



Theories and Sets of Expectations (WP II/III)

Wider Europe, Deeper Integration?

A common theoretical and methodological framework for EU-CONSENT

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1. *Research design: A common theoretical and methodological framework for EU-CONSENT*

For a long time, the accession of new member states to the EU in five successive enlargement rounds¹ has been treated by politics and academia alike as simply *adding* states (of presumably the same, “European” kind) to the institutional structure and the decision-making procedures of the EC/EU by expanding the geographic area in which EC/EU rule-making and policies apply. However, in the context of the last enlargement round, the explicit question has been raised for the first time whether (this) enlargement and (further) “conventional” ways of deepening European integration might be *mutually exclusive*:

¹ 1973: Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom; 1981: Greece; 1986: Portugal and Spain; 1995: Austria, Finland and Sweden; 2004: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia.

“Never before the tension between widening and deepening [has become] [...] so obvious” (Weiß 2005: 9).

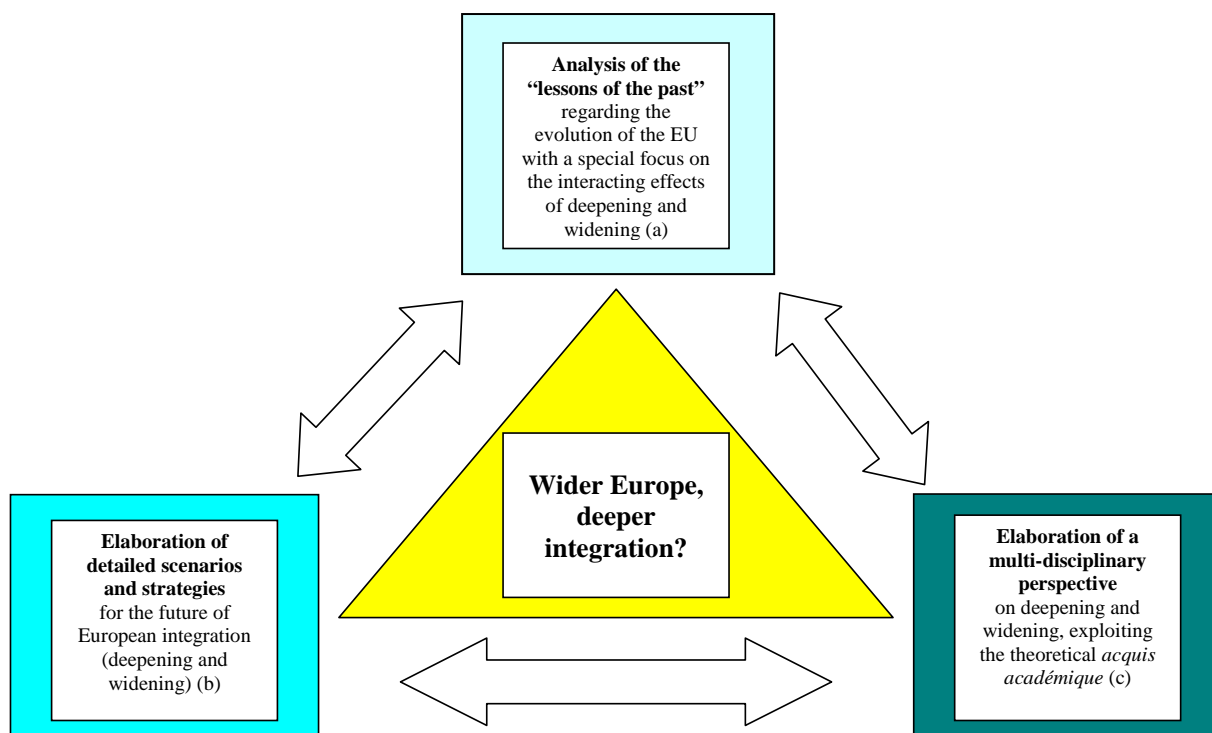
During and since the accession of ten new member states in May 2004, the European Union (EU) has thus witnessed an even more intense discussion regarding its future political and institutional structure than before enlargement. After two failed referenda on the EU’s Constitutional Treaty and the dispute over the budget 2007-2013, the European Union is currently going through a crisis which has once again turned the Union’s future into a wide and open field of greatly differing possible strategies and scenarios:² It is yet an open question what will become of the Constitutional Treaty if it is not ratified by all 25 member states. Ironically, the attempt to construct a stronger legitimacy basis for the EU by enhancing its transparency and efficiency seems to have failed precisely because of the presently existing lack of legitimacy and transparency in the EU – the Union seems to have manoeuvred itself into a “constitutional trap”.

The central question of EU-CONSENT therefore is: *Wider Europe, deeper integration?* The basic assumption underlying EU-CONSENT in this regard argues that the EU is “in the full process of reinventing itself” (see Annex I, May 2005: 4). This implies that after enlargement all EU member states are transformed into “new members”, and that the institutional structure, the decision-making procedures and the EU’s policies are currently undergoing a process of fundamental, unprecedented, *qualitative* change, the outcome of which is yet unclear. It may result in “an even stronger institutional fusion without a clear delimitation of responsibilities” (Wessels 2005), lead to a period of stagnation while present and future steps and decisions are debated, or even lead to a process of erosion of the present European polity. A number of more concrete strategies and scenarios are in principle all conceivable (see Graph 2). Thus, the question (once again and more than ever) is: Which future for the European Union?

In order to find answers to these questions, the following three interacting objectives of EU-CONSENT have been defined:

² “Scenarios” referring to possible future paths of development for the European polity; “strategies” referring to the political behaviour and actions of the relevant political actors.

