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## EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLISH, DANISH AND CYPRIOT PRESIDENCIES IN THE FIELD OF ENLARGEMENT POLICY – ‘A PROJECT ASSESSMENT PERSPECTIVE’

**ABSTRACT** This article concerns the evaluation of the Polish, Danish and Cypriot presidencies in the field of the European Union enlargement policy. In order to assess an effectiveness of both countries he uses a project assessment perspective, which theoretical model was initially developed in the book *Skuteczność polskiej prezydencji w Unii Europejskiej* (trans.: The effectiveness of the Polish presidency in the European Union). A thesis standing behind this approach says that after the treaty of Lisbon has come into force, and has changed crucial functions of each presidency, we can't any more consider a country chairing the Council neither as honest broker nor as representative of own national interests. A project assessment perspective delivers more adequate categories based on project management theory and practice. In the empirical part of the study the author focuses on the effects of Polish, Danish and Cypriot activities in the field of relations with six candidate countries since 1 July 2011 till 31 December 2012.

**KEY WORDS** Polish presidency 2011, Danish presidency 2012, project assessment of the presidency, effectiveness, EU enlargement policy

### INTRODUCTION

In second half of the year 2011 Poland for the first time in its European Union membership history chaired the meetings of the Council of the European Union (later: the Council). Thus, it seems desirable to reliably evaluate the effectiveness of this country

presidency in the context of activities undertaken by Denmark and Cyprus – other countries from the trio presidency, which has finished its term on 31 December 2012.

Group presidency, or trio as it is sometimes called, was formally enclosed in the primary law of the European Union (later: the EU) by the Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community (later: treaty of Lisbon) which entered into force on 1 December 2009. The trio presidency in the Council supposes to provide the continuity of legislative process in the Council and should also guarantees more cohesion of plans and activities undertaken by each country from a group presidency.

Those circumstances inter alia cause, that presidency is required, as one of the institution of the system of the EU, to provide a positive response to the effects of crises happening in the frame of this system. We can mention at least three the most visible crises that affects the balance of the system of the EU. First, is a crisis of eurozone, which manifests itself through the problems of refinancing of a government debts in the southern countries of the UE<sup>1</sup>. Second, is a Schengen zone crisis. It reached its peak during the civil war in Libya in 2011, when uncontrolled stream of immigrants tried to force their way to the territory of the EU. Some member states like France or Germany suggested to return control at the internal borders, implying in this way that they didn't trust a security mechanisms of other members states. Third crisis considers lack of clear leadership in the EU. The EU institutions, which hardly handle to manage eurozone crisis, are substituted by more effective activity of the biggest and economically more efficient member states.

Bearing in mind above factors it is important for political scientists to analyze the effectiveness of the Polish presidency activity, as well as other presidencies from trio, and how they affected a functioning of the system of the EU. It is also relevant for decision makers in Poland to focus on the *ex post* evaluation in order to gain reliable feedback what was done wrong or good during the programming and conducting the presidency.

In Poland theoretical consideration in this matter so far paid attention mainly to institutional arrangements of the presidency under the treaty of Lisbon and conclusions for the Polish presidency drawn from the experience of countries previously holding this post<sup>2</sup>. Other areas of research concentrated on preparation of Polish administra-

<sup>1</sup> K. Szczerski, 'Polska prezydencja a europejski kryzys' in idem (ed.), *Monitor polskiej prezydencji 2011. Raport zamknięcia*, Kraków 2011, pp. 11-14. In this book K. Szczerski distinguishes broader scope of crises influencing the EU, i.e. crisis of the borders, crisis of the institutions, crisis of the security, crisis of the Euro currency, crisis of a social model and crisis of a development model.

<sup>2</sup> K. Szczerski (ed.), *Prezydencja w Unii Europejskiej. Analizy i doświadczenia*, Kraków 2009; A. Nowak-Far (ed.), *Prezydencja w Unii Europejskiej. Instytucje, prawo i organizacja*, Warszawa 2010; Z. Czachór, M.J. Tomaszuk (eds.), *Przewodnictwo państwa w Radzie Unii Europejskiej. Doświadczenia partnerów, propozycje dla Polski*, Poznań 2009; K.A. Wojtaszczyk (ed.), *Prezydencja w Radzie Unii Europejskiej*, Warszawa 2010; J. Barcz, *Prezydencja w Radzie Unii Europejskiej. Podstawy prawne i ramy instytucjonalne wraz z podstawowymi dokumentami*, Warszawa 2010; L. Jesień, *Prezydencja Unii Europejskiej. Zinstytucjonalizowana procedura przywództwa politycznego*, Warszawa 2011; T. Husak, F. Jasiński (eds.), *Prezydencja w Unii Europejskiej. Perspektywa praktyczna*, Warszawa 2010.

tion to holding the presidency and on government priorities, which were supposed to fulfill during the six month period<sup>3</sup>. Topic of the Polish presidency was also analyzed by think-tanks and research centers<sup>4</sup>. Thus, there is a visible gap in *ex post* evaluation of the Polish presidency, which only a few publications try to fill<sup>5</sup>. So far there are also no attempts to assess effects of the other than Polish presidencies in the broader context of ambitions and plans of trio presidency institution.

The aim of this article is to examine the effectiveness of the Polish presidency against the Danish and Cyprus presidency in the field of enlargement policy. Corresponding to such formulated aim I will answer to the research questions considering, firstly, how far the enlargement process has moved forward since July 2011 till December 2012. Secondly, has Poland and rest of the trio presidencies fulfilled their objectives in the field of enlargement? Thirdly, what were the types of the objectives in the analyzing policy field and in what way have they influenced the character of the Polish presidency and other trio country's activity.

A methodology used in this article is based on the project assessment model proposed in the work titled *Skuteczność polskiej prezydencji w Unii Europejskiej* (trans.: *The effectiveness of the Polish presidency in the European Union*), which was prepared by a research team, led by Krzysztof Szczerski since November 2011 till June 2012. A theoretical description of the project assessment presented in first and second section of the article are also based on a conception initially described in the mentioned book<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Z. Czachór, T.R. Szymczyński (eds.), *Priorytety prezydencji Polski w Radzie Unii Europejskiej. Analiza politologiczna*, Warszawa 2011, *Studia Europejskie – Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN*; A. Nowak-Far (ed.), *Prezydencja w Unii Europejskiej. Polska 2011*, Warszawa 2011; *Prezydencja Polski w Unii Europejskiej 2011 r. Materiały przygotowane przez Departament Analiz i Strategii*, Warszawa 2009, *Biuletyn Analiz Urzędu Komitetu Integracji Europejskiej*, No. 22.

<sup>4</sup> M. Brachowicz (ed.), *Wyzwania polskiej prezydencji 2011*, Kraków 2010; K. Szpak (ed.), *Monitor Polskiej Prezydencji 2011 r. Raport otwarcia*, Kraków 2011; K. Szczerski (ed.), *Monitor Polskiej Prezydencji 2011. Raport zamknięcia*; P.M. Kaczyński, *Polish Council Presidency 2011. Ambitions and Limitations*, Stockholm 2011.

<sup>5</sup> C. Żołędowski (ed.), *Polska prezydencja w Radzie Unii Europejskiej. Wybrane zagadnienia w perspektywie politologicznej i medialnej*, Warszawa 2012; A. Legucka (ed.), *Polska prezydencja wobec wyzwań współczesnej Unii Europejskiej*, Warszawa 2012; conference materials from the National School of Public Administration: J. Czapotowicz, Z. Czachór (eds.), *Prezydencja w Radzie Unii Europejskiej. Bilans polskich doświadczeń. Materiały z konferencji, KSAP, 11 stycznia 2012 r.*, Warszawa 2012; B. Nowak, 'Ostatnia prezydencja dużych oczekiwań. Refleksje po Prezydencji Polski w Radzie UE', *Raporty i Analizy Centrum Stosunków Międzynarodowych*, No. 2 (2012), at <[http://csm.org.pl/file-admin/files/Biblioteka\\_CSM/Raporty\\_i\\_analizy/2012/Raporty\\_i\\_Analizy\\_2\\_2012\\_B\\_Nowak\\_Ostatnia\\_prezydencja\\_.pdf](http://csm.org.pl/file-admin/files/Biblioteka_CSM/Raporty_i_analizy/2012/Raporty_i_Analizy_2_2012_B_Nowak_Ostatnia_prezydencja_.pdf)>, 20 September 2012.

<sup>6</sup> An author of this article is a co-author of three theoretical chapters presenting the project assessment perspective. Research team, operating in the Klub Jagielloński in Kraków and led by the Krzysztof Szczerski since December 2011 till April 2012, analyzed the performance of the Polish presidency on the basis of ministerial objectives accomplishment. A theoretical framework of assessment was provided by the project assessment perspective, which is an original input to the debate on Polish presidency. Effects of a research are presented in the book: K. Szczerski (ed.), *Skuteczność polskiej prezydencji w Unii Europejskiej. Zatożone cele i ich realizacja*, Kraków 2012, *Societas*, 52.

Structure of this article will correspond with research questions asked above. In the first section I will give arguments for project assessment of the presidency's effectiveness and show its difference from other assessment perspectives, which completes others rooted already in literature. Second section, will describe the criteria of a project assessment of the presidency. Third section will consist of analysis of the outcome of Polish, Danish and Cypriot presidency in the field of enlargement policy, using the project assessment perspective. At the end I will conclude the answers given to the research questions.

