



## EU 2010: A PROGRAMME FOR REFORM

The European Union is suffering from a profound malaise. There have been difficult times in the past – such as the ‘empty chair’ left by General de Gaulle in the mid-1960s, the rows over the British budget contribution in the early 1980s, and the struggles to ratify the Maastricht treaty and preserve the Exchange Rate Mechanism in the early 1990s. The EU’s current predicament, however, is particularly serious, because several harmful ingredients have come together in a toxic brew.

One crucial ingredient is the poor performance of the core Euroland economies. Low economic growth and high unemployment make many people fearful of change, whether it comes in the form of new EU treaties, fresh rounds of enlargement or a world trade agreement. The failure of the EU’s constitutional treaty has left a cloud of uncertainty hanging over its institutions. Partly because of these economic and institutional problems, the legitimacy of the Union has diminished among broad sections of the European public.

In many EU countries, the Union now symbolises the forces of globalisation. It is viewed – with some justice – as the body that tries to remove barriers to trade and the free movement of people across an increasingly wide area. As a consequence, those who see globalisation as a threat to their jobs, or believe that there are too many immigrants in their country, tend to hold the EU responsible. A lot of people see the EU as a source of insecurity rather than as a resource to help governments soften the pains provoked by globalisation. They look to national governments to provide security. Populist politicians are increasingly adept at exploiting nationalist feeling to oppose openness in general, and the EU in particular.

For 50 years the Union has been a huge success, helping to spread prosperity, democracy and security across much of the European continent. But as the EU has expanded, becoming increasingly diverse, the sense of common purpose among its member-states has diminished. Many Europeans see the EU institutions as remote, complex and hard to understand, but few are aware of the many practical benefits they deliver. Now that the euro has been created, and most of the Central and East European countries have joined the Union, the EU lacks a single, unifying project.

All these problems are compounded by a leadership vacuum: the authority of the European Commission is at an all-time low, while many EU countries have leaders who appear to care little about the fate of the Union. The possibility of the Union ‘going backwards’, for example through an increase in protectionism in some member-states, is real.

And yet, despite all these difficulties, the EU remains indispensable to all its members. The member-states need the Union to help them deliver prosperity to their citizens, through the provision of a broad single market. But they also need it to help them cope with the stresses of globalisation. Issues such as terrorism, technological and demographic change, global warming, the need to diversify energy supplies and the rapid growth of emerging economies are challenging Europe. They cannot be tackled by one or a few countries on their own. More than ever, therefore, Europeans need a strong and effective Union to promote their interests and express their values.

Joint action by the EU's member-states and institutions can reform the Union and rebuild its credibility with the peoples of Europe. The constitutional treaty offered one route for reform. Many of its provisions would have made sensible improvements to the way the EU works. However, the No votes in the French and Dutch referendums have killed the treaty, which cannot be ratified without the consent of every member-state. In the current circumstances, if the EU had another go at writing a significant new treaty, many governments would choose to ratify through referendum rather than parliamentary vote. Therefore the likelihood of a new treaty being adopted by all 25 member-states is minimal. In the long run, the EU will have to come back to the question of treaty revision, especially if enlargement is to continue. But we believe that for the rest of this decade the EU should not spend a lot of time and energy on trying to adopt a major new treaty.

The Union's priorities should be to improve its record of delivering practical benefits to European citizens, and to explain better the benefits it already delivers. The EU should also strive to be outward-looking; it needs the ability to influence its neighbourhood, and to stand up for European values and interests in the wider world. We believe that the EU can do a great deal to improve its institutions and policies on the basis of the current treaties. We are therefore offering 25 proposals that are designed to make the EU work better in the short to medium term. If the Union were able to implement such a programme by 2010, its image would improve, and future treaty changes would become easier to handle.

