

Conference 2005

EU Enlargement : Cultural Issues and Implications

Since its origins, the entity now called the European Union has sought to include countries not party to its founding treaties and agreements. The process has been gradual, with new members joining as a result of changes in their own domestic political constitution, or because of a transformation of perception regarding the balance of economic, cultural and political advantages over the costs or presumed losses of sovereignty involved in participation. The EU is now going through its phase of greatest enlargement, incorporating a large number of the states of the former Soviet bloc within its framework. There is also considerable debate concerning the potential candidacy of one country geographically close to the Union but often considered culturally, politically or historically ill-adapted to membership: Turkey. Turkey's candidacy, and the terms on which new states have recently been admitted to the Union, raise powerful and interesting questions about what defines this political organisation: is it primarily an economic pact, with little cultural significance? How much difference do the terms and requirements of membership make to the legal standards and protocols under which EU citizens live? In what ways do new member states—or potential new members—change or transform existing perceptions and realities with respect to the nature of the EU and its purpose?

Guest speakers

- Ulrike Guerot, Director of Foreign Policy Europe, German Marshall Fund
- Charles Powell, Professor of History, Universidad San Pablo-CEU
- Samuel Abraham, Executive Director, Society for Higher Learning, Bratislava
- Juraj Gyarfás, Society for Higher Learning, Bratislava
- Vasif Kortun, Director, Proje4L Istanbul Museum of Contemporary Art
- Caglar Keyder, Professor of Sociology, Bilgi University, Istanbul
- Taras Wozniak, Chief Editor, *Ji Magazine*
- Brian Kennelly, Blackstone Chambers
- Murat Belge, Professor of Comparative Literature, Bilgi University, Istanbul