

A b s t r a c t s

Günther Verheugen

The future is European

May 1, 2004 represents an important break in European history; anyone who places the enlargement of the European Union in its historical and moral context recognizes this immediately. Europe's historical experience of being on bad terms with one's neighbours, conflict, and war is coming to an end. It could be succeeded by a phase characterized by peace, stability, and security. Anyone who complains about the costs of enlargement should remember that one day of war in Europe costs more than a year of peace.

Despite all the problems of adjustment in East and West, enlargement has much to offer in the spheres of politics, the economy, and culture. For the first time in the history of European integration, a round of enlargement will take place in which no exemptions from community law have been negotiated for any state. Even so, considerable intellectual and institutional efforts will be needed if a 25-member EU is to have the capacity to act effectively. Dialogue between Poland and Germany is indispensable here, and compromise is the expression of the high level of political culture in Europe.

Karel Vodička

Ready for membership?

The political systems of the Czech Republic and Slovakia

In May 2004, the Czech Republic and Slovakia will join the European Union. The consolidation of the political systems of these two states is well advanced at the constitutional level. The intermediate system is also consolidating itself in both countries, but the Slovakian party system remains unstable. In neither country is the behaviour of informal political actors or civil society fully consolidated. A reversal of the democratization process in Slovakia seems unlikely, and in the Czech Republic it is almost unthinkable. However, one cannot exclude the possibility that in one or even both of these countries the transformation process could, in the long term, get stuck at a low level of consolidation.

Mirosław Matyja

Sitting tight brings its rewards:

Elite continuity from socialism to EU membership

The elites in the postcommunist states of East-Central Europe influenced the transformation that took place in 1989-90. This step-by-step changeover of power took a number of different forms, and the balance between the old and the new elites after the end of totalitarian power was crucial for the development of democracy in these countries. The new elites have also had a decisive influence on the eastward enlargement of the European Union. There are times when the private interests of the political elites in the countries of East-Central and Eastern Europe carry more weight than the development of their democratic systems. The EU's eastward enlargement is not just a political and economic process; it also involves the social integration of the new members.

Peter Haslinger

Paradigm change?

East European history and the eastward enlargement of the EU

For the field of East European history, the years 1989-91 represented a significant break. This resulted in 1998-9 in a lively debate about the future of the field. By contrast, there has so far been hardly any examination of whether the basic conditions of East European history will once again change with lasting effect after May 2004. This article presents the results of an initial internal discussion forum which examined this issue in 2003. The author goes on to offer some further thoughts on the question of whether the progress made in the last five years has already been accompanied by a paradigm change taking into account the changed perception of Eastern Europe in the public discussion.

Sergei Mozgvoi

The *siloviki* in the service of the Orthodox church:

State, church and nation in Russia

In view of the various centres of conflict on the territory of the Russian Federation, it is advisable for the state and its "power ministries" to be very careful in their

dealings with the question of religion. If the religious factor is ignored, or if it proves impossible to regulate the relationship between the state and different religious communities in a satisfactory way, a general destabilization may be the result. The Russian Army's current programme of education in "Orthodox patriotism" rests on the rejection of other world views. It promotes Russian nationalism and great power chauvinism.

Aleksandr Soldatov

The Russian Orthodox church and Russia's spiritual space

According to its constitution, the Russian Federation is a secular state: no denomination is to be considered a binding faith or state religion. Nevertheless, the Russian Orthodox church is increasingly taking on the character of a state church. This is leading to conflicts with other denominations, for example with the Russian Orthodox Autonomous church, with Russia's Muslims, and with Catholics. The Orthodox church's attempts to influence education policy have so far been unsuccessful, but a broad range of church-related economic activities receives support from the state.

Aleksandr Kyrlezhev

Liberal tendencies in the Russian Orthodox church:

An outline of the problem

Although scholars and journalists have paid considerable attention to conservative circles in the Russian Orthodox church, they have largely ignored liberal currents. There are methodological reasons for this, and the situation can also be explained by structural features characteristic of liberal thought. Placing an emphasis on freedom and individualism is not conducive to the formation of a school. This article treats liberalism as a political idea, reconstructs elements of liberal ecclesiastical and theological consciousness, and examines the question of where liberal tendencies genuinely exist or are only construed on the basis of criteria imposed from the outside.