## 1. DIFFERENT ASSESSMENT PERSPECTIVES<sup>7</sup>

Hitherto an *ex post* evaluation of the presidencies, presented in political studies was based on behavioural description of country chairing the Council. Usually this referred to the situation, when country holding a presidency could have been honest broker, i.e. impartial mediator between different preferences of EU actors, or representative of own national interests. Sometimes a country can be also assess by emphasising its organizational or leadership role<sup>8</sup>. Nevertheless, those categories may be reduced to fulfilling the role of neutral actor or role of actor who wants to influence the system according to its vision and usually national preferences. This article is dealing with a thesis, that changes introduced by treaty of Lisbon, concerning the position and role of the presidency in the system of the EU, incline to base a presidency's evaluation on different categories.

Above dualistic description of presidency's evaluation is very persuasive for political scientists and journalists because it uses clear assessment categories. Using presidency as an instrument of a given country's foreign policy, forcing often own national interest or acting as mediator, taking care to achieve the broadest possible consensus – those categories are taken into consideration in other, already known in literature, schemes for analyzing the presidency<sup>9</sup>. We can distinguish at least four more types for assessment of the presidency, which completes traditional models:

- a) public assessment,

<sup>7</sup> The content of this section is based on: M. Dulak, K. Szczerski, 'Ocena prezydencji. Podstawowe wyznaczniki pojęciowe' in K. Szczerski (ed.), *Skuteczność polskiej prezydencji...*

<sup>8</sup> See: A. Schout, 'The Presidency as Juggler. Managing Conflicting Expectations', *EIPAscope*, No. 2 (1998), pp. 2-10; A. Schout, S. Vanhoonacker, 'Evaluating Presidencies of the Council of the EU. Revisiting Nice', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 5 (2006), pp. 1051-1077, at <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/50020818300027697>>..

<sup>9</sup> J.J. Węc, 'Formalne i nieformalne możliwości oddziaływania prezydencji na funkcjonowanie Unii Europejskiej po zmianach przewidywanych w traktacie lizbońskim' in K. Szczerski (ed.), *Prezydencja w Unii...*, pp. 31-56; T.G. Grosse, 'Doświadczenia prezydencji jako wyzwanie dla polskiej polityki' in K. Szczerski (ed.), *Prezydencja w Unii...*, pp. 89-106; Ł. Łotocki, 'Promocja naiwności – o prezydencji w perspektywie społecznej' in C. Żołędowski (ed.), *Polska prezydencja w Radzie Unii Europejskiej...*, pp. 137-155; A. Jaskiernia, 'Od awanturnika do wzorowego ucznia. Obraz polskiej prezydencji w Radzie Unii Europejskiej w mediach europejskich i polskich' in C. Żołędowski (ed.), *Polska prezydencja w Radzie Unii Europejskiej...*, pp. 157-175.

- b) political assessment,
- c) system assessment,
- d) project assessment.

First three types in their analytical and semantic layer, as we will see, are based on the categories proposed by the honest broker – national interests' representative model. Fourth one, which will be described in the next section of this article, shows broader catalogue of presidency's evaluation regarding a character of accomplishing objectives.

A period of presidency usually attracts more public attention than other country activities in the EU. Especially this event is very popular in the countries, which for the first time hold a presidency post. A public assessment is expressed through the public opinion surveys, but the most often way of getting to know the opinion of a society of a given country on presidency are information media. Because the issues concerning the presidency and the EU are relatively complicated, views presented by the opinion leaders in newspapers, TV and the Internet can be accepted as reliable sources of information.

An example for public assessment is a survey made in January 2012, by one of the Polish public opinion's research centre. According to it Poles assessed its presidency rather negative<sup>10</sup>. An activity of a government during that time was negatively rated by 45% respondents. More than half of people asked in the survey (53%) stated also that Poland didn't achieve very much during the presidency. Nevertheless, according to 63% of responded Poles think, that chairing the Council helped to improve country's image in Europe and around the world. This last result corresponded with positive opinions of the European politicians, often cited by Polish press, who mentioned such successes of Polish presidency like signing accession treaty with Croatia or approving a "six-pack" legislation<sup>11</sup>. In Denmark a period of presidency didn't attract so much public attention as it was in the case of Poland, as since joining the EU in 1973 it was the seventh presidency held by this country.. However, opinions of the leaders of social and professional groups, presented in Danish press, named the presidency as "pragmatic in historical time"<sup>12</sup>. They regretted at the same time, that government could have focused more on climate and energy issues and free-trade agreements.

As "pragmatic" Danish presidency was also assessed by the members of the European Parliament (EP) during the debate on review of the presidency presented by Danish

<sup>10</sup> Survey was carried by the Public Opinion Research Centre (Centrum Badań Opinii Społecznej – CBOS) in January 2012 on a sample of 1058 people. See: 'Evaluation of Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union', at <[http://www.cbos.pl/EN/publications/reports/2012/011\\_12.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/EN/publications/reports/2012/011_12.pdf)>, 15 September 2012.

<sup>11</sup> 'Co zostanie z polskiej prezydencji', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 29 December 2011, at <[http://wyborcza.pl/prezydencja2011/1,111636,10884081,Co\\_zostanie\\_z\\_polskiej\\_prezydencji.html](http://wyborcza.pl/prezydencja2011/1,111636,10884081,Co_zostanie_z_polskiej_prezydencji.html)>, 15 September 2012; P. Jendroszczyk, 'Polacy okazali się bezbłędni', *Rzeczpospolita*, 14 December 2011, at <<http://www.rp.pl/artykul/107684,769931-Polacy-okazali-sie-bezbledni.html>>, 15 September 2012; 'Barroso: polska prezydencja spełniła nasze oczekiwania', *Rzeczpospolita*, 14 December 2011, at <<http://www.rp.pl/artykul/603964,769564-Barroso-Polska-prezydencja-spełniła-nasze-oczekiwania.html>>, 15 September 2012.

<sup>12</sup> 'Danes: Our EU Presidency Was a Solid Lunch', *Euractiv.com*, 28 June 2012, at <<http://www.euractiv.com/future-eu/danes-eu-presidency-solid-lunch-news-513590>>, 18 September 2012.

prime minister<sup>13</sup>. This traditional point in the agenda of the EP plenary session at the end of each presidency is one of the elements of political assessment. Most of all such evaluation is made in debate between government and opposition in a given country. A forum for this debate is one of the chambers of a national parliament. Rules of this assessments are set by legal acts defining the cooperation of government and parliament in issues concerning European affairs<sup>14</sup>.

Third type of presidency assessment refers to the role played and position possessed by the country holding the presidency in the institutional system of the EU. The way and efficiency of performing presidency's tasks results from the formal and legal rules of the EU system, but also from its political nature. The latter factor is based on the believe that member states possess a structural power and related instruments of influence. According to J. Tallberg a given country bases its structural power on such capabilities and resources as economic strength, size, population, political stability, military and administrative capabilities<sup>15</sup>. The bigger structural power is, the broader scope for using informal and formal instruments has a given country. Usually bigger states more often are able to force their interests in projected legislative. Such countries easier form alliances with other member states and can deal with more issues defined in the European Commission's legislative agenda. Thus, the efficiency of presidency is assessed whether the country has included in presidency's program the issues important for the whole European community, which are simultaneously convergent with preferences and national interest of a given country<sup>16</sup>.

Second factor of a system assessment refers to legal framework for presidency's role in the institutional system of the EU, which is settled by the treaty of Lisbon's provisions and internal regulations of the Council<sup>17</sup>. Those documents design the formal scope of

<sup>13</sup> 'Review of the Danish Presidency (Debate)', 3 July 2012, at <<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20120703+ITEM-004+DOC+XML+V0//EN>>, 30 September 2012; 'Praise – and Some Blame – for the Outgoing Danish Presidency', Press release of the European Parliament, 3 July 2012, at <<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/pl/pressroom/content/20120629IPR47966/html/Praise-and-some-blame-for-the-outgoing-Danish-Presidency>>, 30 September 2012.

<sup>14</sup> 'Informacja bieżąca w sprawie podsumowania polskiej prezydencji w Radzie Unii Europejskiej w czasie 5. posiedzenia Sejmu VII kadencji', 12 January 2012, at <<http://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm7.nsf/wypowiedz.xsp?posiedzenie=5&dzien=2&wyp=43>>, 30 September 2012.

<sup>15</sup> J. Tallberg, 'Bargaining Power in the European Council', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (2008), p. 687, at <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1408-5965.2008.00798.x>>.

<sup>16</sup> T.G. Grosse, 'Doświadczenia prezydencji jako wyzwanie dla polskiej polityki', pp. 89-106.

<sup>17</sup> Article 16 section 9 of the *Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union*, Official Journal of the European Union, 30 March 2010, C 83/13; *Declaration on Article 16(9) of the Treaty on European Union Concerning the European Council Decision on the Exercise of the Presidency of the Council Annexed to the Final Act of the Intergovernmental Conference which adopted the Treaty of Lisbon*, Official Journal of the European Union, 30 March 2010, C 83/335; *European Council Decision of 1 December 2009 on the Exercise of the Presidency of the Council (2009/881/EU)*, Official Journal of the European Union, 2 December 2009, L 315/50; *Council Decision of 1 December 2009 Adopting the Council's Rules of Procedure (2009/937/EU)*, Official Journal of the European Union, 11 December 2009, L 325/35-61 (articles 20 and 21).

actions for the presidency and define possible instruments, which country chairing the Council's bodies can use. Basically, we can distinguish five functions, which every presidency ought to fulfill. Those are mediating, administrative, planning, coordination and representative functions<sup>18</sup>.

A task of the presidency according to first function is being active on each stage of negotiation processes in order to mediate for preparing and finally reaching the compromise in disputed questions. Eventually, the role of the presidency is to develop and propose a position covering the issues raised by the widest number of actors taking part in negotiations. For an efficiently fulfilling this function it is important for a member state holding the presidency to obey the neutrality rule.

