Petr DRULÁK

Director in Charge of the Institute of International Relations.

European Democracy in Action

The Czech EU Presidency: Background and priorities

Since 1989 Czech politics and policies have been shaped by the metaphor of “the return to Europe“. EU membership represented an ultimate goal of this return, representing both its most difficult milestone and its final destination. Since the Czech EU accession in 2004, the EU has presented Czech politics with a variety of challenges connected with membership rights and obligations. Undoubtedly, the upcoming Czech EU presidency presents the most serious challenge among these.

www.notre-europe.eu
e-mail : info@notre-europe.eu

Studies & 67 Research

The Czech EU Presidency: Background and priorities

Petr DRULÁK

Studies & Research 67

The Czech EU Presidency: Background and priorities

by Petr DRULÁK

Petr DRULÁK

Director in Charge of the Institute of International Relations
IIR Researcher, guest professor at The University of Public Administration and International Relations and Associate Professor at the Institute of Politological Studies and at the Institute of International Studies, Charles University since 2005.
He is graduate of international politics, philosophy at the University of Economics, Prague.
He is also Associate Editor of the Journal of International Relations and Development since 2008, Chairman of the editorial board of the Perspectives journal (since 2004), Member of Czech Council on Foreign Relations (since 1997), Central and Eastern European International Studies Association (since 1996), Editorial Board of Mezinárodní vztahy (since 1999), Institut für europäische Politik - Berlin, Council of the Institute of International Relations, ECPR Standing Group on International Relations...

Notre Europe

Notre Europe *is an independent think tank devoted to European integration. Under the guidance of Jacques Delors, who created* Notre Europe *in 1996, the association aims to "think a united Europe."*
Our ambition is to contribute to the current public debate by producing analyses and pertinent policy proposals that strive for a closer union of the peoples of Europe. We are equally devoted to promoting the active engagement of citizens and civil society in the process of community construction and the creation of a European public space.

In this vein, the staff of Notre Europe *directs research projects; produces and disseminates analyses in the form of short notes, studies, and articles; and organises public debates and seminars. Its analyses and proposals are concentrated around four themes:*
• *Visions of Europe: The community method, the enlargement and deepening of the EU and the European project as a whole are a work in constant progress.* Notre Europe *provides in-depth analysis and proposals that help find a path through the multitude of Europe's possible futures.*
• *European Democracy in Action: Democracy is an everyday priority.* Notre Europe *believes that European integration is a matter for every citizen, actor of civil society*

and level of authority within the Union. Notre Europe *therefore seeks to identify and promote ways of further democratising European governance*.

• *Cooperation, Competition, Solidarity: « Competition that stimulates, co-operation that strengthens, and solidarity that unites ». This, in essence, is the European contract as defined by Jacques Delors. True to this approach,* Notre Europe *explores and promotes innovative solutions in the fields of economic, social and sustainable development policy.*

• *Europe and World Governance: As an original model of governance in an increasingly open world, the European Union has a role to play on the international scene and in matters of world governance.* Notre Europe *seeks to help define this role.*

Notre Europe *aims for complete freedom of thought and works in the spirit of the public good. It is for this reason that all of* Notre Europe*'s publications are available for free from our website, in both French and English: www.notre-europe.eu. Its Presidents have been successively, Jacques Delors (1996-2004), Pascal Lamy (2004-05), and Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa (since November 2005).*

Table of Contents

The Czech EU Presidency: background and priorities

Introduction

Since 1989 Czech politics and policies have been shaped by the metaphor of "the return to Europe".[1] EU membership represented an ultimate goal of this return, representing both its most difficult milestone and its final destination. Since the Czech EU accession in 2004, the EU has presented Czech politics with a variety of challenges connected with membership rights and obligations. Undoubtedly, the upcoming Czech EU presidency presents the most serious challenge among these.

I start by reviewing the intellectual background and the key milestones of the return to Europe. In this connection, I show that the slogan of the return to Europe had hidden major disagreements on the orientation of foreign policy within the political elite. Following this, I argue that since these disagreements came to the surface in the late 1990s, Czech foreign policy and the attitudes towards the EU have been influenced by four political communities – the Internationalists, Atlanticists, Europeanists and Autonomists. Using these categories, I then analyse the foreign policy orientation of the current government, arguing that

1 Some parts of this text are about to be published in French in the journal *Revue d'études comparatives Est-Ouest* (Drulák 2009). The author would like to thank to the editors of the journal for their permission.

it is internationalist with an Atlanticist tinge. After this, I examine Czech public opinion on the EU as another important factor. Following this, the priorities of the Czech EU presidency are outlined and discussed. Finally, I look into the international and domestic crises of 2008 whose effects are likely to impact on the Czech EU presidency.

I - Dissidents and neoliberals return to Europe

The Velvet Revolution in 1989 brought about a radical reversal of the policies and identities of Czechoslovakia. The new identity of the post-1989 Czechoslovakia that was undergoing democratisation was based on a positive identification with Western democracies and on a negative attitude towards the concept of communism and towards the Soviet oppressor. It was symbolised by the metaphor of a 'return to Europe', which was dominant in the discourse of the Velvet Revolution and in that of the democratic transition which followed (Drulák 2000).

Ideas about what path exactly Czechoslovakia should take on its journey back to Europe changed over time, as they were shaped by a gradual learning process. However, these ideas also differed with respect to the kind of leaders formulating them. Czech foreign policy elites were indeed a very narrow group back then: these new leaders were recruited from several informal groups and networks which existed in late communist-period society.

Two such networks became dominant: the dissidents around Václav Havel and the liberal economists around Václav Klaus (Drulák, Königová 2005). Despite the

internal heterogeneity within each group and the important differences between them, they share several common features. Both have their intellectual roots in the reform process of the late 1960s, which ended with the 1968 Soviet invasion. Each network had its own intellectual leader capable of transforming the network into a politically relevant force during the Velvet Revolution.

Neoliberals set up their political party, the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), under the leadership of Václav Klaus in 1991. This party dominated the Czech political landscape in the 1990s and has remained one of the two decisive political forces in Czech politics until the present. The dissidents were less successful, as they did not create a viable political force which would stand up for their program. On the other hand, Václav Havel, the informal leader of the network, was elected Czech president in 1993 (after having been the Czechoslovak president during 1989-1992), and he stayed in office till 2003.

The foreign-policy ideas of the two networks differed to some extent. Havel's formulation of 'Europeanness' was based on a search for European unity through the culture and cultivation of individuals. Besides morality and humanism, the security of the undivided continent was a prime concern to the dissidents. They called for an undivided European continent without nationalism striving for membership in the Council of Europe and in the then European Communities as well as supporting a closer Central European co-operation in the shape of the Visegrad initiative. They also supported German reunification, perceiving Germany as a post-national actor which preferred a multilateral approach to narrow national interests (Handl 2004). They were also keen on developing relations with the USA, which they saw as their key ally in their struggle against communism and which they considered as a global guarantor of democracy and human rights.