## INSTITUTIONS AND ENLARGEMENT

- 1. The delivery deficit.** The EU has a problem of legitimacy. The main cause is not a 'democratic deficit' – there are plenty of checks and balances on the exercise of power within the EU system – but rather a delivery deficit. Too often there has been a gap between rhetoric and reality. EU leaders often promise great things, for example to create "the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy" by 2010, but fail to deliver. In order to rebuild support for the EU, national leaders need to focus on delivering visible solutions to the problems European citizens care most about. These problems include low economic growth and high unemployment, illegal immigration, organised crime, terrorism, pollution, global warming and uncertainty over future energy supplies. For many of these issues, national governments control most of the relevant levers, but the EU can and should help in all of them. The EU should also focus on challenges beyond its boundaries which individual member-states are ill-suited to tackle on their own. These include promoting stability and security in the EU's neighbourhood, and common foreign policies further afield. Even without treaty change, the EU and its member-states can make progress in all these areas.
- 2. Linking national capitals to the EU.** Part of the EU's legitimacy problem is rooted in national capitals, which are poorly connected to the Brussels system. National governments frequently use the Union as a scapegoat, and most parliaments do a poor job of scrutinising EU legislation. The Commission should send draft laws to national parliaments at the very start of the law-making process. The governments and the Commission should agree that if six or more national parliaments pass a motion that a legislative proposal breaches subsidiarity (the idea that EU should not be involved in a policy unless it adds demonstrable value), the Commission will withdraw it. European commissioners are formally independent of the countries that nominate them, and rightly so. But they should appear before their 'home' parliaments at least once a year, to explain the Commission's work programme and answer questions on it. In addition, commissioners should try to make themselves available to answer questions in other national parliaments, when requested. The Council of Ministers should meet in public whenever it discusses and votes on EU legislation of any sort: this would make it harder for governments to blame the EU for decisions that they have themselves supported.
- 3. Flexible integration.** Those countries which want a more integrated Europe should make use of flexible integration, the idea that not every member-state need take part in every EU policy. Such 'variable geometry' is already a fact of life: not every member-state is in the Schengen area of passport-free travel or the euro. Flexible integration is not the same as a 'hard core', the idea that the EU should be divided into an inner circle of states committed to closer integration across a wide range of policy areas, and an outer circle of the less ambitious countries. A hard core would be divisive and create big institutional difficulties. Much more likely, and desirable, would be a series of overlapping *avant-gardes* for different policy areas. This kind of flexible integration has potential drawbacks: it increases the complexity of the EU, and if taken to extremes could lead to some countries trying to unravel valuable parts of the existing rule-book. However, with the EU soon expanding to 27 or more members, the spread of flexible integration is probably inevitable. The 'enhanced co-operation' provisions of the existing treaties, which allow groups of countries to move ahead in particular policy areas, have yet to be tested. But informal inter-governmental

groupings are already coming together in ways that promote European interests or integration. For example, the ‘EU-3’ on Iran (Britain, France and Germany), the ‘G-5’ on counter-terrorism (Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain), or the seven signatories of the Prüm treaty on police exchanges and border co-operation (Austria, the Benelux three, France, Germany and Spain). A more diverse EU should be able to cope with different countries pursuing different priorities, so long as everyone agrees that certain core competences and tasks cannot be optional.

**4. Core competences.** These core competences and tasks should be those defined by the current treaties. They include: trade, competition, a set of common rules for fisheries and agriculture (though not necessarily today’s Common Agricultural Policy), environmental standards, policies for helping the EU’s poorer regions, the single market (including cross-border aspects of transport and energy policy), free movement, some co-operation on borders and policing, and common foreign policies. That leaves policies and institutions such as the euro and its budgetary rules, the co-ordination of tax policies (so long as that does not harm the single market), common border controls, criminal justice and defence policy, as suitable for flexible integration.

**5. Flexible integration and enlargement.** Flexible integration could play a particular role in helping to sustain support for enlargement. The view that treaty-based integration has, for the time being, stopped, has turned political elites in some European countries against EU enlargement. They fear that further widening would weaken the EU’s institutions and sense of solidarity. But if the countries which want a closer political union are able to build *avant-gardes* in specific policy areas, some of those opposed to enlargement may reconsider their views. Furthermore, in a more flexible EU, some countries seeking to join could be encouraged to accept very long transition periods that would delay their full participation in certain EU policies. Again, that would make future enlargement more palatable to some doubters.

