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# Enlarging the European Union: relations between the EU and Central and Eastern Europe.

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# Enlarging the European Union: Relations Between the EU and Central and Eastern Europe

Carole Lyons (*Jean Monnet Lecturer, University of Leicester*)

## Main text

An acknowledged weakness of the Amsterdam Summit in June 1997, reflected in the Amsterdam Treaty, is the failure to implement any of the institutional reforms and modernisations necessary to prepare the way for the future accession of new Member States to the European Union. Recognition of the significance of enlargement is limited to a trifling reference in Protocol No. 11 annexed to the Treaty. If this IGC was therefore a disappointment in abandoning any attempt to engage with the issues raised by the inevitable accession of new states, the academic literature on the subject is not similarly affected. There is a fast-burgeoning body of work dealing with the legal, political and economic implications of enlargement. This book, edited by Marc Maresceau (who has a long-standing reputation in the field of European Union external relations), makes an impressive and timely contribution in this regard.

It is a wide-ranging work, with 22 contributors dealing comprehensively with diverse aspects of the enlargement debate. Some of the papers represent the outcome of a 1996 Colloquium on Relations between the European Union and Central and Eastern Europe, which, like this book, was multi-disciplinary in perspective. What differentiates this work is the fact that the contributors hail from a number of European countries, both within and outside the Union. Amongst them are representatives of both academic and practitioner backgrounds, many of the latter being high profile figures. Despite this diversity, the overall result is a successful merging of different perspectives and approaches.

The book is divided into three sections. The first, a short Introduction, containing an important piece by Marc Maresceau, deals with the basic legal principles governing accession. Part II is devoted to papers dealing with the Europe Agreements. There is a significant grouping of detailed articles on the trade and competition implications of these arrangements followed by two thorough pieces on persons and services. The final section, on the Issue of Enlargement, contains many thought-provoking papers dealing with a broad range of such issues, taking into account possible IGC developments. What is significant about this section is the fact that enlargement implications are considered from the dual perspective of both the Union and the potential new Member States. It is this dimension of the book which distinguishes it from others on the subject, offering an in-depth and necessary insight into the two sides of this debate. Given the diverse

backgrounds of the contributors, there are varying styles and approaches here, but all the papers represent solid and knowledgeable engagement with the subject matter.

There is careful, thorough and well organised presentation throughout. This work is essential reading for researchers and post-graduates specialising in this dimension of European Union law. It will obviously have limited appeal in the undergraduate market but is a necessary and vital library purchase providing conscientious, comprehensive and up to date analysis of the many faceted enlargement debate.