In contrast, the neoliberals focused on the partners with whom they shared their neoliberal background, such as the UK, the USA, the IMF or OECD. Similarly, they supported free-trade initiatives such as the Central European Free Trade Area (CEFTA) or an association with the European Communities (EC). However, while focusing on the economic dimension of international politics, they tended to neglect its political dimension, paying only scant attention to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe or the development of political relations with neighbours (Visegrad, Austria, Germany). In this respect, their attitude towards European integration was ambiguous: they appreciated its economic liberalisation while rejecting its redistributive policies and its political dimension. They accepted German reunification, being aware of the enormous economic potential of Germany. However, they did not feel any close affinity to the German model of a social market economy and also felt that German economic influence should be balanced by the presence of the USA and the UK, whose liberal economies they admired (Handl 2004).

However, the differences between the two networks were transcended by the concept of the return to Europe, on which both could agree since it was understood as a transition to a model of society and political economy associated with Western Europe and the USA. In this respect, accession to the multilateral organisations of Western liberal democracies was striven for with great effort. These organisations were seen as facilitators of domestic transition and, more importantly, as the outside actors which might provide new democracies with recognition of their return to the fold. Four memberships were especially important (Drulák, Königová 2005): those of the Council of Europe (1991), OECD (1995), NATO (1999) and EU (2004).

While the Council of Europe was important for dissidents and the OECD for neoliberals, both networks found merits in NATO membership. Neoliberals based their support for NATO on an analogy between NATO accession and the neoliberal economic reform. Klaus argued that this reform was a rejection of third-way attempts to reconcile communism and market democracy (Klaus 1994). Likewise, NATO accession was a rejection of the third way represented by the CSCE or Visegrad co-operation. Even though Havel and his network of dissidents were rather sceptical about NATO in 1990, they later changed their opinion. Moreover, like the neoliberals, the dissidents admired the USA, seeing it as their major ally in their struggle against the communist regime.

The EU accession was clearly the most demanding accession project of all. It required a host of reforms connected with the adoption of the *acquis communautaire*. Moreover, it provoked a lively public debate about the merits of European integration. On the one hand, EU membership benefited from the support of both

dissidents and neoliberals, as both of these groups saw it as the final recognition of the Czech Republic's democracy, market economy and "Europeanness." On the other hand, neoliberals raised objections against what they considered as *dirigisme* and central planning by the EU authorities.

Václav Klaus, first as the prime minister, then as a speaker of the parliament and finally as president, has repeatedly warned against European political integration, which he sees as a threat to freedom. However, this criticism did not prevent him from supporting Czech EU membership, emphasising its symbolic meaning as recognition of Czech Republic as "a normal country" and also its economic benefits. Therefore, despite their reservations, most neoliberals supported EU membership as well. Václav Havel, who as the Czech president was present at all of the important milestones of the EU accession, also argued for EU membership in terms of recognition but, unlike Klaus, he emphasised the political and normative features of European integration.

II - Internationalists, Atlanticists, Europeanists and Autonomists

The agreement on returning to Europe guaranteed an *internationalist* orientation of Czech foreign policy. This internationalism stood for the belief that the Czech Republic needs to develop its relations in two directions: both towards the EU and Western Europe's great powers (such as Germany and France), and towards the USA and NATO. Hence, neither direction should be preferred over the other (Drulák 2006a). Since the 1990s, internationalism has been challenged only by the *autonomist* orientation of the communists, who rejected both directions. However, since the late 1990s, autonomism has attracted new actors and internationalism has diversified into two new foreign policy orientations – namely, Europeanism and Atlanticism (Drulák 2006a).

Europeanism - social democrats

To start with, a new political force came into being in the shape of the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), which was neither a neoliberal party nor a dissident party. It grew into the strongest opponent of the neoliberal ODS, unseating the ODS in 1998 and becoming a senior coalition party in the government up until 2006.

Unlike most social democratic parties in the region, ČSSD is not a successor of the totalitarian communist party. It was built from scratch, referring to the legacy of the pre-war social democratic party and having Western European social democratic parties as its role models in striving for a social market economy and a society based on solidarity.

In public, the ČSSD subscribed to the internationalist consensus: it did not want to jeopardize the return to Europe, and it did not want to be connected with the autonomism of the communists. However, it was internally split between the Internationalists and the *Europeanists*. Europeanism privileges relations with the EU and within the EU over transtlantic relations. In other words, Berlin, Paris and Brussels are preferred to Washington. However, during the eight years ČSSD was in power, its policies were more internationalist than Europeanist. This was a result of the internal split in the party and of the fact that the government had to co-operate with an internationalist president (Havel) as well as a product of constraints coming either from internationalist coalition partners (2002-2006) or from a political deal with the opposition Atlanticist ODS (1998-2002).

The military operations against Serbia (1999) and Iraq (2003) presented big challenges to social democrat governments. In both cases, they hesitated for a long time as to whether or not they should support the military operations which were already taking place. They eventually did so, but immediately tried to hedge their support. In the case of Serbia, the Czech foreign minister, together with his Greek colleague, came up with an initiative for them to act as mediators between Belgrade and Washington. In Iraq, the government qualified its support for the military operation by contributing only to its humanitarian dimension (e.g. military hospitals) and (unlike Poland, for instance) explicitly ruling out any involvement in combat operations (Khol 2004).

The Kosovo and Iraq crises encouraged the crystallisation of the Europeanist position as something different from the still-dominant internationalist position. Later, Europeanists supported the European Constitutional Treaty, criticised what they saw as the Czech subordination to the USA and argued for a stronger European role in foreign policy and defence. More recently, the social democrats affirmed their Europeanist orientation by rejecting Czech participation in the American ballistic missile defence project, which is due to feature the construction of an American radar station on Czech territory. However, it is also telling that their rebuttal of the missile defence came only after they left the government in the aftermath of the 2006 elections. When in power they led secret consultations about the project without committing themselves to being for it or against it.

Atlanticism - civic democrats

Atlanticists represent a mirror image of the Europeanists. Their political bulwark has been the neoliberal ODS, which has consistently raised objections against EU political integration while at the same time supporting Czech EU membership. However, it was on the European Constitutional Treaty that the Atlanticists split from the internationalists, rejecting the draft document from the very beginning.

Atlanticists are against any deepening of European integration. They are especially critical about EU plans for a common defence policy, which they see as incompatible with transatlantic defence: “building the EU defence contradicts a strong Atlantic relationship” (Klaus 2004). The ODS leader Mirek Topolánek put it even more strongly: “Europe cannot have foreign policy interests which would be different from those of the USA” (Topolánek 2004). While NATO is perceived as being based on common transatlantic values, only pragmatic functions are ascribed to the EU .

The USA is seen as a privileged partner, while Germany and France are considered as trouble-makers, and Russia is deemed a potential threat. Too close a co-operation between France and Germany is frowned upon (Topolánek 2004). Logically, Atlanticists supported the air strikes against Serbia as well as the Iraq intervention, which they justified with the same arguments as those of American neo-conservatives.

More recently, Czech Atlanticism has been defined by two factors: resistance against the European Constitutional Treaty and an enthusiastic support for Czech participation in the American ballistic missile defence project.