**6. EU enlargement.** Enlargement enhances the prosperity and security of the entire continent, and gives the Union more strategic weight. But EU governments need to do a better job of explaining the benefits of enlargement to electorates. Romania and Bulgaria should join the EU when they have demonstrated that they are making a big effort to clamp down on corruption and organised crime. Subsequent rounds of enlargement will not be feasible without significant improvements to the EU institutions. The Union should do its best to ensure that the accession talks with Croatia and Turkey reach a successful outcome. Progress in the talks with Turkey will require a resolution of the Cyprus problem. The EU governments need to make a higher priority of finding a diplomatic solution to the division of that island. As part of that effort, they should agree to a new programme of economic assistance for northern Cyprus. The EU should not define its final boundary: if the EU did so it would needlessly curtail its influence over neighbouring countries that aspire to join one day, such as Ukraine. The Union must reaffirm its existing commitments to the countries of the Western Balkans, showing that it is serious about the promise of membership for those that can meet the conditions. The EU should decide on a set of target dates for when it expects each of the Balkan states to become a candidate, and to open accession talks. A tentative timetable would maximise the EU’s ability to persuade these countries to adopt the political and economic reforms that are necessary for their modernisation and the region’s stability.

## ECONOMIC POLICIES

- 7. The euro.** The euro is central to the identity and success of the EU, both economically as the common currency of 12 member-states, and symbolically as the EU’s most integrationist project. Prolonged stagnation in the big euro countries, a euro currency crisis or even the break-up of the eurozone would be a political and economic disaster for the Union. Countries with severe competitiveness problems, such as Italy, must carry out structural reforms as an urgent priority. But the EU also needs to revisit the fiscal rules underpinning the euro, in the stability and growth pact. These rules have been watered down to the point where few people understand them and they have little credibility. A new, clearer set of rules is needed to ensure the sustainability of public finances at a time when societies are ageing. Countries with low debt levels and well-developed private sector pension systems should be allowed to run higher annual deficits than those whose public finances are already strained.
- 8. Eurozone enlargement.** Formally, only the UK and Denmark have an opt-out from the euro, though in practice Sweden behaves as if it had one. The new members from Central and Eastern Europe are obliged to join the eurozone once they fulfil the Maastricht treaty’s convergence criteria on inflation, interest rates, currency stability and public finances – and the eurozone is obliged to let them in. However, the rules should respect the reality, which is that if a country

does not want to join, it cannot be forced to. The new EU members, and future adherents such as Romania and Bulgaria, should be free to decide if they want to adopt the currency. Furthermore, over-hasty enlargement of the eurozone could endanger its health: the Maastricht criteria focus on a country's suitability at any one moment, rather than the sustainability of its macro-economic stability, or the country's likely impact on the eurozone. Once a potential member has satisfied the Maastricht criteria, the European Central Bank and the Commission should jointly prepare a report on whether the eurozone has the capacity to absorb that country. The European Council should not admit the country concerned without a positive report.

- 9. Economic reform.** In Lisbon in March 2000 the EU heads of government signed up to an ambitious programme of economic reform, much of which requires action at member-state level. The governments have yet to fulfil many of their promises. They need to pay more attention to the Lisbon method of achieving reform through benchmarking, peer review and the exchange of best practice. Encouragingly, in March 2005 every member-state agreed to submit an annual national action plan, describing its efforts to meet the Lisbon goals. The national action plans should help parliaments and media to hold their governments to account. The Commission should summon the courage to name and shame the governments which fail to fulfil their Lisbon promises. It should focus its efforts on those areas where it can play a leading role, notably the single market. It should make a special effort to open up energy markets: although in theory deregulated, many national energy markets remain closed to outside competition. The EU should also improve the connections between national energy markets, and adopt provisions so that a member-state suffering an energy shortage can expect help from its partners. The Commission must not flinch in its efforts to deregulate the services sector, which is vital to job creation in Europe. If a group of governments tries to block the passage of a truly liberalising services directive, those in favour should prepare to set up an 'enhanced co-operation' for services liberalisation. That prospect would encourage the foot-draggers to accept a compromise among all 25 that would lead to a significant boost in the cross-border provision of services.
- 10. The EU budget.** The review of the EU budget scheduled for 2008-09 should lead to fundamental reform – before the next budget cycle ends in 2013. The EU should take seriously the recommendations of the report that André Sapir's committee delivered to then Commission President Romano Prodi in 2003. Sapir argued that spending should be targeted on the attainment of Lisbon goals. In particular, he called for a big shift of spending from farm subsidies and regional aid towards R&D, education and aid that helps companies to restructure. The EU should further reform the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) by completing the decoupling of subsidies from production that earlier reforms have begun; introducing 'co-financing', so that national governments share the cost of supporting farmers; focusing a higher proportion of subsidies on the poorest farmers; and transferring money from farm support to rural development in the new member-states. Some of the money from the CAP should go into spending on external policies, with the emphasis on the neighbourhood policy, aid for future members and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (see below). By 2013 the budget should provide €10 billion a year for external policies, rather than the €8 billion planned in the December 2005 agreement.
- 11. Higher education.** Education is the key to building a knowledge economy that will make the EU globally competitive. However, the overall performance of Europe's higher education has declined in recent years. Europe has too few world-class research universities. European universities need to modernise their archaic governance structures and make a better job of seeking private finance to supplement state funds. The EU should support these efforts and provide money to help its best universities strengthen ties with their peers in Europe and the rest of the world. The countries which recently joined the EU have few top universities. The EU's structural funds should provide money to support the best universities in the poorer member-states in developing research departments. The Erasmus programme has benefited hundreds of thousands of students by allowing them to spend an academic year in another EU country. The EU should extend the programme so that those who wish to study for an entire degree in another member-state can do so. It should encourage the portability of student grants and loans from one member-state to another. The EU should expand the Erasmus Mundus programme, which brings students from other parts of the world to European universities. The programme should also send European students to universities in emerging economies, such as India, China and Russia.
- 12. Research and development.** The Commission currently manages the Union's R&D funds in a manner that is neither transparent nor strategic. The EU's procedures for giving out research money are complex, cumbersome and inflexible. Bids for funds are not submitted to an open process of peer review by eminent scientists. Therefore, the EU's recent decision to establish a European Research Council – a largely independent body that would distribute funds according to a set of objective