According to the administrative function country holding the presidency should firstly prepare half-year working calendar of the Council i.e. different Council formation, COREPER I and II and working parties. Secondly, presidency has to also provide all necessary working papers to the delegations of member states during the meetings in the Council's bodies.

After treaty of Lisbon has come into force, the long term programming is right now in the hands of the European Council, chaired by its permanent President. Main task of the presidency, while fulfilling planning function, has been limited to operational programming, which means that country holding this post is especially obliged to prepare 18-months program of trio and program of actions for a half year period. In order to make those programs more accountable, the objectives and priorities set in mentioned documents should be clearly defined and put in hierarchical order. The role of trio program is also to provide visible continuity between programs of different presidencies.

Country holding the presidency should also assure an efficient coordination of work within the Council. Fourth function obliges the presidency to guarantee an efficient cooperation between the Council and other EU institutions. This especially applies to the presidency taking part in the name of the Council in legislative activities in the forum of informal triologue and Conciliation Committee<sup>19</sup>. This task is also an aspect of inter-institutional representation to which the presidency is obliged as well.

<sup>18</sup> A terminology distinguished in: J.J. Węc, 'Formalne i nieformalne możliwości...', pp. 35-50. In my further consideration I am going to use this classification because of its clarity and providing a comprehensive framework of performing of all Presidency's obligation derived from the treaty of Lisbon. Other, more expanded catalogues of functions proposed in the literature propose additional detailed functions, which, however, are derived from the distinction presented by J.J. Węc. See: J. Barcz, *Prezydencja w Radzie Unii Europejskiej...*, pp. 45-56, where J. Barcz points at management function, planning function, mediating, function of co-operation with other EU institutions and external representation function. Additionally J. Barcz singles out symbolic function and function handled while negotiating of revision treaties; Another often mentioned distinction is the one proposed by Artur Nowak-Far, who writes about eight functions: stimulation of integration system, management and regulation, innovation and missionary, programming and operationalization, representation, mediations and negotiations, adaptation, implementation (i.e. unification and harmonization); see. A. Nowak-Far (ed.), *Prezydencja w Unii Europejskiej. Instytucje...*, pp. 220-224.

<sup>19</sup> An assembly comprising of the members of the Council (or their representatives) and an equal number of representatives of the EP. It gathers just after the Council rejects amendments of the EP to the legislative proposal submitted in the second reading in ordinary legislative procedure (article 294 sec-

In the case of representative function we can distinguish two aspects. First one is internal representation, which concerns the relations with other member states, intergovernmental and supranational EU institutions and a presentation of the EU initiatives to the public opinion. The presidency should be also visible during the meetings of the European Council without detriment to the functions and obligations of other bodies like the President of the European Council. Second aspect of representative function is an external representation. After the treaty of Lisbon came into force it is High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy who has a leading role in this field.

As we can see, the competencies of the institution of a presidency significantly changed under the new treaty. They were diminished by creation of the permanent President of the European Council and new institutional position of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Also new organization of performance framework for the presidency, i.e. a group presidency of three member states, has affected the role and position of the presidencies. As a consequence of these changes coordination, planning and representative functions were limited, as well as the instruments subscribed to them, which favored the presidency to play a role of the national interests' representative. Thus, the thesis of inadequacy of dualistic model of the presidency's assessment seems justified.

The mediating and administrative functions' instruments tend to describe presidency as an efficient operations manager – using a corporate language – that is responsible for implementing a particular strategy or plan, but can't be any longer described as a chair of the board. The aftermath of this transformations is a believe that adequate instruments for evaluating the presidency provide the project assessment perspective.

## 2. PRESIDENCY AS A PROJECT<sup>20</sup>

In order to better understand a convergence between technocratic presidency and a project, which is in fact an instrument of technocracy, it is helpful at the beginning to show similarities between presidency and basic categories of project management methods. This will let us clearly to present the categories of presidency's assessment in this perspective. Firstly, description of a project is convergent to the role of the presidency. In literature, a project is defined as an activity:

- aimed at accomplishing of objectives;
- involving to this task many actors, arranged in specific organizational structure (in case of presidency this concerns especially a national administration);

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tion 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union). Representative of the presidency (for example a minister responsible for a given issue) is a co-chairman of the Coordination Committee.

<sup>20</sup> The content of this section is based on second chapter from the book *Skuteczność polskiej prezydencji w Unii Europejskiej*: M. Dulak, K. Szczerski, 'Prezydencja jako projekt' in K. Szczerski (ed.), *Skuteczność polskiej prezydencji w Unii Europejskiej*.



- characterized by definite beginning and end;
- different from routine procedures of a given organization (in case of presidency: the procedures of national administration);
- characterized by unrepeatability (country holds presidency once every several years)<sup>21</sup>.

Secondly, in the case of both – presidency and project – we can distinguish three stages of realization: planning, implementation and evaluation. First one concerns an objectives' programming, preparing the human, administrative and financial resources. In the second stage, an ongoing monitoring reviews how objectives and processes are put into practice. During the last phase, evaluators assess *ex post* whether planning and implementation were correct and measure also what is the level of achieved objectives and indicators.

Thirdly, presidency similarly to the project is obliged to achieve material or non-material results. The rule of accountability concerns a measurement of undertaken actions using performance and outcome indicators. However, it is practically impossible, in the case of presidency seen as a project, to define second type of indicators according to the correct methodology. First of all, presidency doesn't have particularly indicated subject of intervention, but its activity is aimed generally at all institutions and actors functioning within the system of the EU. Just the opposite is in the case of public policies, where project approach is commonly used and where the subjects of public intervention are specific social groups. A barrier for a proper measurement of outcome indicators is also a short period of chairing the Council. An impact of a public intervention is visible in longer period of time. The presidency, according to the available functions, tackles with current issues, which are elements of longer processes and policies of the EU. Thus, six, twelve or even eighteen months are not enough to measure the effects of presidency activities in line with the outcome indicators.

Theoretically, it is possible to define performance indicators, because they show the material effects of presidency work, i.e. adopted legal acts, signed agreements etc. However, this way of evaluation won't present the whole spectrum of presidency's influence, which has also a political nature. Additionally, a selection of one performance indicator can be easily undermined by accusation of favoring either the thesis of presidency's success or presidency's failure. In order to avoid problematic elements of traditional indicators, but not to violate the rule of accountability, the adequate benchmarks for the presidency's effects assessment refer to the nature of presidency's objectives.

According to the presidency's evaluation model, proposed in the previously mentioned book *Skuteczność polskiej prezydencji w Unii Europejskiej*, presidency understood

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<sup>21</sup> The most common definitions of a project, prepared by the leading institutions in project management, point at its temporal and purposefulness character: *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge. PMBOK Guide*, Project Management Institute Inc., 2004, pp. 5-6; *Aid Delivery Methods*, Vol. 1: *Project Cycle Management Guidelines*, European Commission, March 2004, pp. 8-9. Definition presented in the article, beside temporal and purposefulness, includes also an administration and organizational aspect of every project, which in my opinion properly corresponds with the character of presidency: M. Pawlak, *Podstawy zarządzania projektami*, Lublin 2001, pp. 7-9.

as a project can be assessed by description of objectives' character. Analyzing their content and the way of planning we can assess the ambitions and plans of a country concerning how should look the role of the presidency. We can distinguish three pairs of categories describing the character of the objectives:

- a) innovative objective / continuity objective,
- b) firm objective / soft objective,
- c) agreed objective / individual objective.

First pair refers to the content of the objectives. It describes whether presidency decides to put on the agenda an issue, which hasn't been previously raised by other presidencies, or hasn't been on the presidencies agenda for a long time. Those objectives relates also to the situation, when presidency proposes a new, unconventional way of dealing with a given subject. Continuity objective on the contrary refers to those matters, chosen by the presidency, which carry on current processes and initiatives. According to the available functions, which presidency has to its disposal, second type of these objectives will probably gain the majority in presidency's programme. Nevertheless, a share of innovative objectives points at ambitions of a country chairing the Council to shape the European policies according to its ideas and conceptions. Otherwise, a country wants to present itself as a supervisor of the administration process during the six months.

Second pair of objectives' character refers to the predictable results of a given objective. In the case of a firm objective the presidency expects to conclude documents, which legally bind actors in the system of the EU. The examples of such documents are a secondary legislation acts, bi- and multilateral agreements, compromises reached in the Council over particular policy issue, but also reports, conference's conclusions and *sui generis* legislation (resolutions, guidelines, etc.), which formally don't bind members states. Other examples of firm objectives are those initiatives, which result in introducing a new mechanism or institution within one of the European policies or initiation of the formal or informal meeting of a new body, for example at the margin of the different Council's formations meeting. A presidency pursuing such objectives has an ambition to leave possibly many of such permanent traces. Their importance, however, can be measured only if following presidencies will often refer to the material results of their predecessors.

Third type of objectives is in fact a reformulate distinction on national and European objectives. It is, however, adapted to the formal obligation of cooperation between countries within one trio, and to the project management perspective, where rule of cooperation is one of the determinants of a successful project. In a highly complicated structure of mutual relations inside the system of the EU, a single country is hardly able to force its own idea and proposals. Thus, the presidency tries to gain a support of other member states or institutions for a particular issue either at the planning or implementing phase. Among the methods of getting a support are forming the alliances inside the Council; earning a goodwill of an important institutions in the legislative process, i.e. European Commission and European Parliament; initiating a less formal lobbying groups, like friends of the presidency. This means that objectives, for which presidency

tries to gain an interest, are more important for a country chairing the Council than other, chosen without consultations.