Autonomism – communists and Klaus

In the 1990s, the only political alternative to internationalism was *autonomism*, which was the policy of the opposition communist party. Communists argued both against the NATO, which they saw as a tool of American imperialism, and against the EU, which they associated with the rule of German monopolies. However, Czech communists have been isolated by other political parties due to their reluctance to renounce their totalitarian past, a clear sign of this reluctance being the fact that they still stick to the adjective "communist" in their name. Moreover, the communist position on foreign policy has not changed significantly since the early 1990s. The party keeps up its hostility towards the NATO, even though its position on the EU is more ambiguous: on the one hand it recognises that integration is an "objective" and hence unavoidable process; on the other hand it rejects the Czech membership conditions as well as the European Constitutional Treaty and the Lisbon Treaty.

However, the influence of the autonomist orientation has recently increased as well. The communists have been getting closer to the political mainstream, and recently President Klaus has also tended towards the autonomist position. By his party affiliation (ODS), his previous record of support for the USA and his consistent and harsh Euroscepticism, Klaus could be classified as an Atlanticist. However, he has frequently parted ways with the Czech Atlanticists on key issues – opposing the NATO strikes against Yugoslavia, the American intervention in Iraq and recognition of Kosovar statehood, and giving only lukewarm support to Czech participation in the US project of Ballistic Missile Defence. On most of these issues he has been closer to the communists than to the party he founded.

III - Current situation: internationalist government with an Atlanticist tinge facing an autonomist president and a Europeanist opposition

Czech politics is coalition-based, and political parties are decisive players. Almost every government faces a challenge of coalition building in which several parties with different programs have to agree on a common policy. For example, it is unusual for the prime minister, foreign minister and defence minister all to be from the same political party. Thus, the government frequently experiences internal tension when coalition party positions on a particular issue differ substantially.

Moreover, in foreign policy, Czech presidents are more influential than in other policy areas (where they have no real clout). The president ratifies international treaties, appoints ambassadors and is commander-in-chief of the armed forces. It often happens that the president and the government struggle to agree on foreign policy even though the ultimate constitutional responsibility is with the government. Throughout the 1990s, there was a tension between the neoliberal government led by prime minister Klaus and the dissident president Havel. Currently, the country is experiencing tension between the internationalist government led by Mirek Topolánek and the autonomist president Klaus.

The current government, which came into being in 2007 and which will be responsible for the Czech EU presidency, is led by the Atlanticist ODS, and it includes two smaller internationalist parties (the Christian Democrats and the Greens), while the Europeanist Social Democrats and the autonomist Communists are in opposition. However, the governmental majority in the parliament has been extremely narrow from the very start. Originally, it relied on two Social Democrat defectors. Currently, no clear governmental majority exists in the parliament, as several coalition deputies have defected from their parliamentary party groups, and some of those who stayed cannot be counted on by the government during important votes.

With respect to Czech foreign policy, the neoliberal and Atlanticist ODS is particularly prominent. Its representatives occupy the key positions: those of prime minister and the newly established function of the vice-prime minister for European affairs. Moreover, they control key decisions at the foreign and defence ministries (occupying the post of first deputy minister at both ministries).

The prominence of ODS in Czech foreign-policy making has caused an Atlanticist shift in foreign policy since 2007 (Drulák 2008b). The shift is partly rhetorical – opposing the German goal of reviving the European Constitutional Treaty under its presidency, arguing for a stronger partnership with the Kaczynski government in Poland and an increase in anti-Russian rhetoric. However, it is also real – as in the insistence on the earliest possible inclusion of the Czech Republic into the American ballistic missile defence project and bilateral deals with Washington on visa-free travel without co-ordination with the multilateral EU strategy on the matter.

Despite this Atlanticist shift, Czech foreign policy still retains much of its previous internationalism. Thus, the opposition to German efforts to resurrect the EU Constitutional Treaty was indeed mere rhetoric. Eventually, the government signed the Lisbon Treaty without asking for any opt-outs and, unlike the Kaczynski government in Poland, they managed to keep up good relations with Germany. Moreover, one of the Czech conditions in talks with the USA on missile defence was that the system needs eventually to be integrated into NATO and that NATO allies should be involved – whereas the original American concept was purely bilateral. Thus, rather than being purely Atlanticist, the orientation of the current government is somewhere between internationalism and Atlanticism.

Two factors can explain the persistence of internationalism. To start with, the two coalition partners of ODS are internationalist in their outlook. Even though their influence on daily foreign-policy making is rather limited, they are able to shape strategic issues to some extent. In this respect, internationalism also serves as a trade-off position between Europeanism and Atlanticism.

More importantly, despite tensions between Atlanticists and Europeanists, there are several issues in Czech foreign policy which neither Europeanists nor Atlanticists contest. On the strategic level, the EU and the USA are still seen as two geopolitical centres which are essential for the security and prosperity of the Czech Republic. The Czech Republic has close relationships with each in terms of security, economic interchange and the exchange of ideas. Even though Atlanticists and Europeanists differ from each other in the emphasis they put on their preferred direction, neither group is ready to jeopardise the less privileged direction.

On the practical level, the issues which are not contested are derived either from the above-mentioned strategic considerations or from the needs of the Czech economy. Most of them are supported even by autonomists. They include good neighbourly relations, an active and supportive policy towards the Balkans and towards Eastern Europe (Ukraine in particular), good relations with Russia, and the enlargement of the EU and the NATO (Kratochvíl et al. 2006; Kratochvíl 2007). Moreover, they also include the abolition of any remaining discrimination against the new member states in the EU. This discrimination is sometimes explicit, such as in the case of temporary measures protecting the old EU members' labour markets against competition from new EU members. More frequently it is implicit, in the shape of sectoral policies (such as the Common Agricultural Policy) which were tailored to the needs of the old EU members and which do not take into account the demands of the new ones. In this respect, all Czech governments after 1989 have been reform-oriented with regard to the EU policies.

However, the autonomism of the president has been a source of increasing troubles recently. Moreover, the position of the current president vis-a-vis the current government is stronger than ever. This is due to the fact that President Klaus was the founder and until recently the honorary chairman of the party which leads the current government coalition, and his informal influence in the party has been strong. In addition to this, he has tended to encourage opposition within the party against Prime Minister Topolánek, who is the nominal party leader.

This clash has deepened in 2008. The relationship between the president and the government was businesslike in the first year of the Topolánek government in 2007. The president muted his reservations about government policies, as he needed the unambiguous support of the whole of his party for his re-election as president in February 2008. Upon re-election, he became more confrontational. This was especially the case in foreign policy, where he criticised the government for recognising Kosovar sovereignty, rejected government support to Georgia against Russian intervention, and challenged the Lisbon Treaty at the Constitutional Court. The relationship between the president and the government further deteriorated after the regional elections in October (see below), and its future nature is unclear.

The relationship between the government and the Europeanist opposition for the duration of the presidency has not been clarified yet either. After the October elections, the prime minister started talks with the Social Democrat leader Jiří Paroubek, which should guarantee the government a moderate parliamentary opposition and therefore a breathing space during the presidency. However, the Social Democrats condition their tolerance on an immediate parliamentary approval of the Lisbon Treaty and on a host of domestic political concessions.

