious differences, is the reason why a part of the European public opinion keeps looking suspiciously at the entrance of Turkey into the European Union, even after the acceptance of its candidature in October 2005:

(...) Brussels does not want us because we are poor, not because we are Muslims. Europeans are culturally very distant from Japanese people, but they feel them less distant than us. The true difference is not between Christians, Muslims and Buddhists, but between the rich and the poor. And the Turkish society is one of the most unjust societies in the world as far as the distribution of wealth is concerned (Sabahi, 2005: 98).

The problem of opposition to the enlargement to Turkey is surely for the EU a complex one, and it is based on a series of factors: (1) the future borders of the Union with a very unstable Middle East; (2) the potential migration flows from a demographic reservoir (and a market of potential consumers) of almost 70 million inhabitants; (3) the political geography of each member State, in view of the historic presence of wide Turkey communities in various States; and (4) the situation of Turkey as regards human rights (including the still missing official acknowledgement of the Armenian genocide). The enlargement to Croatia raises similar questions, but surely on a smaller scale, considering the neighbouring countries of Balkans that are predominantly Muslims like Bosnia, and Albania, although the latter shows differences due to its recent history. As a matter of fact, it is difficult to oppose the Christian identity, though historically multifaceted in the different European countries, to the Muslim one when discussing the entrance of Turkey, even more if we consider that during the last thirty years the EU has been characterised as an imposing secular and secularising institution.

The Turkish problem seems therefore a badly defined identity problem. Perhaps we should talk more on Europe, its future and its more and more multiethnic mosaic in order to find answers to the identity questions that concern the EU. Perhaps we should remember that Europe is nothing but an appendix of the broader Euro-Asian continent. An exercise of reductionism and of a correct approach to the geographical and cultural proportions should be useful to this purpose. Perhaps, as Emil Tode says in its captivating prose, we should not overdo in the search for a European identity. The Estonian writer suggests the image of Europe as the western border of a huge continent that, like an ink spot spilled on an absorbent sheet of paper, has coloured the whole planet, and he claims that 'Europe cannot be found, because there is no place where it does not already exist' (Tode, 2005: 239).

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