



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Meeting with Dr Syed Kamall MEP in Brussels, early April 2014

1. A Foreign Office official with Dr Syed Kamall MEP in Brussels in early April 2014.
2. Dr Kamall, while arguing from a pro-diversity viewpoint, believed that EU enlargement and free movement had had an impact on the UK that politicians must address. There were negative perceptions among the public around – e.g. - the impact on public services, integration, under-cutting of local businesses and benefits tourism. If not addressed, such fears could lead to the rise of populism and anti-immigrant parties. Sending countries also feared the loss of talent. The EU's founding fathers may not have envisaged such wealth differentials between Member States and free movement between them. For future enlargements, sensible transitional periods and rules were needed - a GDP rule might be looked at.
3. More widely, while the UK was supportive, other Member States questioned whether Turkey was a European country and its impact on the EU's institutional arrangements. One should also consider, from a geopolitical viewpoint, the impact of the EU extending its borders to Iran or Iraq. It is important to consider both the emotional and the pragmatic issues around where the EU's borders should lie.
4. In commercial and trade terms, an EU of 28 is clearly a more powerful interlocutor vis-à-vis, e.g. China. Unfortunately, trade agreements are often held up by the slowest Member States or those with specific concerns (e.g., audio-visual media in TTIP), which can be frustrating for the UK. This risk increases as the EU enlarges. Rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, EFTA's approach – which permits individual nation states to sign bilateral trade deals – might be preferable.