To sum up, the central body of the Czech political representation is a government whose orientation currently leans towards internationalism with an Atlanticist tinge. However, due to his considerable informal power, the autonomist president is certainly a force to be reckoned with. In contrast, the Europeanists exercise their influence through the parliament, which gives them some leverage in the current conditions of an unclear governmental majority in the parliament.

Public opinion

Czech public opinion about the EU more or less aligns with the EU average on most issues, but it tends to be a bit more Eurosceptic than public opinion in the other new EU members. The difference with other new members is sometimes attributed to the influence of the autonomist president Klaus, who enjoys widespread support in public opinion (being trusted by two thirds of Czechs).

Another particularity of Czech public opinion about the EU is a contradiction between parties' and voters' orientations. To put it simply, Eurosceptics often vote for Europhile parties, and Europhiles frequently vote for Eurosceptic parties. At least this is the case with respect to the two biggest parties – the Atlanticist Civic Democrats (ODS), who have the most EU enthusiastic voters, and the Europeanist Social Democrats (ČSSD), whose voters tend to be either lukewarm in regard to the EU or downright Eurosceptic.

The fact that the EU is not particularly high on the list of people's concerns may help to explain why this discrepancy is sustainable and why voters do not punish their parties for it. Czech voters seem to base their party support on issues other than the EU, which they do not care much about. This could also explain why the

president is so popular despite the fact that his views on the EU are not widely shared in the society. The origins of the discrepancies may be connected with the ideological models with which these Czech political parties have identified. The Civic Democrats felt inspired by Margaret Thatcher's Tories and Ronald Reagan's Republicans, while the Social Democrats emphasised their ideological affinity with German, Austrian and Nordic social democratic parties.

In their basic attitudes towards the EU, Czechs are clearly more sceptical than citizens of the other new members (Eurobarometer, spring 2008). In the spring of 2008, 48% of Czechs viewed EU membership as a good thing (the EU average was 52%, the average for new EU members 57%), which was a much lower level of support than at the time of accession in 2004 (almost four fifths of Czechs voted for it) but a little higher than the year before (45%). However, only a tenth of Czechs think that EU membership is a bad thing (the EU average being 15%). This means that quite a lot of Czechs (two fifths) are either not decided or do not care about the EU (Eurobarometer, spring 2008).

Despite their scepticism, almost two thirds of people believe that EU membership brings advantages. Like other new members, and to a much greater extent than the rest of the EU, they connect these advantages mainly with employment opportunities (Eurobarometer, spring 2008). On the other hand, a quarter of Czechs who believe that membership is disadvantageous fear mainly that citizens have no control over the EU decision-making, and these worries are again much sharper than in the rest of the EU.

However, more than a fifth of Czechs feel similarly marginalised with respect to their own national institutions (Eurobarometer, spring 2008). In general, the government and parliament are much less trusted than the EU institutions. This is also the case elsewhere in the EU, but this gap is much bigger in Czech Republic (40% in Czech Republic vs. an EU average of 20%). Czechs agree with most Europeans that rising prices are one of the greatest problems they have to face (38% of Czechs and 37% of EU citizens). However, unlike most Europeans, they do not see immigration or unemployment as especially burning issues. Instead, Czechs are much more worried about healthcare than other nationalities (39% of Czechs and 19% of EU citizens). These discrepancies reflect the Czech conditions of low unemployment, a lack of major problems with the integration of immigrants, and recent neoliberal healthcare reforms.

Czechs also differ from the EU average in their strong support for the EU accession of Croatia (73% vs. 52%) and in their significant support for Montenegro (50% vs. 41%). However, with respect to the accession of other countries, they are as lukewarm as the EU average (Eurobarometer, spring 2008). In this respect, they differ from the other new EU members, which are more supportive of the enlargement. For example, Turkish membership is supported by 34% of Czechs, while the EU average is 31% and the new members' average is 45%.

Recent polls (autumn 2008) on the common currency, the Czech EU presidency and the Lisbon Treaty confirm the attitudes described by Eurobarometer. Czechs are currently more ambivalent about the common currency than they used to be. Less than half of them are for it and the same share is against it (Veselsk 2008), whereas five years ago the euro was supported by almost 60% and opposed by 30% of citizens. However, Czech business leaders unambiguously support Czech accession to the common currency and are likely to put pressure on the government in this respect.

Concerning the Czech EU presidency, three quarters of Czechs say that they are not interested in it, and the same share of respondents admit that they do not have much information about it (Škodová 2008). Despite their lack of information, more than a third of Czechs believe that their country is well prepared for the presidency, while fewer than a third disagree. Still, expectations are quite low. More than half of Czechs are of the opinion that the country chairing the Council cannot influence the EU much, while fewer than a third expect it to be influential somehow. On the contrary, they are more optimistic about the Czech performance at the head of the EU. About half of them think that the government will do fine, while a quarter of them expect it to fail.

A lack of information also characterises the Czech attitudes towards the Lisbon Treaty (Trendy 10/2008). Only about a quarter of Czechs claim to have a clear idea about the treaty, while the share of its supporters roughly equals the share of

its opponents. The share of its opponents moderately grew in 2008, when in the autumn the opponents slightly outnumbered the supporters (53% vs. 47%). On the other hand, the supporters seem to be more committed in their support than the opponents are in their opposition (ČTK 2008).

IV - Priorities of the Czech EU presidency: removing barriers and giving the EU a hard time

Since the autumn of 2007 the government has discussed five possible areas in which it would like to focus its action during the presidency. These include a competitive and open Europe, sustainable and safe energy, Europe as a global partner, budget reform, and a safe and free Europe (*Prioritní oblasti p□edsednictví České republiky v Rad□ Evropské unie v prvním pololetí roku 2009*). Ensuing discourse showed that the first three areas are likely to be especially important for the Czech presidency (Vondra 2008c).

However, before addressing the possible priorities, I will analyse two slogans that the Czech government introduced to promote the presidency. Since the spring of 2007 it has been known that the official slogan of the Czech presidency will be "Europe without barriers". In addition, in the summer of 2008 the government launched a domestic information campaign using the slogan "Evropě to osladíme", whose translation is ambiguous and will be discussed below. The analysis of these two slogans helps us to better understand the attitude of the Czech government towards the EU as well as Czech domestic discussions.

The slogan "Europe without barriers" draws on the metaphor of the "return to Europe", which, as has been argued, was dominant in Czech political discourse after 1989. Returning to Europe, the Czech Republic had to overcome a lot of barriers both on the inside (e.g. the transition to democracy and a market economy) and the outside (e.g. taking over the *acquis communautaire* and talking the European partners into greater openness). In this respect, the Czech government considers its current mission in the EU as a continuation of this policy.

The Czech government discourse on the EU presidency evokes the 20-year anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain and reminds us that the EU still suffers from a variety of barriers which need to be brought down (*Prioritní oblasti předsednictví České republiky v Radě Evropské unie v prvním pololetí roku 2009*). The barriers to be removed include explicit or implicit discrimination, an excessive regulatory burden, and a lack of cooperation in justice and home affairs. Moreover, the discourse on the removal of barriers also addresses the external dimension of the EU – it is a critique of an insufficient liberalisation of EU external trade and of reluctant attitudes towards enlargement.