Graph 1: Aims and objectives of EU-CONSENT (A. Faber)



- a. → **Analysis of the “lessons of the past”** regarding the triangle of *deepening*, *widening* and *“completing”* European integration: Which generalisable conclusions can be drawn in terms of the systematic effects of *enlargement* on the process of regional integration in Europe? Which are discernable patterns of *deepening* preceding and following enlargement rounds?³ Which forms and substance for complementing the integration process exist (e.g. with regard to the EU’s mid-term budgetary and financial perspective)? And finally: What are *patterns of relationships between widening, deepening and completing the European project*, and how can they be conceptualised and measured (see point 2.; see also quadrant I of Graph 2)?
- b. → Elaboration of **scenarios and strategies for the future of European integration** which follow from the analysis of the “lessons of the past”, including an assessment of their respective probability and possibly also their democratic quality:⁴ Which strategies and scenarios could derive from the academic discourse and from the political debate on the Union’s future (see e.g. debates on flexibility, results of EU-25 Watch etc.)? Are there innovative lines of argument, which should be added to Graph 2 as further scenarios? And what may be the benefits and costs of each scenario in

³ In terms of extending the *scope* and *level* of European integration by a) allocating new competences to the European level and by b) newly establishing supranational decision-making procedures in a wider range of European policy areas (see Wessels 2005, Table 2 on p. 29 and Figure 5a on p. 30).

⁴ According e.g. to the stability of the system envisaged in the scenario or its legitimacy (in terms of participation, openness, accountability, effectiveness and appropriateness) (see suggestions made by Best 2005).

the four thematic fields of EU-CONSENT (Institutions & political actors, Democratic life, Economic & social policies, External & internal security) (see point 3.)?

- c. → Elaboration of an innovative, **multi-disciplinary theoretical perspective on deepening and widening**, which draws on the analysis of the “lessons of the past” as well as on the scenarios and strategies, interacts with both and exploits the theoretical *acquis académique* in terms of
- meta-theories that are of relevance to the study of the EU (Constructivism, Institutionalism),
 - traditional integration theories (Neo-Functionalism, (Liberal) Intergovernmentalism, Federalism),
 - more recent theoretical approaches to European integration such as Multi-level-governance, Fusion Thesis, Europeanisation of national politics,
 - normative political theories that address core concepts of EU governance such as democracy and legitimacy, and
 - more focused theoretical approaches stemming from specific disciplinary backgrounds (e.g. Optimum currency area, historical milestones and phases, Policy Networks etc.).

Questions, variables and hypotheses derived from these theoretical approaches (see also point 2. of the paper) should

- be linked to the scenarios and strategies presented in point 3. (in order to support them theoretically), identifying gaps and defining additional strategies and scenarios,
- be applied, tested and, if necessary, re-formulated in order to cover the four different thematic dimensions of EU-CONSENT (Institutions & political actors, Democratic life, Economic & social policies, External & internal security),
- take up the major research results generated within the different thematic and disciplinary dimensions of the project.⁵

Furthermore, special attention regarding these three objectives of EU-CONSENT should be paid to the fact that “[j]ust as a proper and complete theory of integration must also be a potential theory of disintegration, so an adequate theory of enlargement should also be a theory of (potential) contraction” (Schmitter 2004: 71). Thus, all theoretical endeavours will have to ensure conceptual openness, that means consider *all* conceivable sorts of effects and interactions between widening and deepening.

⁵ Regarding the importance of the establishment of multi-disciplinary or interdisciplinary perspectives on European integration see Lasok/Soldatos 1981; Kohler-Koch/Jachtenfuchs 1996; Loth/Wessels 2001.

The *main aim of EU-CONSENT*, however, will be the selection, definition and presentation of scenarios and strategies for the EU's future which, viewed from a multi-disciplinary perspective on deepening and widening, seem

- a) *more likely* than others and
- b) *more acceptable* than others in terms of the input- (legitimacy) and the output-dimension (efficiency) of democratic political systems.

These scenarios and strategies will then form a *set of expectations* for the future of the EU resulting from the research work within EU-CONSENT.

In the following points, the first two objectives of EU CONSENT (analysis of the “lessons of the past” and elaboration of scenarios and strategies for the future of European integration) will be discussed in more detail.

2. *Integration theory and the analysis of the “lessons of the past”*

Especially regarding empirical-analytical political theories of European integration, it may rightfully be argued that the effects of enlargement and the interactions between EU widening and deepening have for much too long represented a “blind spot” (Schimmelpfennig/Sedelmeier 2002). They have neither been addressed by the two old “grand” theories of integration, neo-functionalism and intergovernmentalism (see Schmitter 2004: 70), nor have they figured prominently in more recent approaches to integration such as multi-level-governance, policy analysis, the new institutionalisms or social constructivism.⁶ Instead, enlargement has simply been treated as a proof for the validity of neo-functionalists’ (geographical) spill-over-hypothesis (Haas 1958), as a general proof for the success of European (economic) integration or ignored altogether.⁷ Furthermore, the predominance of

⁶ See the contributions in Diez/Wiener 2004, who had asked authors to “include a section in which they summarize, or speculate, how works written from ‘their’ approach have, or would address the issue of enlargement as a ‘test case’ “ (Diez/Wiener 2004: 20).

