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**Eastern Enlargement of the European Union:
Perspectives and Role of the East and West
German Länder**

Studies on International Issues **B 02**

RESEARCH CENTER OF THE SLOVAK FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION



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This publication appears thanks to generous support from the Ford Foundation

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ISBN 80-89041-00-0

Acknowledgements:

The following study is based on my M.Phil. dissertation that I submitted at the University of Oxford in April 1999. I am grateful for the financial assistance from the Henry R. Kravis Scholarship and Maurice Latey Award that enabled me to carry out the research for this study. I would like to thank Timothy Garton Ash and David Hine for their guidance, advice and patience. I am also grateful to Vladimir Handl for his comments.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CDU	<i>Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands</i>
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CEECs	Central and Eastern European states
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
COMECON	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA)
CSU	<i>Christlich Soziale Union</i>
DM	Deutschmark
EC	European Community
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EMK	<i>Europaministerkonferenz</i>
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
EP	European Parliament
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EU	European Union
FDP	<i>Freie Demokratische Partei</i>
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDR	German Democratic Republic
IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs
MEPs	Members of European Parliament
MPK	<i>Ministerpräsidentenkonferenz</i>
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PHARE	Poland and Hungary: Aid for Restructuring of Economies (later extended to other CEECs)
SEA	Single European Act
SPD	<i>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands</i>
WTO	World Trade Organization

MAP OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY



Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Eastern enlargement of the European Union has been a dominant theme of European policymaking in Germany. After the Meeting of the European Council in Copenhagen in June 1993, that officially invited Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) to join the European Union, Germany took the goal of enlargement one step forward under its EU presidency in the second half of 1994.¹ Germany's commitment to the European project together with the changing domestic context after unification in 1990 made eastern enlargement an important aim of Germany's foreign policy.

At the same time however, Germany's traditional support for the Community's deepening as a precondition for further widening, has delineated the priorities of German policy in the European Union.² Political debates have placed enlargement alongside other, at times contradictory, goals such as the preservation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) or industrial and labor market protection. Developments in the 1990s have increasingly shown that functional and local interests frequently clash and often help determine the course of Germany's foreign policy. The role and strength of these interests make it clear that the traditional distinction between foreign and domestic politics has become increasingly obsolete in the area of European policymaking. This is particularly apparent in Germany, a state with a clear division of competencies among the various ministerial portfolios and different coalition partners, and a clearly developed federal structure with distinct sub-national political actors.

In this study I focus on the latter aspect of Germany's changing domestic context. Namely, I seek to analyze the ways in which the Länder, the German federal states, have contributed to the enlargement debate following such landmark events as unification and empowerment of the Länder in EU affairs through Article 23 of the Basic Law. More specifically, I investigate the different views between select original West German Länder and the new Länder that were recreated and

¹ Germany's role was crucial in developing the so-called Structured Dialogue, the multilateral framework between the EU and the associated CEECs. See Barbara Lippert and Peter Becker, "Structured Dialogue Revisited: the EU's Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion," *European Foreign Affairs*, Vol.3 No.3 (Autumn 1998), p.347.

² Henning Tewes, "Between Deepening and Widening: Role Conflict in Germany's Enlargement Policy," *West European Politics*, Vol.21, No.2 (April 1998), pp.117-133.

incorporated into unified Germany in 1990 and I explore the impact of such divisions on the policymaking process.

Given the political and economic position of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) prior to unification, it is plausible to assume that the East Länder might naturally tend to their eastern neighbors in search for new commercial, social and institutional ties.³ Nowadays, former East Germany is part of a new and a completely different state whose principal commitments and established connections are with Western Europe and the west more broadly. This picture is changing as the European Union prepares to take in more members from Central and Eastern Europe. The EU, that the ex-GDR entered as it joined the Federal Republic of Germany, offers a broad framework that encompasses a comprehensive set of common economic, political and legal rules. Today the plan is to extend this setting to other countries of the former Soviet block and thus continue the process that began with the accession of East Germany into the European Community.

Against the backdrop of the recent trends in German federalism, I examine how far in fact the East Länder compared to the West Länder have expressed a stronger and a more consistent commitment to eastern enlargement of the European Union. I consider the differences in attitude in four Länder - Saxony and Brandenburg on the one hand, and Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg on the other. Saxony and Brandenburg, two representatives of the East Länder, share the biggest portion of Germany's eastern border with the Czech Republic and Poland. Bavaria's position, though historically in the West, is unique due its common border with the Czech Republic, while Baden-Württemberg is both politically and geographically in the west.

The picture that emerges is more complicated than a clear-cut East-West cleavage. The findings show that all four Länder have a strong interest in enlargement. While there is a definite divide that reflects their positions in the East and in the West, nuanced differences in views and in local self-interest persist even between Saxony and Brandenburg and between Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg. These mirror a more complex set of developments that has taken place since unification and in particular since the adoption of Article 23 of the Basic Law. More broadly, the enhanced political role of the Länder in EU affairs has created a new tension between the existing institutional confines and the interests of an individual Land.