The Schengen system served as a symbol of these barriers for a long time (Druláková 2006). When the Czech Republic joined it in March 2008, the prime minister and the minister of interior, in their joint statement, compared the event with the fall of the Iron Curtain, claiming that the accession marks the end of "humiliating passport controls" dividing the union into first- and second-class blocs (Topolánek, Langer 2008). They reminded citizens of the reluctance of some of the old EU members to enlarge the Schengen system, vowing to fight this reluctance by all means, including further EU enlargement, internal economic liberalisation and reform of the CAP.

Despite the fact that Czech Atlanticists and Europeanists do not usually agree on the EU, hardly anybody objects to the reduction of the current barriers. Even if the Social Democratic opposition tends to criticise the government's neoliberal perspective on the common market, the previous Social Democratic government had a very similar program in this respect. For example, when the Bolkestein directive was on the agenda, the Social Democratic leaders either supported it or criticised it for not going far enough. Still, President Klaus added an important qualification to the metaphor of a Europe without barriers. He argued that "without barriers" does not mean "without borders", insisting on the preservation of borders among member states (Igič 2007).

The second slogan "Evropě to osladíme" was exclusively intended for the domestic information campaign promoting the EU presidency among Czech citizens. However, the slogan proved controversial, and the whole campaign fizzled out. It can be literally translated as "We will sweeten it for Europe", "We will sweeten Europe" or "We will put sugar into Europe". In this vein, the visual campaign centred on a sugar cube, which is considered a Czech invention as it was invented in a Moravian town in the 19th century. Thus, the image of a sugar cube was supposed to evoke a Czech contribution to Europe.

Yet the slogan should not be translated literally, since "to sweeten it for someone" is also a Czech idiomatic expression which actually means "to give someone a hard time". Thus the slogan can mean "We will give Europe a hard time". The slogan, whose authorship was attributed to the vice-prime minister for European affairs himself, can be read as a witty response to a widely remarked metaphor Klaus used before the Czech accession to the EU: he warned against the possibility of the Czech Republic dissolving into the EU like a sugar cube in hot coffee. In this connection, the slogan built on Klaus's metaphor, giving it a more self-confident spin, which was appreciated as such by Czech Atlanticists and autonomists.

However, the fact that this self-confidence was based on being an EU troublemaker (giving it a hard time) caused a lot of criticism from internationalists and Europeanists, including the members of the governing coalition who were not consulted about the contents of the campaign. The campaign itself can be seen as a token of the intellectual influence the autonomist president Klaus has exercised over the current government. On the other hand, the failure of the campaign shows the limits of his influence.

The three priority areas which have loomed as the Czech EU presidency priorities since summer 2008 are less controversial. These are competitiveness, energy and

climate change, and European partnerships in the world. These areas more or less reflect the internationalist position. To start with, a competitive and open Europe is likely to top the Czech priorities. It focuses on a further deepening of the internal market by enhancing the four freedoms of movement – those of goods, capital, services and persons. Services and persons are deemed especially important in this respect. A further liberalisation of services is therefore called for – firstly by a more consequential implementation of the directive on services, and secondly by taking further measures. Also, free movement of persons is likely to be on the agenda, reminding us that a couple of old EU members still protect their labour markets, depriving the citizens from new member countries of their freedom to work in a country of their choice. This priority also includes a better management of innovation policy, a smaller regulatory burden for companies, especially with respect to small and medium-sized businesses, and a more liberal external trade policy, especially a greater opening of the EU market towards developing countries.

Second, in the area of energy and climate change there will be a focus on energy security – in particular, addressing the reliability of delivery and external energy policy by the creation of the EU internal market in gas and electricity. A summit with key energy suppliers will be suggested. To some extent, policy is likely to address the environmental dimension of energy production and supply, putting on the agenda the post-Kyoto process and enhancement of energy efficiency. It will also emphasise the preservation of diversity in energy resources due to the Czech interest in preserving and developing nuclear power stations. In general, the environmental issues are likely to be subordinated to the strategic issues of energy security.

Finally, in EU external action, four issues are likely to be promoted by the Czech presidency: Eastern Europe and Russia, the transatlantic relationship, the Western Balkans and Turkey, and, finally, an upgrade of the relationship with Israel (Vondra 2008c). With respect to Eastern Europe, the new European initiative of the Eastern partnership will be a priority. Specifically, Ukraine will be the focus, but the presidency will also try to encourage democratic processes in Moldova, trans-Caucasian countries and Belarus. Russia is perceived as both a rival (in the post-Soviet space and in the Balkans) and a partner (in dealing with the problems of energy, climate change, terrorism, organised crime, and migration). One of the key challenges of the Czech presidency is to start a process which might result in the identification of common EU positions with respect to Russia – to counter the possibility of Russia playing EU members off against each other.

The USA is seen by the Czech government as the closest European partner in the wider world, and the EU-USA summit during the Czech presidency will be an opportunity to redefine the transatlantic partnership with the new Obama administration. This is especially the case with respect to Russia, where the USA and the EU need to speak with a single voice. The EU accession of the Balkan countries has been a long-term priority of Czech foreign policy. In this connection, the conclusions of the Croatian accession process are likely to be important, as the Czech presidency is likely to reject any links between a further EU enlargement and a successful ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. Moreover, a more liberal visa regime with respect to the Western Balkan countries may represent a specific area where the presidency is likely to be active. In addition to that, Turkey is seen as a key strategic partner whose EU accession process needs to be accelerated. Support for Israel is a Czech long-term priority; the upgrade in the EU-Israeli relationship is seen as means for the EU to gain leverage in the Middle Eastern peace process.

As argued, the three priorities are relatively uncontroversial in Czech discourse. They represent a position which can be evaluated as neoliberal, reformist and enlargement-oriented. In most respects, this position does not deviate from the long-term attitudes of the Czech governments towards the EU. It is in fact a new manifestation of them (Karlas 2008). The orientation of foreign policy vacillates between internationalism and the more controversial Atlanticism.

On the one hand, the shift from the original five priority areas to the current three – taking place before the Georgian crisis – was accompanied by a shift from Atlanticism to internationalism. The transatlantic relationship was still seen as one of the key issues of EU foreign policy, but it was no longer argued that it would be the most important issue. This can be seen as a result of the moderating influence of the coalition partners on the Atlanticist orientation of the vice-prime minister for European affairs. It is the same influence which helped to suppress the "sugar cube" information campaign. On the other hand, recent statements by the vice-

prime minister for European affairs (Vondra 2008c) again emphasize the role of the USA with respect to almost all of the EU's foreign-policy priorities. It can be argued that the Russian military intervention in Georgia provided the Czech Atlanticists with some new legitimacy – but not enough legitimacy to seriously weaken the position of the three alternative streams.

V - Recent crises

In recent months, Czech Republic has had to react to four crises which may eventually change both its presidency priorities and its conduct at the helm of the EU. Three of these crises were international: the Irish rejection of the Lisbon Treaty, the Russian military intervention in Georgia, and the international financial crisis. The other one is home-made – a power struggle between the prime minister and the president inside the ruling party, ODS, after the Czech regional elections in October.