⁷ Some of the few exceptions are Miles/Redmond/Schwok 1995, who tried to assess the implications of past and future enlargements on European integration theory and vice versa. Following an evaluation of the relevance of intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism for the analysis and explanation of enlargement, they argued that intergovernmentalism provided the more appropriate approach to enlargement. Enlargement, according to them, enhanced the intergovernmental tendencies within the EU, which became more diverse and heterogeneous regarding the interests, the nature and configuration, the economic situation and the ideological perspectives of its member states. Falkner (1996) responded to these conclusions by arguing that the conclusions drawn by Miles, Redmond and Schwok were not fully justified. Instead, she concluded that enlargement would necessarily entail far-reaching institutional reforms within the EU, further limiting the national autonomy and sovereignty of old and new member states alike. She suggested a theoretical approach to the effects of enlargement emphasising the following dynamics and trends:

- the EU's time scale for major decisions, which was often longer than the lifespan (and the interests) of a particular national government and could, in time, therefore lead to fundamental reforms furthering and deepening European integration;
- the specific working conditions of the EU at the time of enlargement, which was decisive in terms of any revival of intergovernmentalist tendencies;

single-case and single-round orientation of research on enlargement largely prevents generalisable insights and research results (see Schimmelfennig/Sedelmeier 2002: 507ff; 524).

Thus, the present debate on enlargement primarily lacks theoretical contributions and approaches which try to systematically describe and analyse the effects of successive enlargement rounds on the institutional and political development of the EU and vice-versa. EU-CONSENT has been designed to address this “blind spot” regarding the mutually reinforcing effects between deepening and widening.

“Change” in all thematic and disciplinary dimensions covered by EU-CONSENT will thus constitute the prime dependent variable (the *explanandum*) for work in the Work package “Theories and sets of expectations” (WP II/III) and the four thematic Work Packages (WP IV-VII: Institutions & political actors, Democratic life, Economic & social policies, External & internal security).

As a starting point for conceptualising and measuring “change” regarding popular support for the European polity and the development of effective political institutions, re-reading a classic of European integration theory is suggested: Lindberg/Scheingold, *Europe’s Would-Be Polity. Patterns of Change in the European Community*. In their book, Lindberg and Scheingold argued in 1970 that a “permissive consensus” had emerged among the peoples of the European Community due to the “utilitarian” connections and promises of co-operation and integration in Europe (Lindberg/Scheingold 1970: 38ff). Furthermore, they established the hypothesis that change in the European polity largely resulted from an interaction of “mechanisms” (like functional spill-over or side-payments) and “activators” (especially demand flow and leadership) (Lindberg/Scheingold 1970: 134ff).

However, the analysis and explanation of *change* is facing essential and as yet unresolved methodological questions:

- How will it be possible to establish which is cause and which is effect?, that means:
- What criteria should be used to determine which changes in the Union’s scope and level are effectively and directly attributable to (previous or approaching) enlargement rounds (and vice-versa)?, and:
- How will it be possible to prevent a confusion of congruency (or simultaneity) with causality?

- the creation of acceptable and working institutional solutions in order to accommodate the tensions between those member states demanding a deepening of the EU *prior* to enlargement and those solely wanting to widen it (Falkner 1996: 237f).

These basic questions will have to be addressed and discussed by all research teams within the thematic Work packages of EU-CONSENT. Furthermore, indicators for change or *vectors of change* will have to be elaborated and defined in each thematic Work Package for each scenario. These vectors of change may in some cases also be subclassified, e.g. into “substantial” and “procedural” vectors of change.

Categories of independent variables (*explanans*) which should be analysed in order to explain the scope and level of change within the European polity after enlargement are:

- total numbers of acceding countries and of member states (→ effects on institutional arrangements and effectiveness of EU decision-making) (all Teams and WPs);
- the size (population) and, following from that, the political weight of the acceding countries (WP IV, WP V, Team 4);
- the state, structure and competitive position of their national economies and economic growth disparities within the enlarged EU (WP VI, Team 3);
- divergence/convergence of the economic development and interests within member states (WP VI, Team 3);
- differences in unemployment rates within the enlarged EU (WP VI, Team 3);
- the “fit” or “misfit” of the political, legal, administrative and economic structures in the new member states and the *acquis communautaire* (WP IV, WP V, WP VII, Team 4, Team 5);
- national cultural characteristics of the acceding countries; divergence/convergence of cultural heritage (“How are things done?” How are disputes handled? How are problems solved?) (→ influence on the development/degree of a common European identity) (WP V, Team 4, Team 5);
- political structures and political cleavages within the acceding countries (WP 5, Team 5);
- ideological perspectives and political ambitions and preferences in the acceding countries (their “idea” of Europe) (WP IV, WP V, Team 5);
- divergence/convergence of strategic interests between member states (→ influence on the development of common foreign and security policies) (WP VII, Team 2);
- current external threats to EU security (→ effects on the political willingness of member states to further develop and institutionalise EU foreign policy) (WP VII);
- shifts within member states regarding their stance on foreign policy matters (influence on the degree of consensus between member states on EU foreign policy matters) (WP VII);

Categories of independent variables (*explanans*) which could be analysed in order to explain differences between enlargement rounds include:

- the state of the EU at the time of enlargement; i.e. the scope and level of the *acquis communautaire* and the scope and level of institutionalisation and politicisation within the EU (WP IV, Team 2, Team 4);
- the calculation of potential gains and losses from enlargement for the current member states (WP IV, V, VI, VII);
- the EU citizens' acceptance for another enlargement round (WP V).