Finally, in efforts of analyzing the presidency we have to take into considerations the political nature of every presidency. This opinion is based on the conception of realism, according to which within integration process only states dispose its sovereignty. States are not altruists and the only reason they transfer some elements of their power to the supranational level is confidence that benefits will outweigh the costs of uncertainty and costs of a relations between many actors within the system<sup>22</sup>. Thus, when evaluating the presidency we should also take into account a fact that country chairing the Council will try to realize its own national interest. A role of a researcher is to propose adequate assessment categories for this phenomenon.

The thesis stating that after the changes introduced by the treaty of Lisbon we can't assess the presidency according to the dualistic model not only implies the project assessment perspective, proposed in this article, but also influence the country's role as a national interest's representative. Limitation of the coordination, planning and representative functions deprive the presidency of an open methods of pushing for own interests. Right now country holding the presidency should be a "silent national interest's representative". The aim of the article is to assess the Polish and Danish presidencies activity in the field of enlargement policy only according to the project assessment perspective without focusing on the political aspect of evaluation. Thus, I will briefly note what instruments has a presidency to its disposal in order to gently realize its own national interest<sup>23</sup>. Among the catalogue of possible actions undertaken by the presidency, first one refers to the duty of arranging the working agenda and meetings of the Council's bodies under the administrative function. According to the Swedish political scientist Jonas Tallberg, although the presidency is characterized by 'responsabilité sans pouvoir' (responsibility without power), it can effectively push its interests by influencing a shape of the agenda of the Council. The possible scope of action concerns agenda-setting, agenda-structuring and agenda exclusion<sup>24</sup>. Despite the fact that J. Tallberg proposed those instruments for the institutional reality before the treaty of Lisbon came into force, most of the solutions are still adequate for the working methods in the Council's committees and working parties. Other possible actions for a presidency to act as a "silent national interest's representative" are those referring to the ability of a country to form a coalitions. Some aspects of possible methods of build-

<sup>22</sup> R.D. Putnam, 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics. The Logic of Two-Level Games', *International Organization*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (1988), pp. 427-460, at <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/50020818300027697>>; A. Moravcsik, 'Preferences and Power in the European Community. A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (1993), pp. 473-524, at <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1408-5965.2008.00798.x>>.

<sup>23</sup> More detailed description of the instruments of a presidency understood as "silent national interest's representative" are enclosed also in the work titled *Skuteczność polskiej prezydencji w Unii Europejskiej* edited by K. Szczerski. A presidency's evaluation by using the categories of a "silent national interest's representative" completes the project assessment perspective but can be also analyzed separately.

<sup>24</sup> J. Tallberg, 'An Agenda-Shaping Powers of the EU Council Presidencies', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (2003), pp. 2-4.

ing alliance was mentioned, while describing the character of objectives. What completes this technique is the rank of the given country's representatives involved in the coalition building. The higher the official or politician in the government is, the more respect is shown to his or her proposal of alliances. In order to achieve expected results, the presidency can use one of the negotiation method, for example *tour des capitals* i.e. visiting the capitals of given countries<sup>25</sup>.

### 3. EVALUATION OF THE PRESIDENCIES' ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF ENLARGEMENT

A methodology I used, while studying the performance of the Polish and Danish presidencies was based mainly on analysis of documents of the Council, European Commission and the European Council. First of all, I have taken into consideration the conclusions of European Council and General Affairs Council; electronically available documents of the Working Party on Enlargement and Countries Negotiating Accession to the EU; schedules of meeting of the Working Parties, COREPER I and II and documents of the presidency send to the European Parliament and European Commission. I have also analyzed European Commission's Enlargement Strategy and Progress Reports from 2010 and 2011 and Commission's opinions on the country's application for accession to the EU, as a complementary documents in the field of enlargement policy.

Besides the EU documents I also have analyzed government documents of each trio countries concerning the presidency and interviews with government's officials. These were helpful in putting the performance of the presidency into context of its priorities and national administration's preparation for holding the post. An additional source of information were press releases of the Council and articles in the thematic web pages concerning the EU affairs.

Analysis of the objectives' achievement, according to the project assessment perspective, requires a clear logical reasoning. That is why in an empirical part of this article firstly, I will describe a point to which previous presidencies have brought the enlargement process. This will help to answer the first research question and will show how far the enlargement process has moved forward since July 2011 till June 2012. Then the objectives of each of the presidencies, concerning candidates countries, are going to be presented. A brief external and internal factor analysis, influencing the objectives' accomplishment, will complete this part. Next I am going to describe, what each presidency has done to push forward accession negotiations. This concerns a way of proceeding in the Working Party on Enlargement and Countries Negotiating Accession to the EU, COREPER, the Council and the European Council. All forms of relations between presidencies and candidate countries, like meeting, conferences, signing of the documents will be also analyzed in the context of obtained results. At

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<sup>25</sup> Idem, 'Bargaining Power...', pp. 697-698.

the end I will sum up whether the presidency has achieved its objectives and what was their character, according to the list of analytical categories of the project assessment perspective.

### 3.1. Presidency as a project in enlargement policy

Up to the 1 July 2011 there were five countries which had a candidate status, i.e. Croatia, Iceland, Turkey, Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Beside there were four other countries – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia – which hadn't gained a status of candidate to the EU because of the difficulties with fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria for the membership.

An important general guidelines, which had influenced the agenda of Polish, Danish and Cypriot presidencies, were adopted by the Council on 14 December 2010<sup>26</sup>. They expressed expectations about the progress made by countries in the enlargement process. In the case of Turkey the expectations regarded: further normalization of its relations with the Republic of Cyprus; efforts to fully meet Copenhagen criteria<sup>27</sup>; respecting the sovereign rights of the EU Member States to enter into bilateral agreements, especially the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Council looked forward to the further progress in the screening process of Iceland's law and regulations. Hungarian presidency, as well as subsequent presidencies, supposed to work on opening the accession negotiation with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In case of Serbia the Council made conditional granting a candidate status on further cooperation with International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and quick beginning of dialogue with Kosovo authorities. The Council also stated that in the case of Montenegro opening of negotiations depended on positive opinion of the Commission based on fulfillment of the seven key priorities pointed out in Commission's Opinion on Montenegro in enlargement strategy for the year 2010<sup>28</sup>. Similarly, Albania should focused on fulfilling the twelve key priorities set out in Commission's Opinion and overcome the political stalemate after the parliamentary election held at the end of June 2010. The Council appealed to Bosnia and Herzegovina to introduce necessary reforms regarding functioning state institution, mainly through constitutional changes.

<sup>26</sup> 'Press Release on Council Conclusions on Enlargement/Stabilisation and Association Process, 3060th General Affairs Council Meeting', The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 14 December 2010, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/118487.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/118487.pdf)>, 2 October 2012.

<sup>27</sup> In the Declaration of the European Council adopted on 21-22 June 1993, member states agreed that Central and Eastern European states which were at that time associated with the European Communities, had to fulfill three prerequisites: a) concerning democratic countries, i.e. achieving an institutional stability, rule of law, respecting human rights; b) having an efficient market economy able to cope with the competitiveness in the internal market of the European Communities; c) an ability to fulfill the obligations of the political, economy and monetary union.

<sup>28</sup> *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. Commission Opinion on Montenegro's Application for Membership of the European Union*, No. COM (2010) 67, The European Commission, Brussels, 9 November 2011, pp. 11-12.

Finally, in the case of Kosovo the Council's expectations concerned a cooperation with EULEX and establishing a dialogue with Serbia.

More important for Polish, Danish and Cypriot presidencies were the European Council's conclusions adopted on 23/24 June 2011 – just before the beginning of Polish presidency. Heads of states and governments called to close remaining negotiation chapters and take all decisions necessary for concluding the accession negotiations with Croatia by the end of June 2011. Accession Treaty, according to the European Council recommendation, should have been signed by the end of 2011. Discussion on further steps of continuing the integration path for other Balkans state should have taken place during the summit in December 2011. This event, according to the European Council, will bring “a momentum to the European perspective of the Western Balkans, provided these countries continue on the path of reform”<sup>29</sup>. In this context Serbia's EU perspective was particularly mentioned after the arresting and transferring to Hague Serbian general Ratko Mladic, responsible for war crimes in the years 1992-1995.

**Croatia.** In the first version of the Polish presidency objectives, a subject of concluding a negotiations with Croatia was omitted<sup>30</sup>. This issue eventually dropped in the official six-month presidency program at the end of May 2011, when it became certain that Hungary would manage to finalize negotiation with this Balkan's country<sup>31</sup>. Thus, Poland was obliged in the next half year to sign the Accession Treaty with Croatia.

The day before starting of the Polish presidency, on 30 June 2011, the thirteenth meeting of the Accession Conference with Croatia at Ministerial level was held. During the meeting last four negotiation chapters were closed, i.e.: Chapter 8 – Competition Policy, Chapter 23 – Judicial and Fundamental Rights, Chapter 33 – Financial and Budgetary Provisions, Chapter 35 – Other Issues. This moment was in fact the end of five years negotiation process started in October 2005<sup>32</sup>.

Next steps undertook by the Polish presidency concerned preparation of the draft text of the Accession Treaty. On 13 September 2011 Permanent Representatives' Committee received a note from General Secretariat, where it requested to approve the

<sup>29</sup> 'European Council Conclusions', 23/24 June 2011, The European Council, p. 12, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/123075.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/123075.pdf)>, 2 October 2012.