Each of the crises split the Czech political elite. To start with, the Irish No was greeted by autonomists, and the Communists and President Klaus celebrated what they saw as the final demise of the European constitutional reform. A few months before the referendum, a group of ODS senators supported by the president sent a complaint to the Constitutional Court, in which they asked the Court to examine whether or not the Treaty breaches the Czech Constitution. They argued that the Lisbon Treaty deprived the Czech Republic of its sovereignty. This complaint interrupted the ratification process, and autonomists argued that after the Irish No, it was not possible to resume the ratification, irrespective of the court's decision.

Opposition Europeanists and government internationalists were dismayed and argued for the continuation of the ratification process. Government Atlanticists were more ambiguous. On the one hand, they participated in the Lisbon Treaty negotiations under the German presidency, signed the treaty and asked the Czech parliament for its ratification. On the other hand, they never really liked the treaty. They signed it only to avoid their being isolated in the EU, and they therefore saw the Irish referendum as a welcome opportunity to stop the cumbersome ratification process in the Czech Republic (Topolánek 2008). This led to tension within the government, which eventually committed itself to the treaty and its ratification by the end of the year so that the issue would be closed before the start of the Czech presidency.

It was in fact the Atlanticist vice-prime minister for European affairs who in November defended the Lisbon Treaty before the Constitutional Court. The Court then came to the unanimous conclusion that the complaint was unfounded. However, it also said that its ruling applied to this particular case only, which means that more litigation about other issues is possible. The ruling led to the resumption of the ratification process, but it became obvious that ratification by the end of the year was no longer possible.

On the other hand, at least two factors suggest that the parliament will approve the treaty soon. To start with, the government, which lacks a clear parliamentary majority, badly needs a tolerant opposition during its presidency – and the Europeanist Social Democrats condition their tolerance on an immediate approval of the Treaty in the parliament. Also, the Eurosceptic wing of the ruling Civic Democratic Party (ODS) was defeated at the recent party congress in December (see below), and the current party leadership supports the treaty ratification. However, according to the Czech constitution it is the president who ratifies international treaties. Even though he is unlikely to reject the treaty, which will have been approved by the parliament, he may delay his ratification until the Irish referendum takes place in autumn 2009.

Second, the Georgian crisis was also divisive. Atlanticists, including the prime minister, declared their solidarity with Georgia, comparing the Russian actions there with the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 (Šťastný 2008). Autonomists, including the president, sided with Russia, pointing to Georgian responsibility for the war. Europeanists and internationalists tried to avoid strong positions on the issue, referring to its complexity.

Third, the financial crisis was not at first an issue, since no Czech financial institutions were affected by it. The government was reluctant to take any extraordinary measures, as it did not feel any need for these and was afraid that such steps might provoke a crisis of confidence. The opposition attacked the government for its complacency, but no public or political debate arose from this. Government leaders did not rule out the possibility of the financial crisis affecting the Czech presidency. However, they did not specify how (Vondra 2008b).

This ambiguity partly reflects the unease with which the Czech government observed the French presidency proposals for addressing the financial crisis. The prime minister criticised these, which he saw as asking for more state intervention in markets and for less fiscal discipline (Vondra 2008b). He argued that such a tinkering with the state aid rules endangered the common market and could deprive economic subjects of a level playing field. Moreover, the exclusive meeting of Germany, Britain and Italy, hosted by France in October to discuss the financial crisis, was criticised as great-power politics (Vondra 2008b). The government therefore tried to do its best to water down the original proposals, supporting Germany and the Nordic countries.

However, perceptions of the crisis started to change in November, as it turned out that Germany was entering recession and that its car industry would be particularly badly hit. The Czech economy is vitally dependent on the German economy, and a significant part of its industrial production is linked with the car industry. Media headlines started bringing news about massive layoffs of industrial workers. Unemployment, which had not previously been an issue for politicians or for public opinion, started to matter. Since November the economic crisis thus started to be perceived as a critical threat directly affecting the country, rather than as merely something which others were imposing on the EU agenda.

Finally, the Czech regional elections in October brought heavy losses to all the government parties and particularly to the ODS. In their aftermath, President Klaus, the honorary chairman of the party, openly challenged Prime Minister Topolánek, the party leader, calling for his resignation. A power struggle inside the party ensued, in which the originally weakened prime minister gradually regained ground. This coincided with the judgement of the Constitutional Court in favour of the Lisbon Treaty, which was a victory of the government over the president.

At the extraordinary party congress in December the president left the party, abandoning his honorary chairmanship. He argued that the party was no longer right-wing enough and that it was dominated by business lobbying and centrist policies. This criticism was to a large extent connected with the government support for the Lisbon Treaty as well as with the calls for euro membership coming from the businesspeople associated with the ODS. Topolánek was able to get re-elected as the party leader at the congress and he will stay on as the prime minister during the EU presidency. The party leadership is more or less a team of his choice, which strengthens his position inside the party. However, he will not able to count on any kind of support from or loyalty of the activist and Eurosceptic president. Moreover, a cabinet reshuffle is expected immediately before the start of the presidency.

Conclusions

The upcoming EU presidency presents a key challenge to the Czech Republic. Three factors are especially important. First, the EU needs leadership to face such issues as the economic crisis, ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, and the new administration in the White House. Second, the Czech domestic quarrels have gone beyond their usual boundaries, and the current government is in an extremely difficult position. It cannot rely on a parliamentary majority, and it is likely to be challenged by the Eurosceptic president. Thirdly, even though the presidency will last six months as usual, its effective part will be much shorter this time. As the European elections take place in early June, the European Parliament will not be functional during the second half of the six-month presidency. Also, the attention of political leaders is likely to turn to the composition of the next Commission.

One can imagine at least two scenarios for the Czech EU presidency. First, the Czech government will settle on the internationalist orientation. It will be able to find a *modus vivendi* with both the Europeanist opposition in the parliament and the autonomist president, whose inevitable Eurosceptic outbursts will be accompanied by successful damage limitation by governmental leaders. The Czechs will

be unlikely to give the EU new directions or to reshape EU policies during the Czech Republic's presidency. However, they will provide the EU with a competent presidency and, if circumstances allow it, they will leave their small mark on EU policies – such as the Eastern partnership.

Second, the Czech government will not be able to resolve the internal tension between the Atlanticists and internationalists. Nor will it be able to accommodate the Europeanist opposition and to contain the autonomist president. In fact, it will be the president who will become the voice of the Czech Republic during the presidency, as the government will be too busy with itself. Other EU members will perceive this as both an oddity and a power vacuum, and they will do their best to save the situation. An informal troika of Angela Merkel, Nicolas Sarkozy and Gordon Brown will take over. The Czech presidency will only rubberstamp what agree on. However, this will bring practical difficulties, so everybody will be happy when the nightmare of the Czech presidency is over on 1 July.

There are many hints to indicate that the actual plot of the presidency will be closer to the first scenario. The government seems to take its tasks seriously: it has been tending towards internationalism, doing its best not to alienate its EU partners despite mutual differences in political positions, and supervising intensive preparations of the civil service and diplomacy. It is difficult to point to any specific ambition the government might have with respect to the presidency, but the ambition to avoid failure seems quite strong.