In sum, the analysis of the "lessons of the past" with the help of the existing theories of European integration should lead to

- a more systemic, multidisciplinary overview over EU systems change induced by enlargement;
- a more systemic, multidisciplinary overview over differences between enlargement rounds stemming from EU deepening;
- interacting patterns between widening and deepening;
- (possibly) a typology of different enlargement rounds.

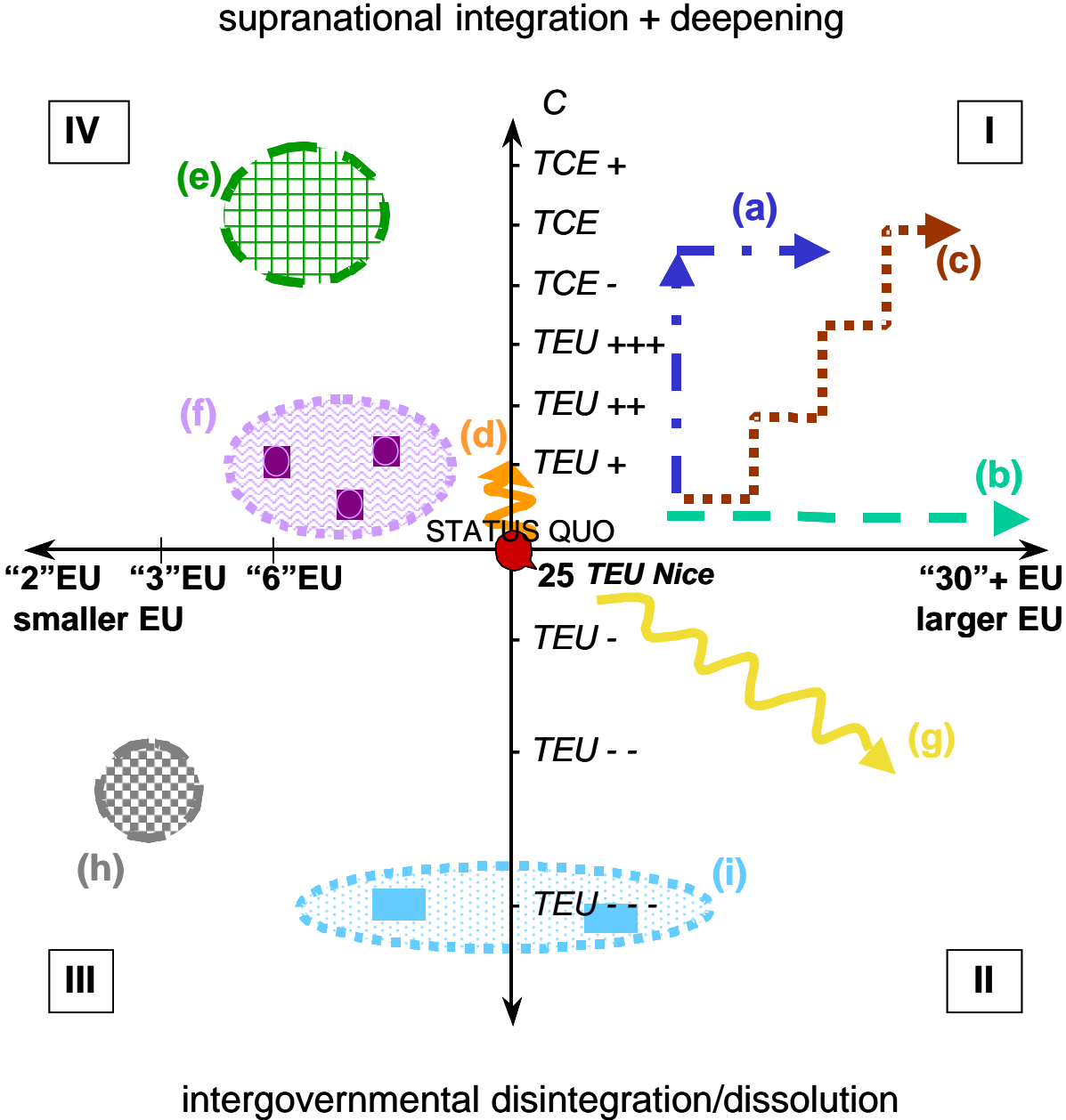
These results should then feed into the elaboration of more detailed scenarios and strategies for the future of European integration.

3. *Europe's future: more uncertain than ever? Scenarios and strategies*

Conceptual openness, even ambiguity has always been one of the main characteristics of the process of European integration. The step-by-step-approach to integration "invented" by Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman in the 1950s has worked (and worked well) precisely because it was based on the common assumption of a *lacking* predetermined, "ideal" or optimal end state (*finalité*) of regional integration in Europe. Paradoxically, the EU's most ambitious attempt to date to end this provisional, step-by-step approach has now led the EU into one of its biggest crises since 1951. And yet, even without the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty until the end of 2006, the future of the EU may not be as open and unpredictable as the current state of crisis might suggest. After more than 50 years of successful co-operation and integration in Europe, it seems highly unreasonable and unlikely that the member states will simply and completely "give up on Europe". Furthermore, following arguments derived from historical institutionalism, European integration is, like any process of institutionalisation, a path-dependent process. Basic institutional structures, rules and policies are, once established, "sticky", that means difficult to abolish or even to overhaul (see Pierson 1996; Pollack 2004).

As a starting point for the elaboration of a set of expectations for the future of the EU,⁸ we propose the following overview of principally conceivable scenarios and strategies (Graph 2):

Graph 2: Alternative strategies and scenarios for the EU (W. Wessels)



⁸ That means a set of scenarios and strategies for the EU's future which seem *more likely* than others and *more acceptable* than others, see point 1.

