



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Meeting with Vít Dostál and Vlad'ka Votavová, Association for International Affairs, Prague, June 2014

1. A Foreign Office official interviewed Vít Dostál and Vlad'ka Votavová from the Association for International Affairs in Prague in June 2014, for the UK Balance of Competences Review of EU Enlargement.
2. A survey of Czech European policy elites had recently put Enlargement at the bottom of a list of importance of 17 European issues, just behind European Neighbourhood Policy. Czech perceptions of Enlargement were tied to the 2004 and 2007 waves of accession. In contrast with other national publics of enlargement countries of the central and eastern states that acceded in 2004, the Czechs were reticent about EU membership.
3. An EU perspective was more realistic for Moldova and Georgia, than Ukraine, for which NATO was more relevant. The Czech Republic and Poland were more interested in the Eastern Partnership than the Western Balkans. Indeed, Turkey did not feature at all in the (ruling) Christian Democrats' intergovernmental programme.
4. Of current countries with a perspective on EU membership, Albania's reluctance to grant energy licenses to the Czech Republic's state-owned energy company had irritated the Czechs.
5. Media coverage of the Vukovar massacre and its legacy has been good at cementing public support for enlargement, but there had been little else.