

# **EU-27 WATCH**



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# EU-27 Watch

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## On the project

Due to the new treaty provisions of the Lisbon Treaty and the economic crises the enlarged EU of 27 member states is on the search for a new *modus operandi* while also continuing membership talks with candidate countries. The EU-27 Watch project is mapping out discourses on these and more issues in European policies all over Europe. Research institutes from all 27 member states and the four candidate countries give overviews on the discourses in their respective countries.

The reports focus on a **reporting period from December 2009 until May 2010**. This survey was conducted on the basis of a questionnaire that has been elaborated in March and April 2010. Most of the 31 reports were delivered in May 2010. This issue and all previous issues are available on the EU-27 Watch website: [www.EU-27Watch.org](http://www.EU-27Watch.org).

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**Poland****Enlargement and ENP remain key priorities****Maria Karasinska-Fendler**

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Support for further enlargements and for the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) remain key priorities of the Polish government and the main political parties – including the opposition. There is also a general public opinion interest in developing good relations with all neighbours who are not members of the EU. Non-governmental organisations are deeply involved in aid for the development of democracy in those countries which were formerly members of the Soviet Union. On 27 January 2010, Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski delivered the opening address at the Madrid seminar “The Future of the Eastern Partnership: Challenges and Opportunities”. Minister Sikorski’s speech was followed by a meeting of foreign ministers from the Republic of Poland, the Kingdom of Spain and the Czech Republic. The Madrid seminar, organised jointly by the Spanish Presidency, Poland and the Czech Republic, reviewed the state of implementation of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) in its bi- and multilateral dimensions, as well as examining the challenges ahead. The participants also appraised the EaP’s development perspectives and discussed ways to further consolidate it through deeper involvement of international financial actors, private sector institutions and NGOs. The seminar was attended by the representatives of the EU member states, the six partner states (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine), EU institutions, international financial institutions (the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, the World Bank) and European think tanks. The next and more concrete steps to promote the realisation of the EaP’s aims were discussed in Sopot, a Polish Baltic Sea resort. On 24 May 2010, at the invitation of Minister Sikorski, EU foreign ministers met in Poland for an EaP debate. First, the EaP was underlined as the first comprehensive initiative to bring Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine closer to the EU. The initiative aims to help those countries integrate with the EU. “Poland has proposed to create a “group of friends” for the Eastern Partnership, bringing together countries like Russia that want to participate in programmes related to the Partnership and be informed about them”, Sikorski told reporters after an EU ministerial meeting on the EaP. The “group of friends” would also include “such countries as Norway, Canada, the United States and Japan as well as others”, he said. It is aimed at facilitating multi-lateral meetings, the progressive liberalisation of EU visa regimes and the creation of a free-trade zone, as well as using EU funds for various projects in the region. The Partnership is “everything except a ‘cordon sanitaire’ against Russia”, France’s European Affairs Minister Pierre Lellouche told AFP after the meeting. It can be well seen that Poland wants to play a leading role in developing the EaP strategy and in its realisation. It is worth noticing that the Union for the Mediterranean is not perceived as a competitive but as a cohesive way of building up common EU relations with its partners. For that reason, Poland supports all Mediterranean projects, expecting in return support from a majority of EU members for its efforts on the eastern border.

## Questionnaire for EU-27 Watch, No. 9

Reporting period December 2009 until May 2010 – Deadline for country reports 21 May

**All questions refer to the position/assessment of your country's government, opposition, political parties, civil society organisations, pressure groups, press/media, and public opinion. Please name sources wherever possible!**

### 1. Implementation of the Lisbon Treaty

On the 1 December 2009 the EU-reform ended with the entering into force of the Lisbon Treaty. However, the new treaty provisions still have to be implemented. Some procedures and conditions have to be determined. In other cases, procedures, power relations, and decision-making mechanisms will change due to the new provisions.

- How is the work of the new President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, assessed in your country? Which changes to the role of the rotating council presidency are expected?
- How is the work of the new High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, assessed in your country? Please take into particular consideration both her role within the European Commission and her relationship to the Council of the European Union.
- On 25 March 2010 a "Proposal for a Council Decision establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service" was presented. How is this concept perceived in your country? Which alternatives are discussed?
- On 31 March 2010 the European Commission presented a proposal defining the rules and procedures for the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI). What are the expectations for the ECI in your country? What are the various positions concerning the rules and procedures?

### 2. Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy

The European Commission has given its opinion on Iceland's application for EU-membership and a decision from the Council is expected before the end of June. Croatia seems to have settled its border dispute with Slovenia. Against this background:

- Which countries does your country expect to become members of the European Union in the next enlargement round? What are the opinions in your country on the membership of these countries?
- How are the membership perspectives of those countries discussed, which are not expected to become a member in the next enlargement round?

The Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean were the last major projects dealing with the European neighbourhood:

- How are these projects assessed in your country?

### 3. European economic policy and the financial and economic crisis

The European Council agreed on 25/26 March on the key elements of the Europe 2020 strategy, the successor of the Lisbon strategy. While not being on the formal agenda the economic and financial situation in Greece was discussed. The European Council agreed on a finance package combining bilateral loans from the eurozone and financing through the International Monetary Fund.

- How is the finance package for Greece assessed in your country? Are there any opinions on the process, how the agreement on the package was reached?
- Which lessons should be drawn from the Greek case for a reform of the Stability and Growth Pact?
- How is the idea of "a strong coordination of economic policies in Europe" perceived in your country? What concepts of an European economic governance are discussed in your country and which role do they assign to the Euro group?
- How is the Europe 2020 strategy discussed in your country? What are the priorities for the Europe 2020 strategy from your country's perspective?

### 4. Climate and energy policy

The climate conference in Copenhagen took note of the Copenhagen Accord but did not reach a binding agreement. The next conference of the parties (COP 16 & CMP 6) will take place at the end of November 2010.

- How is the Copenhagen conference assessed in your country? Please take into consideration the negotiation strategy of European Union and the results of the conference.
- Does the European Union need to change its own energy and climate policy in order to give a new impulse to the international negotiations?
- Is a global agreement within the UNFCCC the best strategy to fight climate change? If not, which alternative strategy should the European Union follow?
- What is your country's position on financing mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries?

### 5. Current issues and discourses in your country

Which other topics and discourses are highly salient in your country but not covered by this questionnaire?