On the other hand one cannot be too optimistic, as the Czech political elite has not yet shown much responsibility. As late as three weeks before the start of the EU presidency, the composition of the government, which will be responsible for the presidency, was not known. The chairmanship of the parliamentary EU committee has been left vacant for a year due to internal quarrels among the Green deputies. The scandals of the Christian Democrat leader made a mockery of government claims of eradicating corruption from Czech public life. Some of the top Civic Democrat leaders plotted to topple the government which their party dominates just a few weeks before the start of the presidency. The Social Democrats are doing their best to exploit the tension inside the parties of the ruling coalition even if this means burying the propositions which are otherwise close to their hearts. Hence, the second scenario is possible as well. The next few months will show which of the two scenarios turns out to be closest to reality.

References

ČTK (2008) "Factum: Pro lisabonskou smlouvu je třetina lidí, proti desetina", 6.10.2008, Praha: ČTK (Czech news agency).

Drulák, Petr (2006a) Qui décide la politique étrangere tcheque? Les internationalistes, les européanistes, les Atlanticistes ou les autonomistes? *La Revue internationale et stratégique*, No. 61, Printemps 2006. Paris: IRIS, 71-84.

Drulák, Petr (2008a) "Možnosti nízkoprofilového předsednictví". In: Jan Karlas et al. *Jak předsedat Evropské unii?* Praha: Institute of International Relations. 136-144.

Drulák, Petr (2008b) "Česká zahraniční politika mezi internacionalismem a Atlanticismem." Michal Kořan, ed., *Ročenka české zahraniční politiky 2007*. Praha: Institute of International Relations.

Drulák, Petr (2009) "Les Tchèques à la barre: la présidence tchèque de l'UE en 2009". *Revue d'études comparatives Est-Ouest*, volume 40, n°1.

Drulák, Petr and Lucie Konigová (2005) "The Czech Republic: from Socialist Past to Socialized Future" In: Flockhart, Trine, ed., *Socializing Democratic Norms: The Role of International Organizations for the Construction of Europe*. London: Palgrave, 149-168.

Drulák, Petr and Lucie Königová (2007) "Figuring Out Europe: EU Metaphors in the Minds of Czech Civil Servants". *Perspectives*, 28, Summer 2007, 5-23.

Druláková, Radka (2006) "Schengen: Evropa a ČR bez hranic". Dočkal, Vít et al., *Česká politika v Evropské unii: Evropský integrační proces a zájmy České republiky*. Brno: Mezinárodní politologický ústav, 89-102.

Handl, Vladimír (2004) "Česká politika vůči Německu". In: Pick, Otto and Vladimír Handl, eds., *Zahraniční politika České republiky 1993-2004: Úspěchy, problémy a perspektivy*. Prague: Institute of International Relations, 71-82.

Havel, Václav (1990) *Do různých stran*. Praha: Lidové noviny.

Igič, Vanja (2007) "Prezidenti V4 bilancovali v EU tři roky". *iHNed.cz*, Praha.

Informace o výsledcích analýz a srovnání provedených podle usnesení Vlády České Republiky ze dne 25. června 1997 č. 383, MZV, září 1997.

Karlas, Jan (2008), ed., *Jak předsedat Evropské unii? Návrh priorit předsednictví ČR v Radě EU v roce 2009*. Praha: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů.

Karlas, Jan a Petr Kratochvíl (2008) "Priority předsednictví - unijní cíle a české zájmy" In: Jan Karlas et al. *Jak předsedat Evropské unii?* pp.7-16. Praha: UMV.

Khol, Radek (2004) "Česká bezpečnostní politika 1993-2004". In: Pick, Otto and Vladimír Handl, eds, *Zahraniční politika České republiky 1993-2004: Úspěchy, problémy a perspektivy*. Prague: Institute of International Relations, pp. 31-44.

Klaus, Václav (1991) *Ekonomická věda a ekonomická reforma (statě, eseje)*. Praha: GENNEX & TOP Agency.

Klaus, Václav (1994) *Česká cesta*. Praha: Profile.

Klaus, Václav (2004) Speech at the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the NATO accession, Prague 12.3.2004. Zahraniční politika České republiky – Dokumenty, 3/2004. Prague: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, p. 4-5.

Kratochvíl, Petr, Petra Cibulková, Vít Beneš (2006) "Foreign policy, rhetorical action and the idea of otherness: the Czech Republic and Russia" *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*. Vol. 39, No. 4 (12.2006), pp. 497-511

Kratochvíl, Petr (2007) "New EU Members and the ENP: Different Agendas, Different Strategies". In: *Intereconomics*. Vol.42, No.4, July/August 2007, pp.191-196.

Prioritní oblasti předsednictví České republiky v Radě Evropské unie v prvním pololetí roku 2009. Praha: Útvar místopředsedy vlády pro evropské záležitosti, October 2007.

Škodová, Markéta (2008) *Občané o předsednictví ČR v Radě EU*. Praha : CVVM.

Špidla, Vladimír (2004) Speech at Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Berlin, 17.2. 2004. Zahraniční politika České republiky – Dokumenty, 2/2004. Prague: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, p. 13.

Šťastný, Ondřej (2008) "Anketa: Klausův postoj ke Gruzii tříští i ODS". *iDNES.cz*, 18.8. 2008.

Topolánek, Mirek (2004) "Evropa nemůže mít jinou zahraniční politiku než USA", interview with the chairman of the ODS Mirek Topolánek. Právo 17.1. 2004.

Topolánek, Mirek (2008) "Interview of Prime Minister Topolánek for Radiožurnál". 17.6. 2008, http://www.vlada.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=36556.

Topolánek, Mirek and Ivan Langer (2008) "Bourání bariér je údělem Evropy". *MF Dnes*, 31.3.2008.

T*rendy*, 10/2008: "Názory české veřejnosti na tzv. Lisabonskou smlouvu – 4.11. 2008", Praha: STEM.

Veselský, Michal (2008) *Vliv členství ČR v EU na vybrané hospodářské a sociální oblasti*. Praha: CVVM.

Vondra, Alexandr (2008a) "Alexandr Vondra o přípravě předsednictví: S Francií máme dobré vztahy". Interview, *EurActiv*, 18.2. 2008.

Vondra, Alexandr (2008b) Otázky Václava Moravce, CT 1 (Czech TV), 5.10. 2008.

Vondra, Alexandr (2008c) "Foreign policy priorities of the CZ PRES". *Speech at the ISDP in Stockholm*, 12.11. 2008, http://www.vlada.cz/scripts/detail.php?id=45498.

Previously Published Studies

Social experimentation in Europe: towards a more complete and effective range of the EU action for Social Innovation - Marjorie Jouen (November 2008).

UE-ASEAN: two to tango? - David Camroux (June 2008).

CAP Reform beyond 2013: An idea for a longer view - Jean-Christophe Bureau and Louis-Pascal Mahé (May 2008).

The political economy of regional integration in southern Africa – Mills Soko (December 2007).

What Future Framework for Agriculture after 2013? - Jean-Christophe Bureau, Nadège Chambon, Pierre Lepetit, Pierre Rainelli. With the Contributions of François Bonnieux, Sylvie Bonny, Nadège Chambon, Pierre Dupraz, Isabelle Garzon, Aziliz Gouez, Michiel Keyser, sophie Méritet, Karine Latouche and Josef Schmidhuber (December 2007).