- C Full constitution (constitutional convention; EU-referendum)
 - TCE + Amended and complemented Constitutional Treaty (convention and referendum)
 - TCE Constitutional Treaty, where applicable including “solemn declarations” (renewed submission and referenda where required)
 - TCE - Core elements of the Constitutional Treaty (part I, II, IV; no referenda)
-
- TEU +++ Nice and partial reforms (package deals, elements of the TCE requiring ratification, intergovernmental conference)
 - TEU ++ “Soft constitutionalisation”, development without treaty change, elements of the TCE not requiring ratification)
 - TEU + Intensive use of the status quo
-
- TEU - De facto retreat and desintegration due to non-use of the Treaty
 - TEU -- De jure retreat: Free trade area
 - TEU --- Break-up or replacement by ad hoc formation of groups of member states

Strategies and scenarios

- a. **(federal) community strategy: deepening in order to be able to enlarge**
 - b. **linear enlargement strategy: Enlargement including minimal institutional adjustments without constitutional extension and upgrading**
 - c. **coupling option: close connection between enlargement and deepening - deepen step by step and enlarge member state by member state**
 - d. **Flexibility/enhanced cooperation: differentiated integration, opt-outs (within the TEU framework)**
 - e. **core Europe: institutional deepening within a group of „willing“ and „able“ member states (outside the TEU framework)**
 - f. **variable geometry: groups of member states with sectoral integration existing in parallel (outside the TEU framework)**
-
- g. **intergovernmental approach: enlargement and reduction/dismantling**
 - h. **“directoire”: intergovernmental co-operation between big member states (EU3, EU6, ...) (outside the TEU framework)**
 - i. **I'Europe à la carte: groups of interested member states practising limited functional or sectoral co-operation (outside the TEU framework)**

Although we cannot give a complete picture, a few implications of four possible future directions of the integration process will be sketched out below and linked to scenarios from Graph 2 with special regard to the implications for the four thematic dimensions of EU-CONSENT (Institutions & political actors, Democratic life, Economic & social policies, External & internal security).

1. **Status-quo:** In Graph 2, the status quo is represented by the **point where both axes cross**. In terms of the legal constitution of the EU, it is represented by the continued validity of the Treaty of Nice (TEU). Regarding the thematic dimensions of EU-CONSENT, the status quo implies that no or very limited change will occur in the next years. This means that there will be no major institutional or constitutional reforms, no establishment e.g. of a European

social model, no emergence of a common public sphere and no further development of democratic life in the EU, as well as no larger projects in the field of external and internal security policy. However, there may be an intensive use of the Treaty on European Union, including a renewed financial perspective for the EU (TEU, TEU+, TEU++ in Graph 2).

This general direction for the future development of European integration starts from the assumption that the EU has now reached its limits and a stable equilibrium, i.e. that it has found its fundamental political and institutional order for the foreseeable future. Thus, the EU works and exists “without illusions”, that means without a vision and without strategic views regarding new projects. Instead, the Union will be “floating”, “flowing” or “muddling through” at and around the level of constitutionalisation and politicisation defined by the Treaty of Nice. On the other hand, there will also be no tendencies to disintegrate.

Although it may seem unlikely that the next enlargement round (Bulgaria and Romania in 2007 or 2008) will be suspended, this scenario might be attractive for a majority of member states who fear for the stability of the integration project as a whole. It does not seem unreasonable to expect that an extended period of stabilisation and consolidation of ten to fifteen years might follow after the last enlargement round.⁹ The EU’s recently announced „reflection break“ (June 2005) of one year would thus characterise the process of European integration during the years to come, and the *acquis communautaire* at the present level (Treaty of Nice) would represent the level of constitutionalisation on which the EU is likely to settle for the foreseeable future. On the other hand, however, the Union might be forced to change considerably (institutionally and constitutionally) over the next decade in order to accommodate present and future enlargements. A complete, longer-term standstill thus seems neither desirable nor realistic, or, as Schmitter put it in 1971, integration only happens as long as the regional system reacts to crises and developments. If it stops reacting, it has begun to disintegrate (Schmitter 1971: 240ff).

2. **Spillover:** In Graph 2, this direction is represented by the vectors in quadrant I:

- the “**(federal) community strategy**” (a), i.e. deepening prior to and in order to enlarge (“buildup” in classical neo-functional terms, including TEU +++);
- the “**linear enlargement strategy**” (b) which foresees enlargement including minimal institutional adjustments, but no fundamental institutional and constitutional reforms requiring a treaty change (geographical spillover or “spill-around” in classical neo-functional terms);

⁹ Already in the 1970s, this status-quo-scenario (or status of “encapsulation” or “equilibrium”) was deemed the most likely by classical neo-functional scholars in each moment of decision (see Lindberg/Scheingold 1970: 291, Nye 1970: 829f, Schmitter 1971).

- the “**coupling option**” (c), representing a close connection between enlargement and deepening, with deepening and enlargement both proceeding step by step (or new member state by new member state).

In terms of the legal constitution of the EU, this direction is represented by an extension of the *scope* and/or of the *level* of the Treaty of Nice (TEU) (from “status quo” to “C - Full Constitution” in Graph 2). Regarding the thematic dimensions of EU-CONSENT, “spillover” implies that there will be, step-by-step, substantial reforms and new projects in all policy areas leading e.g. to a greater visibility of the EU as an actor in external relations or to the establishment of European economic governance in the Eurozone.