<sup>30</sup> 'Wstępna lista priorytetów polskiego przewodnictwa w Radzie Unii Europejskiej w II połowie 2011 r.', [trans.: 'Preliminary list of the priorities of the Polish presidency In the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2011']. This document was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 21 July 2010. It contained six priorities: multiannual financial framework 2014-2020, relations with Eastern Europe, internal market, enhancing external energy policy of the EU, common security and defense policy, taking advantage of the intellectual capital of Europe. Document available at <[http://www.premier.gov.pl/rzad/pozostale\\_dokumenty/informacje\\_zwiazane\\_z\\_ue/\\_wstepna\\_lista\\_priorytetow\\_p,5071/>](http://www.premier.gov.pl/rzad/pozostale_dokumenty/informacje_zwiazane_z_ue/_wstepna_lista_priorytetow_p,5071/>)>, 2 October 2012.

<sup>31</sup> *Programme of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. 1 July 2011 – 31 December 2011*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, Warsaw 2011.

<sup>32</sup> 'Press Release on Thirteenth Meeting of the Accession Conference with Croatia at Ministerial Level', The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 30 June 2011, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/123336.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/123336.pdf)>, 2 October 2012.

agreed draft text (technical level details) and to send it to the European Commission for consultation and to European Parliament in order to get a consent on accession of the Republic of Croatia<sup>33</sup>. COREPER approved the draft text next day and on 17 September 2011 in Zagreb the Polish Prime Minister, Donald Tusk, officially handed over the EU Accession Treaty text to Croatian Prime Minister, Jadranka Kosor. A month later, on 12 October the European Commission has delivered favorable *avis definitive* (a non binding primary opinion) on the accession of Croatia<sup>34</sup> and European Parliament on 1 December adopted a resolution giving a consent for signing an Accession Treaty<sup>35</sup>. During the meeting of the European Council on 9 December 2011 the document was signed by the heads of states or governments of the 27 member states, by Ivo Josipovic, the President of Croatia and the Croatian Prime Minister.

Polish presidency has fully accomplished one of its objectives in the field of enlargement. Denmark, a forthcoming country holding the chair of the Council, committed itself to "(...) monitor the consolidation of Croatia and the continuation of the country's reform efforts after the accession treaty was signed (...)"<sup>36</sup>. Similar objective had Cyprus presidency<sup>37</sup>. However, a presidency during the ratification process has no crucial competencies. In fact, a ratification of the Accession Treaty with Croatia in each member state is beyond any competencies of a presidency<sup>38</sup>. It is also a duty of the European Commission to assess the commitments undertaken by Croatia in the areas which need to be improved before joining the EU on 1 July 2013. The European Commission sends these monitoring reports every six months only as a communication

<sup>33</sup> 'Treaty, Protocol and Act of Accession with the Republic of Croatia – Finalisation of the Drafting of the Treaty, Protocol and Act of Accession – Consultation of the Commission and Request for the European Parliament's Consent to the Accession to the European Union of the Republic of Croatia – Political Agreement on the Adaptations Required by Reason of Accession', General Secretariat of the Council of European Union, Brussels, 13 September 2011, Document No. 14003/11, at <<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/11/st14/st14003.en11.pdf>>, 2 October 2012.

<sup>34</sup> 'Commission Opinion on the Application for Accession to the European Union by the Republic of Croatia', The European Commission, COM (2011) 667, Brussels, 12 October 2011, at <<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0667:FIN:EN:PDF>>, 2 October 2012.

<sup>35</sup> 'European Parliament Legislative Resolution of 1 December 2011 on the Accession to the European Union of the Republic of Croatia' (14409/2011 – C7-0252/2011 – 2011/0805(NLE)), The European Parliament, Brussels, 1 December 2011, at <<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2011-0538+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>>, 2 October 2012.

<sup>36</sup> 'Europe at Work. Programme of the Danish Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2012. 1 January-20 June 2012', p. 25, at <[http://eu2012.dk/en/EU-and-the-Presidency/About-the-Presidency/~/\\_media/Files/Trykt%20materiale/Presidency%20programme/EU%20Presidency\\_Programme\\_UK\\_Final%20Web\\_22\\_12.pdf](http://eu2012.dk/en/EU-and-the-Presidency/About-the-Presidency/~/_media/Files/Trykt%20materiale/Presidency%20programme/EU%20Presidency_Programme_UK_Final%20Web_22_12.pdf)>, 24 August 2012.

<sup>37</sup> "The Cyprus Presidency will follow closely the monitoring process for the implementation of the commitments assumed by Croatia during the accession negotiations, in view of the Comprehensive Monitoring Report to be presented by the European Commission to the European Parliament and the Council in autumn 2012" in *Programme of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union 1 July – 31 December 2012*, Cyprus EU Presidency Secretariat, 2012, pp. 10-11.

<sup>38</sup> So far (until 30 September 2012) only eleven Member States have ratified Croatia's Accession Treaty – Slovakia, Hungary, Italy, Bulgaria, Malta, Latvia, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Cyprus, Romania, Austria.

to the Council and European Parliament<sup>39</sup>. Thus, it is necessary to make a note, that although Denmark and Cyprus decided to choose such an objective they had no formal competences to fulfil this task.

**Iceland.** Bringing negotiation with Iceland, as far as it is possible, has been a common objective for both presidencies. An accession process of Iceland seemed uncomplicated because of long lasting cooperation of this country with the European Communities (signing a free trade agreement in 1972) and later with the EU (joining European Economic Area in 1994), which favored adapting Icelandic law to the *aquis communitaire*. An Iceland's screening process under the Polish presidency was characterized by a significant dynamism. Until the 1 July 2011 the Hungarian presidency had managed to accept 8 screening reports of an Icelandic law. During the six months of Polish presidency a Working Party on Enlargement and Countries Negotiating Accession to the EU accepted 15 of those reports and sent them to COREPER I or II as an information note<sup>40</sup>.

The negotiations with Iceland wasn't very advanced before 1 July 2011. They stopped at the stage where four chapters, screened earlier by adequate working party, had been opened, i.e. Chapter 5 – Public Procurement, Chapter 10 – Information Society and Media, Chapter 25 – Science and Research and Chapter 26 – Education and Culture. Last two chapters had been also provisionally closed during the Accession Conference on 27 June 2011<sup>41</sup>.

On 19 October 2011, the First meeting of the Accession Conference with Iceland at Deputy level was held in Brussels. During the meeting the EU delegation (led by representative of Polish Presidency – Jan Tombiński, Poland's Permanent Representative to the EU) and Icelandic delegation (led by Stefán H. Jóhannesson, Iceland's Chief Negotiator to the EU) have opened and provisionally closed negotiations on Chapter 2 – Freedom of Movement for Workers and Chapter 7 – Intellectual Property Law<sup>42</sup>. Third meet-

<sup>39</sup> 'Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Main Findings of the Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Croatia's State of Preparedness for EU Membership', The European Commission, Brussels, 10 October 2012, COM (2012) 601 final, at <[http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2012/package/hr\\_rapport\\_2012\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/hr_rapport_2012_en.pdf)>, 10 January 2012.

<sup>40</sup> The screening reports accepted by the Working Party on Enlargement and Countries Negotiating Accession to the EU was concerning following negotiation chapters: Chapter 33: Financial and budgetary provisions, Chapter 23: Judiciary and fundamental rights, Chapter 6: Company Law, Chapter 29: Customs Union, Chapter 20: Enterprise and industrial Policy, Chapter 22: Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments, Chapter 16: Taxation, Chapter 21: Trans-European networks, Chapter 31: Foreign, Security and Defence Policy, Chapter 19: Social Policy and Employment, Chapter 12: Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy, Chapter 18: Statistics, Chapter 27: Environment, Chapter 15: Energy.

<sup>41</sup> 'Press Release on Second Meeting of the Accession Conference at Ministerial Level with Iceland. Opening of Accession Negotiations', The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 27 June 2011, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/123123.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/123123.pdf)>, 2 October 2012.

<sup>42</sup> 'Press Release on First Meeting of the Accession Conference with Iceland at Deputy Level', The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 19 October 2011, at <<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/1302274/125354.pdf>>, 2 October 2012.



ing of the Accession Conference with Iceland at Ministerial level (first was on 27 July 2010; second one on 27 June 2011) and last during the Polish presidency was held on 12 December 2011. In this meeting from the EU side took part Maciej Szpunar, Under-Secretary of State for legal and treaty affairs in Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Commissioner Štefan Füle, who was representing the European Commission. Iceland was represented by Össur Skarphéðinsson, Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade. During the IAC the delegations firstly confirmed results of the Accession Conference on 19 October and secondly, opened and provisionally closed four chapters (i.e. Chapter 6 – Company Law, Chapter 20 – Enterprise and Industrial Policy, Chapter 21 – Trans-European Networks and Chapter 23 – Judiciary and Fundamental Rights). Only one opened chapter didn't meet the benchmarks for provisional closure (i.e. Chapter 33 – Financial and Budgetary Provisions)<sup>43</sup>.

Under the Denmark's chairmanship in the Council a pace of adopting the screening reports by the European Commission has slowed down. It echoed in the number reports adopted by the Working Party on Enlargement and Countries Negotiating Accession to the EU, which set at the level of 7. This was more than a half less comparing to the Polish presidency, but this doesn't diminish Denmark's involvement.

In the first half of the year 2012 the Accession Conference gathered twice – on 30 March and on 22 June 2012. During the first one, gathered at the deputy level, negotiators have opened four chapters – i.e. Chapter 8 – Competition policy, Chapter 15 – Energy, Chapter 28 – Consumer and health protection, Chapter 31 – Foreign, security and defence policy – out of which last two were provisionally closed<sup>44</sup>. The Accession Conference in June 2012 was held at ministerial level, fourth of this kind in the history of Iceland's accession negotiations. At this meeting the delegations opened three chapters: Chapter 14 – Transport Policy, Chapter 19 – Social Policy and Employment, Chapter 32 – Financial Control. None of them have been provisionally closed so far<sup>45</sup>.