A star pupil playing it safe in the EU: an inside view of the first Slovenian EU Council Presidency, January-June 2008 - Manja Klemencic (December 2007).

An open Europe in a multipolar World: Lessons from the Portuguese Experience - Àlvaro de Vasconcelos (October 2007).

Transnational Production Networks in the Automobile Industry - Heribert Dieter (June 2007).

Power to the People: Promoting Investment in Community-Owned and Micro-Scale Distributed Electricity Generation at the EU Level - Stephen Boucher, Columbia University Workshop (May 2007).

The Czech EU Presidency: background and priorities

Funding the EU Budget with a Genuine Own Resource: The Case for a European Tax - Jacques Le Cacheux (May 2007).

Wine and Europe: the Metamorphoses of a Land of Choice – Aziliz Gouez and Boris Petric (March 2007)

Germany and Europe: New Deal or Déjà vu? – Ulrike Guérot (December 2006)

Regional Economic Integration in South America - Alvaro Artigas (November 2006)

The Impact of Television Media on the French Referendum Campaign in 2005 - Jacques Gerstlé (November 2006)

Plan B: How to Rescue the European Constitution? - Andrew Duff (October 2006).

A transition Presidency? An Inside View of Finland's - Second Presidency of the EU - Teija Tiilikainen (July 2006).

The Vision of Europe in the New Member States – Notre Europe asked different Personalities of the New Member States to give their Vision of Europe in 2020 - Gaëtane Ricard-Nihoul, Paul Damm and Morgan Larhant (July 2006).

Sense and Flexibility – Striking a Balance between Sovereignty and Harmonisation in the Implementation of the EU ETS - Stephen Boucher, University of Columbia Workshop on EU ETS (May 2006).

The Question of European Identity - Aziliz Gouez, Marjorie Jouen and Nadège Chambon (January 2006).

Report on East Asian Integration: Opportunities and Obstacles for Enhanced Economic Cooperation - Co-ordinated by Heribert Dieter, With Contributions from Jean-Christophe Defraigne, Heribert Dieter, Richard Higgott and Pascal Lamy (January 2006).

An Honest Broker in Difficult Times: Austria's Presidency of the EU - Sonja Puntscher-Riekmann, Isabella Eiselt and Monika Mokre (December 2005).

The European Constitution and Deliberation: the Example of Deliberative Focus Groups ahead of the French Referendum of 29 May 2005 - Henri Monceau (November 2005).

The French "no" vote on May 29, 2005: Understand, Act - Gaëtane Ricard-Nihoul (October 2005)

Defining a new European Social Contract - Marjorie Jouen and Catherine Palpant (September 2005).

The best laid plans: Britain's Presidency of the Council of European Union - Anand Menon and Paul Riseborough (June 2005).

European Budget: the Poisonous Budget Rebate Debate - Jacques Le Cacheux (June 2005).

Analysis of European Elections (June 2004) - Céline Belot and Bruno Cautrès (June 2005).

Why they wanted Europe: A Call of 12 french Pionners of European integration - Jean-Louis Arnaud (May 2005).

Ratification and Revision of the Constitutional Treaty - Henri Oberdorff (May 2005).

Luxembourg at the Helm: Experience, Determination and Self Denial - Mario Hirsch (December 2004).

A Driving Force Despite Everything: Franco-German Relations and the Enlarged European Union - Martin Koopmann (November 2004).

Europe and its Think Tanks: a Promise to be Fulfilled - Stephen Boucher, Benjamin Hobbs, Juliette Ebelé, Charlotte Laigle, Michele Poletto, Diego Cattaneo and Radoslaw Wegrzyn (October 2004).

A View from Outside: the Franco-German Couple as seen by their Partners - Matt Browne, Carlos Closa, Soren Dosenrode, Franciszek Draus, Philippe de Schoutheete and Jeremy Shapiro (April 2004).

Leading from Behind: Britain and the European Constitutional Treaty - Anand Menon (January 2004).

US Attitudes towards Europe: a Shift of Paradigms? - Timo Behr (November 2003).

Giving Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation a breath of fresh air - Bénédicte Suzan (October 2003).

Italy and Europe 2003 Presidency - Roberto Di Quirico (July 2003).

European Attitudes towards Transatlantic relations 2000-2003: an Analytical Survey - Anand Menon and Jonathan Lipkin (June 2003).

Large and Small Member States in the European Union: Reinventing the Balance - Paul Magnette and Kalypso Nicolaïdis (May 2003).

Enlargement and Investment in Central and Eastern Europe - Bérénice Picciotto (May 2003)

The Institutional Architecture of the European Union: a third Franco-German way? - Renaud Dehousse, Andreas Maurer, Jean Nestor, Jean-Louis Quermonne and Joachim Schild (April 2003).

A New Mechanism of Enhanced Co-operation for the Enlarged Union - Eric Philippart (March 2003).

Greece, the European Union and 2003 Presidency - George Pagoulatos (December 2002).

The Question of the European Government - Jean-Louis Quermonne (November 2002).

The European Council - Philippe de Schoutheete and Helen Wallace (September 2002).

The Czech EU Presidency: background and priorities

Multilevel Government in three Eastern and Central European Candidates Countries: Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic (1990-2001) - Michal Illner (June 2002).

The Domestic Basis of Spanish European Policy and the 2002 Presidency - Carlos Closa (December 2001)

The Convention of a Charter of Fundamental Rights: a Method for the Future? - Florence Deloche Gaudez (December 2001).

The Federal Approach to the European Union or the Quest for an Unprecedented European Federalism - Dusan Sidjanski (July 2001).

The Belgian Presidency 2001 - Lieven de Winter and Huri Türsan (June 2001).

The European Debate in Sweden - Olof Petersson (December 2000).

An enlargement Unlike the others ... Study of the Specific Features of the Candidate Countries of Central and Eastern Europe - Franciszek Draus (November 2000).

The French and Europe: the State of the European Debate at the Beginning of the French presidency - Jean Louis Arnaud (July 2000).

Portugal 2000: the European way - Alvaro de Vasconcelos (January 2000).

The Finnish Debate on the European Union - Esa Stenberg (August1999).

The American Federal Reserve System: Functioning and Accountability - Axel Krause (April 1999).

Making EMU work - partnership Notre Europe and Centro European Ricerche (March 1999).

The Intellectual Debate in Britain on the European Union - Stephen George (October 1998).

Britain and the new European agenda - Centre for European Reform, Lionel Barber (April 1998).

Social Europe, History and Current State of Play - Jean-Louis Arnaud (July 1997).

Reinforced Cooperation: Placebo rather than Panacea - Françoise de la Serre and Helen Wallace (September 1997).

The Growth Deficit and Unemployment: the Cost of Non-Cooperation - Pierre-Alain Muet (April 1997).

All our publications are available for free from our Website: www.notre-europe.eu

Legal Mentions

With the support of the European Commission : support to active entities at European level in the field of active European citizenship.

Education and Culture
Europe for citizens

Dépôt legal

The Czech EU Presidency: background and priorities