criteria and peer review – is welcome. The ERC needs to be independent of EU institutions, and adequately funded, with a budget of at least €2 billion a year. When the ERC has proved its worth, some of the R&D funds currently managed by the Commission should be transferred to it.

**13. Social policy.** Jacques Delors rightly argued that if the EU wants trade unions and left-of-centre parties to give broad support to its liberalising policies, it needs a ‘social dimension’. The Union should set minimum standards for health and safety in the workplace, and for non-discrimination. It also has an important role to play in promoting benchmarking and exchange of best practice, as governments try to modernise their welfare states. For example, the EU sets guidelines for its member-states on issues such as fighting child poverty and the provision of child-care. However, an EU that stretches to 27 or more countries must inevitably accommodate a diverse range of social models. Much labour market regulation should be left to the member-states: the EU should not extend its existing rules on working hours, paid holidays or consultation. The Sapir report urged that part of the EU budget be targeted on the ‘losers’ of globalisation, such as those laid off because companies or industries have become uncompetitive. The responsibility for coping with the social consequences of industrial restructuring must remain principally with the member-states. However, the EU should help, for example by offering financial support for retraining, relocation or business start-ups. The European Council’s decision in December 2005 to establish a ‘globalisation adjustment fund’ should enable the EU to play this role. However, the fund currently lacks the secure financial base that it needs to be credible.

## EXTERNAL POLICIES

**14. Strengthening foreign policy.** With foreign policy challenges including a Russia that is increasingly inward-looking, a rising China, an unstable Middle East and a fragile transatlantic relationship, the EU has little choice but to strengthen its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). One important goal for the EU must be to promote stronger multilateral institutions, including a more effective United Nations. In practice, not all member-states will play an equal role in the making of EU foreign policy. But there should be no permanent *directoire* of the larger countries, or any other fixed leadership group. Depending on the subject under discussion, small groups of large and small member-states with relevant expertise, should – together with the High Representative – give leadership to the Union, as has happened with policy towards Iran and Ukraine. On the question of arms sales to China, for example, countries with significant arms industries – such as Slovakia, Spain and Sweden – should be included in the leading group. Both Spain and Portugal should be involved in policy towards Latin America, and so on.