In the second half of the year 2012 Cyprus presidency – according to its programme – has planned to strive to bring the negotiations with Iceland as close as possible to its conclusion<sup>46</sup>. Similar to the period of Polish and Danish presidencies the Accession Conference met twice – one time on deputy level on 24 October and second time on ministerial level on 18 December. During the first meeting the negotiations have resulted in three opened chapters (Chapter 9 – Financial Services, Chapter 18 – Statistics, Chapter 29 – Customs Union). In December delegations led by Ministry of

<sup>43</sup> 'Press Release on Third Meeting of the Accession Conference with Iceland at Ministerial Level', The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 12 December 2011, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/126778.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/126778.pdf)>, 2 October 2012.

<sup>44</sup> 'Second Meeting of the Accession Conference with Iceland at Deputy Level', The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 30 March 2012, 8378/12 PRESSE 147, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/129376.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/129376.pdf)>, 2 October 2012.

<sup>45</sup> 'Accession Conference with Iceland. Three New Chapters Opened, Progress Confirmed', The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 22 June 2012, 11767/12 PRESSE 286, at <<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=PRES/12/286&type=HTML>>, 2 October 2012.

<sup>46</sup> *Programme of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union...*, p. 10.

Foreign Affairs of Cyprus Mr. Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis and the Iceland Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade Össur Skarphéðinsson have managed to closed one chapter referring to competition policy and to start negotiating on Chapter 1 – Free Movement of Goods, Chapter 16 – Taxation, Chapter 17 – Economic and Monetary Policy, Chapter 22 – Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments, Chapter 27 – Environment, and Chapter 30 External Relations<sup>47</sup>.

Although Cyprus presidency opened nine chapters, which is most of all from the trio countries the pace of negotiation with Iceland is steadily slowing down. It is visible when analysing the number of screening reports, which have to be adopted by the COREPER before opening a given negotiation chapter. During Cyprus presidency Working Party on Enlargement and Countries Negotiating Accession to the EU proceeded on two of such documents, which is more than twice less than in the case of Danish presidency. Nevertheless, such a slowdown in the negotiation process is predictable. It is a common practice that candidate country strive to close in the first phase of the negotiations those chapters, which are the most convergent with the EU *aquis* and which don't cause any objections of the European Commission.

**Turkey.** Since the opening of accession negotiation with Turkey on 3 October 2005 very little progress was made in this subject. Out of 35 negotiating chapters, thirteen have been opened and one provisionally closed. Until the end of Belgian presidency in December 2010 no new chapter was closed<sup>48</sup>. On the 19 April 2011, the 49th EU – Turkey Association Council was held. Delegation of the EU represented by Hungarian presidency and Turkish delegation led by Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs reviewed EU-Turkey relations, the accession process and the implementation of the Association Agreement. On this occasion EU appreciated the constitutional reform package i.e. referendum on constitutional change carried out on 12 September 2010<sup>49</sup>.

During the Polish presidency a negotiation process with Turkey hasn't moved further. In the communication from the European Commission of 12 October 2011 on the Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2011-2012 a hitherto reformatory efforts were appreciated. At the same time it was underlined that Turkey refused to respect the obligation of maintaining good neighborhood relations and full implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Association Agreement, not discriminating other

<sup>47</sup> 'Third Meeting of the Accession Conference with Iceland at Deputy Level', The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 24 October 2012, 15371/12 PRESSE 444, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/133154.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/133154.pdf)>, 10 January 2013; 'Fifth Meeting of the Accession Conference with Iceland at Ministerial Level. Six New Chapters Opened, One More Chapter Provisionally Closed, Substantial Progress Achieved', The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 18 December 2012, 17894/12 PRESSE 543, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/134419.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/134419.pdf)>, 10 January 2013.

<sup>48</sup> J.J. Węc, 'Ocena belgijskiej prezydencji w UE', 19 May 2011, at <[http://ec.europa.eu/polska/news/opinie/110519\\_belgijska\\_prezydencja\\_pl.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/polska/news/opinie/110519_belgijska_prezydencja_pl.htm)>, 18 September 2012.

<sup>49</sup> 'Press Release on 49th EU-Turkey Association Council', The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 19 April 2011, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/er/121603.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/er/121603.pdf)>, 2 October 2012.

Member States. As the European Commission underlined, until the progress is made in mentioned areas the negotiations wouldn't accelerate<sup>50</sup>. Additional worries were raised after Turkey stated that it would freeze its relations with the EU presidency during the second half of 2012, when Cyprus is going to hold this post. Despite these obstacles, the European Commission in an enlargement strategy proposed a new positive agenda with Turkey, which should support negotiation process, covering inter alia political reforms, foreign policy dialogue, visas, migration, energy, the fight against terrorism and participation in the EU programs<sup>51</sup>. On 5 December 2011 the General Affairs Council in its conclusions reiterated opinions and requirements from the European Commission's enlargement strategy for the years 2011-2012<sup>52</sup>, which were eventually recalled by the European Council in its conclusions four days later<sup>53</sup>.

Denmark among its objectives declared to support a continuation of the negotiations with Turkey. Similarly to the Polish presidency period, in the first half of the year 2012 the EU and Turkey didn't made any progress in opening or closing new chapters. Danish presidency planned also to support the development of relations between Turkey and the EU. In this field the presidency was more successful.

Few days before the end of the Danish presidency – on 26 June 2012 – the Council adopted a decision allowing to put a signature on behalf of the EU under the Agreement between the UE and Turkey on the readmission of people residing without authorization<sup>54</sup>. On its basis Turkey will undertake additional measures to prevent illegal migrants fleeing to Greece or Bulgaria. This, as Turkey's officials predict, will help their country to join the EU visa-free area in two-three years<sup>55</sup>. Also substitution of Nicolas Sarkozy, who opposed Turkey's membership, by Francois Hollande at the post of a France's president is expected to break stalemate in the accession negotiations lasting since June 2010.

Although a strategy of positive agenda in accession negotiations with Turkey was confirmed during Danish presidency<sup>56</sup> there was high probability on the eve of Cyprus

<sup>50</sup> *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2011-2012*, COM (2011) 666, The European Commission, Brussels, 12 October 2011, pp. 25-26.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>52</sup> 'Press Release 3132nd Council meeting General Affairs', No. 18089/11, The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 5 December 2011, pp. 13-16, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/EN/genaff/126578.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/EN/genaff/126578.pdf)>, 2 October 2012.

<sup>53</sup> *Conclusion of the European Council*, Brussels, 9 December 2011, EUCO 139/1/11 REV, p. 4.

<sup>54</sup> *Council Decision of 26 June 2012 on the Signing, on Behalf of the European Union, of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Turkey on the Readmission of Persons Residing without Authorisation (2012/499/EU)*, Official Journal of the EU, L 244/4.

<sup>55</sup> 'Turkey Hopes for EU Visa Breakthrough this Week', *EUObserver*, 19 June 2012, at <<http://euobserver.com/enlargement/116678>>, 2 October 2012.

<sup>56</sup> A positive agenda in EU-Turkey accession process was launched on 17 May 2012 in Ankara. Its aim is to strengthen the efforts to implement reforms in Turkey in areas, which are in common interest both for EU and Turkey. This process should involve not only politicians and officials but also broader catalogue of civil society groups and organizations. During EU-Turkey Association Council on 22 June 2012 Danish presidency expressed its hope that accession negotiations will be continue in accord-

presidency that no issues concerning enlargement process will occur in relation between this country and Turkey. Cyprus during its presidency made any progress in accession negotiations with Turkey dependant on fulfilling the guidelines of Turkey's Negotiating Framework and relevant Council conclusions, which generally demanded normalization of the relations between Turkey and the Republic of Cyprus. Turkey's declaration on freezing relations with Cyprus presidency, expressed in the mid of 2011, and harsh negotiation between representatives of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, held in January 2012 under the auspices of the United Nations on solving the problem of island division, made a situation more tense even before the Cyprus began its presidency<sup>57</sup>. From the one side the EU tried to present its commitment to the accession process. The European Commission in its annually Progress Report on Enlargement appreciated all reformatory efforts in Turkey, calling simultaneously to fulfill the political membership criteria<sup>58</sup>. From the other side however there was a visible critique of Turkey's policy towards Republic of Cyprus, which was explicit enclosed in the General Affairs Council conclusions from December 2012<sup>59</sup>. This ambiguous position was eventually criticized by Turkish Ministry of EU Affairs as "(...) subjective, biased, unwarranted and bigoted attitudes (...)" in their own report referring to the progress made by this country in the EU accession process<sup>60</sup>.

**Montenegro.** On 16/17 December 2010 the European Council agreed to give Montenegro the status of candidate country. However, few days before the summit, on 14 December 2010, as it was mentioned at the beginning of this section, ministers of foreign or European affairs of member states agreed that the opening of negotiations with Montenegro is dependent on positive opinion of the European Commission. In the Enlargement Strategy 2011-2012 the European Commission confirmed that Montenegro had fulfilled the priorities set out in 2010 and it is ready to open the accession negotiations<sup>61</sup>.

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ance to the new framework, see: *EU-Turkey Association Council*, The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 22 June 2012, 11776/12 PRESSE 287, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/er/131131.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/er/131131.pdf)>, 10 January 2013.

<sup>57</sup> 'Turkey Warns of Freezing Ties with Cyprus EU Presidency', *Euractive.com*, 14 July 2011, at <<http://www.euractiv.com/enlargement/turkey-warns-freezing-ties-cypru-news-506534>>, 1 October 2012; 'Cyprus Deal Sought by Mid-Summer', *Euractive.com*, 24 January 2012, at <<http://www.euractiv.com/enlargement/cyprus-deal-sought-mid-summer-news-510344>>, 1 October 2012.

