



# Foreign & Commonwealth Office

## Record of interview with Judy Dempsey, Carnegie Europe, 8 July 2014

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### Enlargement and UK influence

1. UK influence was boosted by enlargement. Countries entering the EU were traditionally seen as UK allies. Furthermore, the UK had been seen as a champion of enlargement and it had chosen not to implement transitional controls, thus boosting UK standing in the new Member States.
2. The UK's ability to influence the enlargement process can be seen in the pushing of law and order and Turkish accession up the political agenda.
3. The UK's influence with these Member States had since waned due to a number of factors:
  - a) The migration debate in the UK.
  - b) Reduced defence spending is making some new Member States (particularly Poland) feel less secure.
  - c) The possibility of a "Brexit".
4. The perception that the UK did not take sufficient action on Ukraine (particularly in Poland).
5. The lack of understanding in the new Member States of the UK perspective on the EU and the view that the UK is harming its interests.
6. Despite the strains, the new Member States respect the UK commitment to liberal values and human freedom and want the UK to remain inside the EU. They do not want to be left in a union with France and Germany as the only large countries, and value the UK's contribution to the EU's defence and security.

## **The balance of competence**

7. The balance of competence between Member States and EU institutions is appropriate in the pre accession stage of the enlargement process.
8. Recent cases have shown that the pace of reform can stall or reverse once countries enter the EU as the leverage to push for reform is removed. The commission needs increased power to monitor and enforce standards in new Member States post-accession. It would be beneficial if these standards were equally applied to Member States which had not recently acceded.
9. The main problems have been in the exercise of competence rather than its location. The commission and some Member States have pushed for the accession of some countries prematurely.

## **EU financial and technical assistance**

10. There have been problems in the absorption and use of financial and technical assistance. This is partly due to a lack of administrative capacity on the part of candidate countries to use the money effectively and to work through EU bureaucracy to obtain it.
11. Conditionality and technical assistance are based on a general approach to candidates. If it could be tailored towards the needs of each country it would be more effective.

## **Conditionality**

12. Conditionality is essential to the effectiveness of enlargement. However the adoption of the acquis is not sufficient to Europeanise a country. Problems in candidate countries often stem from social, political and generational issues which make adaptation to European norms difficult.
13. In order to increase the focus on political developments within candidate countries EEAS posts should be given a more significant role in monitoring the political situation.

14. There should be greater emphasis on observation of the Rule of Law and the democratic process in candidate countries. The “New Approach” is a step in the right direction in this regard.

### **EU Enlargement and the EU’s Geostrategic interests**

15. Overall enlargement has been to the EU’s geostrategic advantage. It has increased the weight of the EU internationally and increased the confidence of Poland and the Baltic States in standing up to Russia.
16. A significant problem has been that new and old Member States have not yet agreed a wider strategic view on the EU’s relations with its neighbours. This is particularly apparent in the EU’s relations with Russia. The wide spectrum of perspectives within the new Member States has been starkly exposed in the Ukraine crisis.
17. Russia is able to exploit divisions within the Member States and the EU’s dependence on Russian energy to its advantage. Both of these weaknesses are particularly apparent in new Member States, making a united and robust response more difficult. Member States and the EU itself are not pursuing energy diversification fast enough.
18. The need for an effective EU security and defence policy in an enlarged EU creates impetus for further integration; this would be desirable.

### **Future Enlargement: Western Balkans**

19. Enlargement should continue to be pursued in the Western Balkans. The EU has not been sufficiently focused on it and there is competition for influence with Turkey and Russia.
20. The accession process should not be rushed. Croatia was let in too soon despite significant problems with the judiciary and continuing corruption.
21. On Bosnia and Herzegovina the EU has committed itself to the Dayton agreement. However this model is not working as the different communities do not want to live together. The EU should consider other models going forward.

22. On Serbia enlargement has been relatively successful. Serbia is working towards EU conditions for accession and is improving relations with Kosovo.

### **Future Enlargement: Turkey**

23. The EU should pursue enlargement for Turkey. Turkish accession would be a boost to EU security and defence interests given its weight and geostrategic significance.
24. The policies of PM Erdogan are being used as a pretext to push for a halting or slowing down of the accession process in Turkey. The opposite conclusion should be drawn, that now is the time to use the accession process. This is the most effective lever to influence Turkey.
25. Turkey would represent a challenge for the EU to absorb given its size and differing views on a number of issues.

### **Future Enlargement: Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia**

26. Enlargement could be pursued in these countries from a long term perspective. These countries have significant internal problems. The process could involve these states first joining an “outer core”, in a similar model to Switzerland and Norway before becoming full members. It would be important for the pace of reform to be maintained and for this to precede any steps towards membership.