Spillover assumes that *in general* mutually reinforcing *positive* effects exist between deepening and widening. This means that enlargement strengthens the awareness of the need for institutional reform – so that the Union continues to function properly – and will thus lead to a (path-dependent) process of deepening and vice-versa. The Union, in becoming bigger and wider, will simultaneously reform its institutional structures and enhance their efficiency. The democratic legitimisation of the EU will be strengthened, contributing to a growing sense of a common European identity. New aspects of economic, social and security policies will be moved to the European level; existing European policies will be further integrated and intensified (“buildup”).¹⁰ Majority voting will be introduced on foreign policy matters, with member states accepting to share sovereignty also in this policy area. The legal output of the EU will grow constantly, covering more and more policy areas and replacing national regulations. Ideally, the EU will thus turn into a legitimised and well-balanced system of governance both on the national and on the European level and represent a unified and strengthened actor on the international level. Spillover may lead to the full constitutionalisation of the EU, including a constitution which goes beyond the aims and practices stipulated in the EU’s Constitutional Treaty. According to this second general direction, the EU may thus turn into a fully-fledged federal European state, a European Federation (the “United States of Europe”) at some stage. However, successful deepening and widening projects of the past may in some cases also prove to be a “step too far” for single member states in the present (like e.g. the accession to EMU for Italy) or as not having been timed ideally. Therefore, every success of the past will have to be carefully analysed and contrasted with the present state and output of the respective project in order to assess its longer-term quality.

¹⁰ Terms adopted from Schmitter 1971. The seven potential strategies identified by Schmitter for the development of the integration process are: “spillover”, “spill-around”, “buildup”, “retrench”, “muddle-about”, “spill-back” and “encapsulate”.

3. **Spill-back:** Looking at Graph 2, “spill-back” is represented by the scenarios and strategies below the x-axis (quadrant II and II):

- an **intergovernmental approach (g)**, which leads to an enlarged, yet less integrated Union;
- the establishment of a “**directoire**” (h), i.e. intergovernmental cooperation between three, four, five or six big member states outside the treaty framework;
- the evolution of a “**Europe à la carte**” (i), in which groups of interested member states practise limited functional or sectoral cooperation.

In terms of the legal constitution of the EU, “spill-back” thus represents a reduction of the legal as well as of the living constitutional basis of the Union by a *de facto* or by a *de jure* retreat from the present treaty (TEU-, TEU- -, TEU - - - in Graph 2). Regarding the thematic dimensions of EU-CONSENT, “spill-back” implies that there will be highly differentiated forms of cooperation emerging from the present EU-25. While in some policy areas like internal and external security, the establishment of a “directoire” of few, big member states may extend the present scope and level of cooperation substantially, other policy areas such as democratic life in the EU might be neglected. Thus, the EU may turn into a large free trade area with selected additional, flexible sectors of deeper integration. On the other hand, the EU may also cease to exist completely and become replaced by ad hoc formations of former EU-member states.

Spill-back thus suggests that reinforcing *negative* consequences of deepening and widening are at work in the development of the European integration process: Widening will lead to a crisis of output failures, “retrench” and “spill-back” (Schmitter 1971: 240ff) within the framework of the existing institutional structures. Common policies will suffer from the growing number and heterogeneity of member states and their interests, leading to stagnation and political deadlock. Institutional reforms, policy trajectories and future enlargements will be blocked. The EU might also partially disintegrate in some policy areas and e.g. turn into a large European Free Trade Area (less European governance in a wider Union).

In view of the fact that the EU’s “everyday politics” are still working in a “business as usual” manner despite the two failed referenda, this general direction for the future development of European integration seems less probable than the previous two. Furthermore, over-strain may be caused by other factors than over-stretch, such as a deepening project which asks too much of some member states in terms of financial contributions, administrative adaptations or changes of traditional national stances in certain policy areas (e.g. defence policy).

4. The **re-invented (or newly invented) Union**: In Graph 2, this direction is represented predominantly by the vectors in quadrant IV:

- “**core Europe**” (e), representing institutional (an constitutional) deepening within a group of “willing” and “able” member states;
- “**variable geometry**” (f), representing a network of parallel groups of member states which pursue sectoral integration in different policy areas.

In terms of the legal constitution of the EU, this direction of a re-invented (or newly invented) Union is represented by the reduction of the *scope* of the Treaty of Nice (TEU), that means a reduction of the number of member states (from 25/27 to groups of six or three member states). Thus, the Union could develop into a multi-level system of governance with overlapping spheres of competence which could, although making the EU (even) more complicated and complex, lead to the emergence of innovative instruments and procedures for problem-solving.

The re-invented (or newly invented) Union therefore suggests a fresh outlook on the Union’s future development. In the past years, the EU has shown an enormous capacity for transformation and change. That means that the EU has gone through periods of substantial institutional and political change which may, although they each proceeded in an incremental (path-dependent) way, add up to a “transformative” change. Compared to the EC of the 1950s and 1960s, it can thus be argued that the present EU has been transformed into a fundamentally different polity and may yet again be at the beginning of another fundamental transformation. Further deepening and widening are not excluded, but become more and more unlikely and difficult to achieve for all 25 member states simultaneously. However, the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands may have ended hopes for the introduction of more effective and practicable forms of “enhanced co-operation” into the current institutional framework of the EU.