<sup>58</sup> *Commission Staff Working Document. Turkey 2012 Progress Report Accompanying the Document Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council – Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012-2013*, European Commission, Brussels, 10.10.2012 SWD (2012) 336 final.

<sup>59</sup> *Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process – Council Conclusions*, The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 11 December 2012, 17604/12, pp. 8-13, at <<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st17/st17604.en12.pdf>>, 10 January 2013.

<sup>60</sup> 'Turkey Accuses EU of Bigotry', *Euractive.com*, 2 January 2013, at <<http://www.euractiv.com/enlargement/turkey-accuses-eu-bigotry-news-516832>>, 10 January 2013.

<sup>61</sup> *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. Enlargement Strategy...*, pp. 26-27.

During the Polish presidency in the Council one technical issue was pushed further in EU – Montenegro relations. At the end of October 2011 a draft Cooperation Agreement between European Police College (CEPOL) and the Police Academy in Danilovgrad in the Republic of Montenegro was processed by COREPER<sup>62</sup>. This fact is important in the context of enlargement policy because representative of a country holding the presidency chairs also the Governing Board of the CEPOL. Thus, the presidency has an instrument of influence on some issues referring the cooperation with other countries in the field of police's education.

The European Council in its conclusions on 9 December 2011 appreciated a progress made by Montenegro. It called the Council to examine implementation of reforms in Montenegro, particularly in the areas of rule of law and fundamental rights, fight against corruption and organized crime. This should be done on the basis of a report, which the European Commission supposed to present in the first half of 2012. As the European Council stated, a perspective of opening the negotiation with Montenegro was June 2012<sup>63</sup>.

In the Commission's report presented in May 2012 it stated that Montenegro has reached a necessary level of compliance with Copenhagen political criteria and provided that this country will make further progress in implementing reforms the European Commission recommended the Council to open accession negotiations<sup>64</sup>. According to this statement General Affairs Council on 26 June 2012 adopted the EU general negotiation position, setting a framework for talks with Montenegro, and referred to the European Council to open negotiations on 29 June 2012<sup>65</sup>. On this day, at the end of Danish presidency, first Accession Conference with Montenegro at ministerial level has been held. What is worth noticing, beside recommendation for Montenegro to stay on reform track, is that delegations haven't opened any negotiation chapter<sup>66</sup>. It was done however six months later on 19 December 2012 during the second Accession Conference at ministerial level, when EU and Montenegro delegations have opened and provisionally closed Chapter 25 – Science and Research. In the second half of the year 2012 the Cyprus presidency at the level of working party accepted two screening

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<sup>62</sup> 'Item Note from the General Secretariat to the COREPER/Council on Cooperation Agreement between CEPOL and the Police Academy in Danilovgrad, Republic of Montenegro', No. 15449/1, The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 24 October 2011, at <<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/11/st15/st15449.en11.pdf>>, 30 September 2012.

<sup>63</sup> *Conclusion of the European Council*, Brussels, 9 December 2011, p. 5.

<sup>64</sup> 'Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on Montenegro's Progress in the Implementation of Reforms', The European Commission, Brussels, 22 May 2012, COM (2012) 222 final, at <[http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2012/montenegro\\_spring\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/montenegro_spring_report_en.pdf)>, 30 September 2012.

<sup>65</sup> 'Press Release 3180th Council meeting General Affairs', 11690/12, The Council of the European Union Luxembourg, 26 June 2012, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/131236.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/131236.pdf)>, 30 September 2012.

<sup>66</sup> 'Press Release. First Accession Conference with Montenegro', Brussels, 12033/12, The Council of the European Union, 29 June 2012, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/press-data/en/er/131410.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/press-data/en/er/131410.pdf)>, 30 September 2012.

reports referring to the judiciary, fundamental rights and justice, freedom and security. On the basis of those two facts the presidency objective stating that Cyprus is willing to " (...) implement swiftly the Union's decision to open accession negotiations with Montenegro and to contribute to the decisive advancement of these negotiations"<sup>67</sup> can be marked as accomplished.

**The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.** Although the European Commission recommended opening accession negotiation with Macedonia as early as in the 2009 Enlargement Package, the Council has not yet decided on it. The European Commission in its Enlargement Strategy 2011-2012 has reiterated a recommendation to move to the second stage of transitional period as provided in the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and open accession negotiations<sup>68</sup>. In the conclusions of the General Affairs Council on 5 December 2011, it generally agreed on the European Commission's opinion to start the negotiation with Macedonia and expressed its readiness to return to this issue during the next presidency<sup>69</sup>. Nevertheless, it is not an overstatement that Macedonia's European perspective wasn't at the top list of Polish presidency priorities. Firstly, although Poland literally declared in its objectives "to support the European aspirations of the whole region of Western Balkans"<sup>70</sup>, it didn't distinguished any single state from this part of the continent. This meant that activity of Polish presidency was rather directed towards another issue, namely Eastern Partnership. Secondly, Poland's involvement in the EU-Western Balkans relations during the presidency didn't go beyond officially planned meetings, i.e. organising Western Balkan EU Ministerial Forum in October 2011 or meeting with the ministers from candidate countries on the occasion of informal ministerial meeting of the Member States. Bearing in mind above restrictions, the way the presidency's objective was phrased tends to admit that it was accomplished.

Denmark didn't include a accession negotiations with Macedonia into its enlargement objectives list, though the General Affairs Council had declared on 5 December 2011 a readiness to return to opening of the negotiations with Macedonia during the next presidency<sup>71</sup>. However, Danish representative attended in the Stabilization and Association Council regular meetings, reviewing a developments in aligning Macedonian regulation to the political and economic criteria of accession process<sup>72</sup>.

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<sup>67</sup> *Programme of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union...*, p. 10.

<sup>68</sup> *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. Enlargement Strategy...*, pp. 26.

<sup>69</sup> 'Komunikat prasowy z 3132. posiedzenia Rady do Spraw Ogólnych...' p. 18.

<sup>70</sup> *Programme of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union...*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>71</sup> *Europe at work. Programme of the Danish Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2012...*, pp. 24-25.

<sup>72</sup> 'Joint Press Release. Eighth Meeting of the Stabilisation and Association Council between the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the EU', 1453/12, The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 23 January 2012, at <<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/1398834/127481.pdf>>, 1 October 2012; 'Joint Press Release. Ninth Meeting of the Stabilisation and Association Council between

The status of negotiation process with Macedonia didn't change during Denmark and Cyprus presidency. Remarkable in this context is that similarly to Denmark, among Cypriot objectives we can't find those concerning Macedonia accession to the EU<sup>73</sup>. One of possible obstacle for moving this issue forward is the conflict between Macedonia and Greece on the legal name of the first country. Greece government states that term "Macedonia" belongs to the historical area, which lies nowadays in the border of the Hellenic Republic. Thus, a Greek speaking part of Cyprus, which belongs to the EU won't probably oppose a position of its partner, with whom has not only strong cultural bonds, but also economic ones<sup>74</sup>. Although during the regular meetings under the Stabilisation and Association Council Framework, where the reform process of economic and political adjustment to the EU aquis was examined, a so called 'name issue' was visibly present in Council conclusion. General Affairs Council, chaired by the Cyprus Foreign Minister, stated on 11 December that it is crucial to work on good neighbourhood relations and to bring "(...) a longstanding discussions on the name issue to a definitive conclusion without delay"<sup>75</sup>.

**Serbia.** At the end it is necessary to notice that on 12 October 2011 the European Commission gave its opinion on Serbia's application for membership of the European Union. Bearing in mind that this country generally fulfilled the Copenhagen political criteria and requirements imposed in the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Process the European Commission recommended the Council to grant Serbia the status of candidate country<sup>76</sup>. The European Council in December 2011 called the Council to examine whether Serbia is still committed to the regional dialogue, has reached an agreement on inclusive regional cooperation and is cooperating with EULEX and KFOR<sup>77</sup>. On the basis of this assessment the Council recommended the European Council on 28 February 2012 to grant Serbia candidate status, which it has eventually done on 1 March<sup>78</sup>. Nevertheless Danish presidency didn't move on with this issue.

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the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the EU', 12873/12, The Council of the European Union, Brussels, 24 July 2012, at <[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/132003.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/132003.pdf)>, 1 October 2012.

<sup>73</sup> *Programme of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union...*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>74</sup> Ł. Fleischerowicz, 'Macedonia w NATO i UE a nowy rząd grecki i przewodnictwo Cypru w Radzie UE', *balkanistyka.org*, 14 lipca 2012, at <<http://balkanistyka.org/wp/macedonia-w-nato-i-ue-a-nowy-rzad-grecki-i-przewodnictwo-cypru-w-radzie-ue/>>, 1 October 2012; on the problematic relations between Macedonia and Greece in the context of NATO enlargement in the Balkans see: T. Żornaczuk, 'Wyzwania procesu rozszerzenia NATO na Bałkanach', *Biuletyn Polskiego Instytutu Spraw Międzynarodowych*, No. 65 (930), 5 July 2012.

<sup>75</sup> 'Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process – Council Conclusions', p. 19.

<sup>76</sup> *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council. Commission Opinion on Serbia's Application for Membership of the European Union*, No. COM (2011) 668 final, The European Commission, Brussels, 12 October 2011, p. 12.

<sup>77</sup> *Conclusion of the European Council*, Brussels, 9 December 2011, p. 5.

<sup>78</sup> *Conclusion of the European Council*, Brussels, 1-2 March 2012, EUCO 4/3/12 REV 3, p. 14.