**15. The High Representative.** The constitutional treaty would have done much to make the CFSP more effective and efficient. But the current institutional arrangements for the CFSP can also be improved through agreements among the governments and EU institutions. The EU should diminish the role of the rotating presidency in foreign policy, and at the same time build up the role of the High Representative, currently Javier Solana. The governments should reach an understanding that successive presidencies will, first, delegate the chairing of foreign ministers’ meetings to the High Representative; and, second, entrust the job of representing the Union externally to the High Representative (in place of the ‘troika’, which consists of Solana, the presidency, and the external relations commissioner, currently Benita Ferrero-Waldner). The High Representative and his staff need greater resources so that they can better analyse the key problems and co-ordinate the member-states’ policies. In 2005 the EU spent €62 million on CFSP – less than what it spent on office cleaners. The EU should set aside €500 million a year for the CFSP and crisis management. The demise of the constitutional treaty means that the promised ‘external action service’ cannot be created as a legal entity. But in practice the relevant officials from the Commission (including its overseas delegations) and the Council, together with others seconded by the member-states, could and should be integrated into a single team, under the leadership of the High Representative. The governments and the Commission should agree that the commissioner for external relations would act as a de facto deputy to the High Representative. Her job would be to mobilise the Commission’s extensive resources for the benefit of the CFSP. She would remain in charge of the EU’s neighbourhood policy.

**16. A stronger neighbourhood policy.** The EU needs to pay particular attention to its potentially unstable neighbourhood. The European neighbourhood policy is a laudable first attempt to help stabilise the Union’s southern and eastern flanks. It promises aid, trade, political contacts and participation in EU programmes, in return for political and economic reform. However, some parts of the Commission and several of the member-states are not yet committed to

implementing the policy (for example by providing market access). The Union needs to be able to give greater incentives to the best-performing neighbours, in order to influence their development. The EU should offer selected neighbours the privilege of becoming ‘security partners’ of the Union – in effect joining the CFSP. The EU and the neighbour concerned would agree that on certain foreign or security policies – for example, dealing with networks that smuggle arms or people, or policy towards Central Asia – they shared a common interest and could help each other. When the EU discussed such a subject in the Council of Ministers, the security partner would be involved. However, the partner’s role would be limited to participating in the shaping, but not the taking, of decisions. It would have the choice of signing up to the policy that emerged, or standing aside. Such arrangements could greatly enhance ties between some neighbours and the EU.

**17. Promoting democracy.** The Commission’s efforts to promote democracy in neighbouring states, through the European Initiative on Democracy and Human Rights, have been hampered by slow decision-taking, excessive bureaucracy and inflexibility. The EU should create a ‘European endowment for democracy’, modelled on the National Endowment for Democracy in the US. This should take over the funds currently managed by the Commission that support civil society and democracy.

**18. Defence policy.** Given how much the Europeans spend on defence – some €180 billion a year among the 25 – they have very little capability to show for it. Solana is already over-stretched and needs a credible deputy with the specific task of strengthening European defence. This deputy should work with the European Defence Agency to mobilise the EU’s military capabilities – and name and shame the governments which fail to deliver on their promises. The Commission, too, can play a useful role. Most member-states have signed up to a voluntary code of conduct on opening up their defence markets – but there is no institution to enforce the code. The governments should therefore mandate the Commission to regulate a common market for the less sensitive defence products – for example armoured vehicles or spare parts for military aircraft. The Commission should use existing single market rules to promote cross-border competition among defence contractors. The governments should pool more of their spending on military R&D, to avoid duplication and to save money. As a start, they should give the European Defence Agency a research budget of €500 million a year. They should also save money by pooling some logistical support, and operating certain assets, such as transport planes, on a joint basis.

**19. Trade.** The EU has an important role to play in stamping out national protectionism and in helping developing countries to trade their way out of poverty. Governments should be more supportive of the Commission and give it greater room for manoeuvre in the Doha round of trade talks. Businesses should be more active in making the case for open economies and an ambitious conclusion to the Doha round. A successful outcome requires a major reduction of EU agricultural tariffs. But the EU alone cannot ensure that Doha benefits the poorest countries. So the Union should do everything it can to maximise the pressure on the US, Japan and the stronger developing economies – including Brazil, China and India – to open their markets to the least developed countries.

**20. Development assistance.** The EU is the world’s leading aid donor, accounting for 55 per cent of all development assistance (a fifth of that 55 per cent is managed by the Commission). However, too little EU aid goes to the world’s poorest countries; half the EU’s aid is spent in middle-income countries. The EU should focus its development policy on poverty reduction and thus increase the funds going to the least developed countries. Currently, the development policies of the Commission and the member-states are poorly co-ordinated, which sometimes leads to inefficiencies and contradictions. If the EU and the 25 member-states were better able to coordinate their approaches, they would make more political impact and reduce the burden on recipient governments. The member-states should give more support to the Commission’s efforts to ensure greater consistency of these policies. However, the Commission’s procedures for dispensing funds are too slow and inflexible. It should give its staff in the field greater freedom of action. More of the EU’s aid should focus on building the capacity of developing countries to export, for example through infrastructure projects or support for the private sector, and on improving governance and the delivery of services. Less should go to central government bureaucracies or western consultants.