A new kind of European polity (a “post-modern” Europe, Bonvicini 2005) is therefore expected to emerge after the last enlargement round. All member states will become “new” members in the evolving polity; the institutional structure will be re-established to fit the demands of its 25+ member states. Depending on the basic principles and character of this new polity, democratic life may either be attributed an essential role (e.g. in the foundation of a “European federal state”) or excluded (e.g. in the reduction of the EU to a great European free trade area). Economic and social policies as well as aspects of external and internal security may likewise either be integrated into a deepened and widened political Union or be reduced to few, functionally limited tasks. A wide range of scenarios and strategies linked to this general direction for the future development of European integration is conceivable and will have to be explored, especially with regard to new forms of differentiated integration

which have consistently been suggested as solutions for the emerging dilemma between widening and deepening.

The fact that the now 25 member states might have even more widely differing aspirations for the future of the EU makes it obvious that more flexible forms of co-operation and constitutional development have to be offered to those who are willing to proceed without permanently excluding those who are not able and/or not willing to do so. The obvious problem in connection with the introduction of new forms of co-operation and integration is that new dividing lines may evolve which may, in the long run, cause the European Union to break up. Furthermore, a “differentiated” EU will be highly intransparent for European citizens and elude democratic control by the European Parliament or national parliaments. Again, the choice to be made here will be a political one, weighing up the benefits and the risks of the different options. The political preferences of national elites, political actors such as parliaments or the European Commission as well as the public opinion on EU politics will be decisive for the choices to be made.

The following matrix illustrates four different types of member states’ behaviour in a “new” European Union, keeping in mind that the classification of each member state into one of these fields may differ from policy area to policy area and from case to case (see Graph 3).

Graph 3: Types of member states’ behaviour in the “new” European Union regarding projects for further deepening and widening the EU (A. Faber)

| | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| ability | can | can't |
| willingness | | |
| want to | <i>the avant-garde</i> | “les frustrés” |
| don't want to | veto-players | (potential) drop-outs |

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>fundamental</i> “willingness” depends e.g. on the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • domestic political constellations and orientations (political orientation of party leaders, power distribution between political actors, ..) • political “traditions” concerning EU politics and national views of Europe and the EU • calculation of potential gains and losses from further deepening and widening |
| <i>de-facto</i> “ability” depends e.g. on the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • economic situation and position of the member state in the global economy • domestic political constellations (e.g. stable or instable government, popular satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the government, upcoming national elections...) • “fit” or “misfit” of projects for further deepening and widening the EU with national structures and policy objectives (in terms of institutional, administrative, political and cultural structures and conditions) |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| the <i>avant-garde</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ambitious - common visions of a strong, politically unified Union - projects for deepening: social policy (labour market, social security systems,...), economic policy (tax policy, economic governance), CFSP, internal security (fight against terrorism and organised crime) - may establish different forms of cooperation, e.g. “directoire” or “l’ Europe à la carte” |
| “les frustrés” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - influential, most dangerous for the stability of the whole system, especially if many and/or many big states are concerned - endanger status quo as well as success of further deepening projects |
| veto-players | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - may be dangerous for the stability of the system because of their strong position, but are primarily interested in keeping the status quo - will act as veto players and build alliances against further deepening in cases where they are strongly opposed to deepening/widening projects |
| (potential) drop-outs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - comparatively not very influential - may create confusion: who is still a member state of the EU and who isn’t? |

4. *Issues and approaches in the four thematic Work packages*

In order to work out a set of expectations¹¹ regarding the mutually reinforcing effects between deepening and widening, first of all the impact of former enlargement rounds on the EC/EU will have to be analysed within the four thematic Work packages of EU-CONSENT.

In Work package IV: “*Institutions & political actors*”, the impact of enlargement on the evolution of the EU’s institutional structure will be scrutinised. Special attention in this WP should thus be turned towards the internal organisation, intra-institutional relations and the interaction of the European institutions with actors on the national level. The main issue which might be addressed is how far the present institutional structures can be “stretched” quantitatively by adding new member states without providing for any fundamental, qualitative changes. Following from the results of this analysis, recommendations could be given for the next enlargement round(s) concerning the adaptation of the EU’s institutional structure and decision-making procedures. Furthermore, general conclusions could be drawn regarding the set-up of appropriate, manageable institutional arrangements for continuously expanding projects of regional integration.

In Work package V: “*Democratic life*”, the effects of enlargement on the state of democracy, transparency and efficiency within the EC/EU will be analysed. In order to do so, first of all the basic assumptions of the WP will have to be revisited and reconsidered. Facing a potential failure of the EU’s Constitutional Treaty, the question now is whether an enlarged (and further enlarging) Union can still initiate a process of growing mutual understanding across the member states and greater transparency of its institutional structure that may one day bring about the emergence of a true European “deliberative democracy”. Central issues

¹¹ That means a set of scenarios and strategies for the EU’s future which seem *more likely* than others and *more acceptable* than others, see point 1.

of this WP will be the analysis of those factors which cause EU citizens to take positive, negative or neutral positions on the present procedures of citizens' participation in EU politics, the creation of a monitoring system for citizens' involvement and the summary of recommendations for policy-makers. The aim of these recommendations should be to help turn the ratification process of the Constitutional Treaty into a valuable (and not completely frustrating) experience. This experience should contribute to the establishment of a European Union which is more directly democratically legitimised and closer the European citizens than the present one.

In Work package VI: "*Economic & social policies*", the policy developments and trajectories in economic and social policy will be analysed. The core purpose of this WP will be the exploration of the effects of deepening and widening on developments in internal market policies, structural funds and the cohesion fund, EU monetary policy, the budgetary framework, labour markets and the European social model, economic policy co-ordination and trade policy. Building on the analysis of the effects of past enlargement rounds on these policy areas, proposals for reforms and initiatives will be put forward and fed into the political debate.