Cypriot presidency in one of its objectives has focused on Serbia accession perspective, aiming potentially decision for the opening of accession negotiations by the European Council. Strong commitment of Cyprus to maintain priority relations with Western Balkans states was visible as on 11 June 2012 the Minister of Foreign Affairs Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis made his first foreign visit during Cypriot presidency to Serbia. During this visit, which started *tour de capital* in Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania, E. Kozakou-Marcoullis said that presidency will put an effort in order to open accession negotiations with Serbia in December 2012, provided that the European Commission would made positive recommendation on that issue<sup>79</sup>. In spite of such declaration there was no progress in this matter. In its conclusion on 11 December 2012 the Council has stated that Serbia needs to stay on the path of fulfilling necessary political criteria and conditions outlined by the Stabilisation and Association Process. The Council has declared to examine a progress in mentioned issues no sooner than in Spring 2013. It is however dependant on positive decision of the European Council on opening the negotiations and after the Commission and European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy will have presented their report on reform process in Serbia<sup>80</sup>.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS ON TRIO PRESIDENCY EFFECTIVENESS IN THE FIELD OF ENLARGEMENT POLICY

In order to clearly illustrate to what degree each presidency has fulfilled its objectives I will present an accomplishment level on a three-step scale (see table 1).

Table 1. A level of Polish and Danish objectives' accomplishment in the field of enlargement policy.

	Objective	Accomplished	Partially accomplished	Not accomplished
POLAND	To sign the Accession Treaty with Croatia	X		
	To explore all opportunities to continue accession negotiation with Turkey	X		
	A meaningful progress made in accession negotiation with Iceland	X		
	To support the European aspirations of the Western Balkans		X	

<sup>79</sup> 'Press Release – The Cyprus Presidency supports enlargement in the Western Balkans', *Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union Official Website*, 11 July 2012, at <<http://www.cy2012.eu/en/news/press-release-the-cyprus-presidency-supports-enlargement-in-the-western-balkans>>, 1 October 2012.

<sup>80</sup> 'Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process – Council Conclusions', p. 22.



	Objective	Accomplished	Partially accomplished	Not accomplished
DENMARK	Taking further forward the enlargement negotiations with Iceland	X		
	To support a continuation of the enlargement negotiations with Turkey and the development of relations between Turkey and the EU.	X		
	To discuss and, potentially, decide on further steps to be taken with respect to the approximation of Serbia and Montenegro (European Council conclusion on December 2011)	X		
	To monitor the consolidation of Croatia and the continuation of the country's reform efforts after the accession treaty was signed with Croatia on 9 December 2011.			X
	Objective	Accomplished	Partially accomplished	Not accomplished
CYPRUS	To contribute in taking forward Iceland's accession negotiations, aiming at bringing the process as close as possible to its conclusion	X		
	To reinforce Turkey's accession prospect, which is of critical importance and to focus on advancing this prospect, in line with Turkey's Negotiating Framework and relevant Council conclusions.			X
	To implement swiftly the Union's decision to open accession negotiations with Montenegro and to contribute to the decisive advancement of these negotiations.	X		
	To seek to build on the momentum created by European Council Decision to grant candidate status to Serbia, a key country in the Western Balkans, aiming potentially to a European Council decision for the opening of accession negotiations.		X	
	To follow closely the monitoring process for the implementation of the commitments assumed by Croatia during the accession negotiations, in view of the Comprehensive Monitoring Report to be presented by the European Commission to the European Parliament and the Council in autumn 2012.			

Source: Prepared by author on a basis of: *Programme of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. 1 July 2011 – 31 December 2011...*, p. 12; 'Europe at Work. Programme of the Danish Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2012. 1 January-20 June 2012...', pp. 24-25; *Programme of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union...*, p. 10-11.

In case of Poland as well as Denmark accomplished objectives are the majority. This means that officials, who prepared the agendas fit in the legislative plans of the European Commission and working agenda of other EU institutions. The reason why the rest objectives weren't fully accomplished is that the actions undertaken by trio didn't correspond with the content of the objectives, which were planned long before each presidency started.

Only Poland has managed to accomplish its presidency's objective regarding the accession of Croatia. An argument for marking Danish and Cypriot objectives on Croatia as not accomplished is that those countries didn't undertake any actions, which were supposed to directly monitor reforms in Croatia. In fact it lies only in competencies of the European Commission to regularly present an effect of such monitoring. An example for this was a report on Croatia's accession preparations published in April and October 2012.

In the area of negotiation with Iceland all three countries fully accomplished their objectives. However, a point to which they moved this process was different. During the Polish presidency seven new negotiation chapters were open, out of which six were closed. Danish presidency opened the same number of chapters as Poland, but managed to close only two of them. The biggest progress in opening new chapters has made Cyprus presidency whereas it has managed to close only one.

Poland and Denmark accomplished their objectives, which referred to the Turkey. During the Polish presidency the General Affairs Council reiterated opinion and demands from the European Commission's Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2011-2012. Although this statement was not an own initiative of the presidency, it fulfills the objective formulated by Poland. Danish objective was more precise. It was also accomplished by the fact, that the Council adopted in June 2012 a decision allowing to put a signature on behalf of the EU under the Agreement between the UE and Turkey on the readmission of people residing without authorization. Only Cyprus hasn't accomplished its objective on Turkey. It has made any progress in this issue dependant on fulfilling Negotiating Framework and relevant Council conclusions but presidency has also stated that it will focus on advancing the Turkey's accession perspective. In this matter however, there was no prospect on positive actions or declaration undertaken by either Cyprus presidency or Turkey government.

The Polish presidency's objective concerning Western Balkans was partially accomplished. A way of formulation of this objective suggested a presidency's involvement would go beyond technical issues (like in the case of Montenegro) and officially planed meetings (like Western Balkan EU Ministerial Forum in October 2011). On this basis it is hard to classify this objective either as fully accomplished or completely not accomplished. Danish presidency's objective was again more precise because it referred only to Serbia and Montenegro, not generally to the whole region. Thus, this objective was accomplished thanks to granting Serbia a candidate status in March 2012 and starting the accession negotiation with Montenegro on 29 June 2012. Cyprus objective on Serbia was partially accomplished. The presidency contributed to the General Affairs Council conclusions, where it has enclosed some prospects for moving negotiation forward.

Nevertheless, Cyprus in its objective counted on pushing the process further by using the fact of granting the candidate status to Serbia. Presidency has made this dependant however on the European Council decision for the opening of accession negotiations.

Assessment of the types of the objectives and through that also a character of each presidency's activity is more straightforward. All objectives chosen by trio presidencies are continuity objectives. It is a rare situation, when in the field of enlargement policy appears a new objective, which presidency rises for the first time. However, an objective concerning relations with Macedonia has a potential to be an innovative in the future. It is because in the programme of a current trio, as well as in programme of each presidency, topic concerning Macedonia was omitted or generalized by referring to the Western Balkan region. This is opposite to the programmes of Spain, Belgian and Hungary presidencies, from previous trio, where Macedonia's case was clearly present.

All accomplished, partially accomplished and not accomplished objectives can be characterized also as firm ones. However, it is significant that before presidencies started, all objectives were formulated, as if they were soft. In this way presidencies usually try to avoid an unpredictable situation, which doesn't depend on them, but which can disrupt fulfilling the objectives. All of them resulted eventually in opening new chapters, signing agreement (for example an Agreement between the UE and Turkey on the readmission of people residing without authorization) or at least adopting the Council conclusion. There was only one exception, which from the beginning was a firm objective, namely issue referring to the signing the Accession Treaty with Croatia.

Also all objectives have to be characterized as agreed. A reason for this is firstly, enlargement policy in an area where all presidencies' actions are consulted with the European Commission. Secondly, enlargement as an ongoing issue in the EU agenda has to be consulted among trio countries. A framework for executing a continuity rule is a group presidency programme. This doesn't mean that every agreed objective is equally important. We can distinguish those on which presidencies put more emphasis than on others. In case of Polish presidency it was signing the Accession Treaty with Croatia. Poland tried to quickly prepared a draft text of this document and achieved positive opinion of the European Commission and the EP, thanks to which the treaty has been signed in December 2011. For Denmark and Cyprus an important objectives referred to Serbia and Montenegro. Although in a trio programme states that an attention will be paid to the Western Balkan, Danish and Cyprus presidencies have chosen only those countries, where a chance for a success was bigger than in the case of Macedonia negotiations.

A continuation character of objectives and thanks to that also character of trio presidencies shows, that all three countries agreed on current enlargement policy's guidelines and directions. They both were in favour of further EU enlargement (with some restrictions towards singular countries) and didn't have ambitions to revise this policy's framework.

Trio presidencies will be also remembered because of the facts such as signing the Accession Treaty with Croatia, granting Serbia a candidate status and opening accession negotiations with Montenegro. Objectives referring to those matters provided

firm aftermath of both presidencies. Their agreed character shows also the great importance three presidencies attached to them. A proof of the presidencies' ambitions to leave a visible effect of own work are inter alia 23 newly opened negotiations chapters with Iceland, out of which 9 were provisionally closed.

On the basis of above analysis and objectives' characteristic we can objectively assess that activities of the presidencies contributed to the advancement of the enlargement process. As a political issue, however, there were visible differentiations in relations with candidate countries. Despite the fact that all objectives were agreed, at least in the framework of trio 18-month programme, each presidency put more or less stronger emphasis on their own preferences. The most visible example was Turkey issue during Cyprus presidency.

Nevertheless, trio presidencies have managed to push the enlargement process further in other, also important for the EU, areas. First of all a significant progress was made in the negotiations with Iceland. An important step was also done in the relations with Serbia and Montenegro. However it is hard to predict, when first country will manage to open negotiations. As it was concluded previously, objectives of all trio presidencies weren't ambitious and rather focused on continuation of current principles of enlargement policy. Despite such objectives' character Poland, Denmark and Cyprus were able to leave a visible aftermath of their activities, what author inter alia sought to be proved in this analysis.

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