**21. Climate change.** During the global negotiations to replace the Kyoto protocol with a new institutional framework, the EU should argue for a 30 per cent binding target of cuts in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (from 1990 levels). Such an ambitious target would create the

incentives for the development of new technologies that can help to solve the problem – and allow the EU to lead the rest of the world by example. However, its current system of carbon trading is flawed: each member-state has some leeway in setting its own ‘cap’ (maximum level) of carbon emissions. The EU should agree on a Europe-wide cap, based on scientific advice, and then apportion carbon quotas to each member-state. This carbon trading scheme should be extended to Europe’s aviation industry. In the long run the EU should merge its carbon trading system with those established by several North American states. The EU should also take further steps to limit its greenhouse gas emissions. For example, the EU should adopt more ambitious guidelines on the proportion of each member’s electricity generation that comes from renewable sources, and make them binding. It should also pass legislation to set standards on greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles. The EU should do much more to export its environmental technologies, at minimal cost, to developing countries such as China and India.

## **JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS**

- 22. Better decision-making in Justice and Home Affairs (JHA).** More effective EU policies on JHA could help to make the Union more popular: there is strong public support for closer European co-operation on issues such as terrorism, illegal immigration and organised crime. However, the governments still take decisions on these issues by unanimity, and often very slowly. The final compromises are frequently of poor quality, and are seldom implemented on time. The European arrest warrant, for example, is still not applicable in every member-state, two years after the official deadline for implementation. Article 42 of the existing Treaty on European Union allows the EU to switch decision-making on criminal justice and cross-border policing to qualified majority voting (QMV); and to give the Commission and the European Court of Justice the power to ensure that decisions in these areas are implemented. The governments should agree to make this switch – for which unanimity is required – as soon as possible.
- 23. Civil liberties.** The EU’s growing role in JHA must not come at the expense of an erosion of civil liberties. If the governments used Article 42 to extend qualified majority voting in JHA (see above), the European Parliament would gain greater powers over JHA legislation, through the so-called co-decision procedure. That should allow more public scrutiny of JHA policies. The EU’s governments should agree on optimal standards for the rights of defendants facing trial in EU countries other than their own, so that they receive proper legal aid, translation and interpretation. Given that an increasing number of Europeans are held on remand away from home but in the EU, a new system of cross-border bail needs to be devised.
- 24. Counter-terrorism.** The fight against terrorism is mainly a task for national governments. But the EU can play a useful role by helping governments to arrest and prosecute suspected terrorists (and other criminals) who travel across borders. The EU governments should speed up the implementation of proposals such as the European evidence warrant, which would make it easier to transfer evidence from one country to another. They should also share more information, through the ‘situation centre’, the EU’s intelligence assessment body. Many member-states lack the expertise to track open sources of information, like terrorist websites, which often help to recruit and train new members for extremist cells. With more money and analysts, the situation centre could play an important role in monitoring suspicious websites. Finally, the EU should step up co-operation with key countries in the fight against terrorism, such as Indonesia, Morocco, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. That means sending more policemen, intelligence officers and border guards on training missions to such places.
- 25. Immigration.** Every member-state stands to gain from immigration. Their economies would also benefit greatly if legal migrants from beyond the EU could move around freely within it. The EU’s governments should therefore agree on a system of flexible residence permits that would allow migrants to shift between countries and types of employment. The free movement of migrants within the EU would require the member-states to co-ordinate their immigration policies. For example, they should agree on the criteria by which they judge applications for admission, including education and skills levels. But a single, EU-wide immigration policy would be pointless: each member-state has different immigrant communities and economic priorities. Meanwhile, the 12 ‘old’ member-states still limiting the freedom to work of those from the ‘new’ member-states should end restrictions. Britain, Ireland and Sweden, which welcomed East European job-seekers, have found their presence manageable and beneficial to their economies.

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Mark Leonard, Simon Tilford and Aurore Wanlin, February 2006*

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