In Work package VII: "*External & internal security*", the impact of enlargement on EU foreign policy and on its international role will be scrutinised. Specific objectives of the WP will be the changes in the EU's internal and external security environment after eastern enlargement (NATO, transatlantic relationship, new neighbouring states in the East and in the South), the Union's reaction to changes and new challenges in terms of policy innovations and institutional adaptations (e.g. the European Neighbourhood Policy) and the likely consequences of these new policies and institutional changes for the EU-25 as a (unified?) actor in the field of security and defence policy. Different scenarios and policy options will be proposed and tested in order to delineate the European Union's grown role as an international actor in this area.

5. *Time and work plan including deliverables*

In order to operationalise the work steps towards a common theoretical and methodological framework outlined above and to meet the deadlines for the deliverables, the following plan for the first 18 months of the project has been drawn up:

Table 1: Time and work plan for Work package “Theories and Sets of Expectations” (WP II/III) (to be regularly updated)

| Month 1 - 12 | Working steps and results to be communicated/delivered | Responsibility of |
|--|---|--|
| Until Sept 30th, 2005 | Send out questionnaire on normative and analytical approaches and sets of expectations to all WP leaders and Team leader of Teams 2-5 ✓ | Team 1 |
| | Fill in questionnaire and return it to Team 1 (✓) | WP leaders IV-VII Team leaders 2-5 |
| | Include results in a new draft version of the paper on the common theoretical and methodological framework of EU-CONSENT ✓ | Team 1 |
| Oct 27 th -29 th , 2005 | Team 2: Conference on “Beyond the customs union: The European Community’s quest for completion, deepening and enlargement, 1969-1975”, Groningen ✓ | Team leader of Team 2 (Loth) |
| From Nov 11th, 2005 | Circulation of Draft Paper on “Wider Europe, deeper integration?” including indicators to all participants of WP “Theories and Sets of Expectations” (WP II/III) | Team 1 (Faber/Wessels) |
| Nov 18 th , 2005 | Deliverable: First meeting of WP II/III during the kick-off meeting in Brussels (D4a) | Teams 1-5 |
| Nov 18 th , 2005 | Specification of date for 2 nd and 3 rd WP meeting | WP leaders (Wessels/Laffan) |
| end of Nov 2005 | Invitations to partners for 2 nd and 3 rd WP meeting | WP leaders (Wessels/Laffan) |
| Month 8 (Jan 2006) | Deliverable: Background paper on the project’s theoretical and methodological framework including yardsticks with indicators (D5) (to be published on WEB-CONSENT) | Team 1 (Faber/Wessels) |
| Jan 19th-21st, 2006 | Team 5: Workshop on “Europeanization and Differentiated Membership: Institutions and Policies”, Budapest | Team leader of Team 5 (Agh) |
| March 2006 onwards | Deliverable: Recurrent revisiting of the set of expectations (background paper) (D6) (to be published on WEB-CONSENT) | Team 1 (Faber/Wessels) |
| Month 10 (March 2006) onwards | Deliverable: First Publication of journal articles on the historical dimension as a forum for intermediary reports and discussions (D7) | Team 2 (Loth) |
| Month 11 (beginning of April 2006) | Deliverable: Second meeting of WP II/III (D4b) | Team 1-5 Org.: Team 1 (Wessels/Laffan) |

| Month 1 - 12 | Working steps and results to be communicated/delivered | Responsibility of |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Month 11 (April 2006) | Deliverable: Annual state of the art paper of each team (max. 10 pages) (to be published on WEB-CONSENT) (D 15a) | Team leaders of Teams 1-5 (Wessels/Laffan, Loth, von Bogdandy/Rovna, Tsoukalis, Agh/Goetz) |
| Month 12 (May 2006) | Deliverable: Policy Papers by young researchers on the constitutionalisation of the EU, in co-operation with WP XI (to be published on WEB-CONSENT) (D11) | Teams 1-5 (Wessels/Laffan, Loth, von Bogdandy/Rovna, Tsoukalis, Agh/Goetz) |
| Month 13 - 18 | Working steps and results to be communicated/delivered | Responsibility of |
| Month 14 (July 2006) | Deliverable: State of the art paper on the nature of the Union's political order (D8) | Team 1 (Wessels/Laffan) |
| Month 14 (July 2006) | Deliverable: Annual Working Papers on the economic and legal dimension of EU integration (to be published on WEB-CONSENT) (D10a) | Team 3-4 (von Bogdandy/Rovna, Tsoukalis) |
| Month 14 (July 2006) | Deliverable: Annual Working Paper on the transition and Europeanization process as a preparation for a projected volume on "The EU-25 and its member states: structures and procedures for the EU policy cycle" (projected: 26, 38) (D12a) | Team 5 (Agh/Goetz) |
| Month 16 (Sept. 2006) | Specification of date for 4 th and 5 th WP meeting | WP leaders (Wessels/Laffan) |
| Month 17 (beginning of October 2006) | Deliverable: Third meeting of WP II/III with leading representatives of thematic Work packages (D4c) (parallel to 2 nd CONSENT Assembly) | Teams 1-5 (Wessels/Laffan, Loth, von Bogdandy/Rovna, Tsoukalis, Agh/Goetz) |
| Month 17 (October 2006) | Deliverable: Paper redefining concepts of EU deepening and widening (D9) | Team 1 (Faber/Wessels) |

6. *Literature (to be regularly updated)*

6.1. Basic texts

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6.3 Core texts Democratic life (WP V)

6.4 Core texts Economic & social policies (WP VI)

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