The study of interest formations in the select Länder together with the policymaking process vis-a-vis the Federation illustrates notable parallels with the political process inside the European Union. Policymaking in the EU has been for

³ Throughout the study I use the terms 'the East and West Länder' instead of 'the eastern and western Länder'. I prefer the former because they capture more fully the political and the historic divisions between the FRG and the former GDR. The terms 'eastern and western' are not as precise principally due to Bavaria's special position: it is politically in the West but geographically in the east.

decades dominated by attempts to bring together divergent interests of different member states. In the case of Germany's federal structure, the Bundesrat and other common decision-making forums of the Länder serve to unite the various regional interests into a common position. The topic of enlargement serves as a good example, whereby both the Länder and ultimately the fifteen member states of the European Union have to agree on a common stance. The study therefore demonstrates not only the complexity of political mechanisms in a horizontally and vertically decentralized Germany's political system, it also confirms a degree of compatibility between the internal legislative and political setups of the Federal Republic of Germany and of the European Union. To the extent that Germany's formal political structures mirror the EU's institutional framework, German politicians and bureaucrats may seem more adaptable to the Union's policymaking process.

Chapter two begins by sketching the picture of important changes at Germany's sub-national level. It points to the increasingly competitive nature of inter-Länder relations and specifically focuses on trends in EU policymaking. It lays the ground for viewing the basic differences vis-a-vis eastern enlargement both in terms of the East-West divisions and in terms of the mitigating effects of the formal political structures.

Chapters three and four expose the views toward the eastern expansion of the EU in the four Länder, considering Brandenburg and Saxony first and Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg next. The chapters draw out the officially stated differences as well as the key reasons for acting in a particular way given the economic situation, the political climate and other important legacies in these Länder.

Chapter five considers how the Länder as a collective both at home and in Europe have perceived the question of eastern enlargement of the EU. It illustrates that underneath the unanimity of the Bundesrat resolutions and statements by other coordinating bodies, there are notable differences that underscore especially the unique stance of the East Länder. Moreover, these together with Bavaria have voiced their concerns and set their agenda in relation to enlargement in coordination with other European regions that share borders with one or more applicant countries. Such initiatives indicate the attempts by the Länder to voice their agenda outside of the confines of the Bundesrat whose resolutions often amount to rather diluted compromises. Although the Länder are very unlikely to block enlargement, the Bundesrat's right of veto, given its constitutional say on this question, could in the future be potentially exploited by some regional politicians with larger national aspirations.

The time period that this study mostly deals with is from summer 1993 to the end of September 1998, although I cite some sources that do not fall within this period. The choice of these dates has clear reasons. First, in June 1993 the Meeting of the European Council in Copenhagen officially launched the process of enlargement to

the Central and Eastern European countries.⁴ Second, German federal elections at the end of September 1998 ousted Helmut Kohl's long-lasting federal coalition. Upon taking up its office the new SPD-led government expressed greater reservations about the planned enlargement. More importantly, the results of the elections ejected the Bavarian CSU from the government in Bonn.

Sources in this study include official documents produced by the Länder governments and parliaments, speeches by regional politicians and other public pronouncements, such as published interviews or reports in newspapers and magazines. I also use resolutions by the Bundesrat and by the other inter-Länder coordinating bodies. In assessing the self-interest of each Land, I rely principally on what the politicians and the officials say this interest is. In addition, interviews were carried out with senior civil servants in each Land. The purpose of these interviews was to gain further insight into the attitudes of the Länder towards eastern enlargement and also towards European integration more generally in order to place the Länder in the political context in which they operate. The interviewees were also asked to elaborate on some aspects of the official Länder documents. In order to avoid as far as possible the bias of personal statements, I use personal opinions only in so far as they are backed up by other sources.

The secondary literature includes writings on German federalism, principally the recent work edited by Charlie Jeffery and other pieces on the Länder involvement in EU policymaking. Translations quoted in the study are all mine.

⁴ The Meeting of the EU Council set out the following criteria for membership:

1. Politically, applicants must be stable and pluralistic democracies, committed to the rule of law, to respect for human rights and to the protection of minorities;
2. Economically, they must be established market economies and must be able to cope with competitive forces and market pressures within the Union;
3. They must comply with political, economic and monetary objectives of the Union and fully assume the *acquis communautaire*.

The ten CEECs that have between 1994 and 1995 applied to the European Union are Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Estonia, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia and Lithuania. Cyprus, certainly not a CEEC on either geographical or political grounds, joined the group of 10 in 1996. Subsequently, the candidates for the next wave of the EU enlargement have been commonly termed as 10+1. The summit in Luxembourg in December 1997 invited Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Estonia plus Cyprus to begin the accession talks.

Chapter 2

THE GERMAN LÄNDER: FROM COOPERATION TO COMPETITION BEYOND MONEY

In this chapter I review the changing nature of German federalism in recent years by tracing the developments that have contributed to a move from cooperative federal arrangements to greater competition among the Länder. I identify three principal factors that have facilitated this increased competition: changing economic trends, German unification and European integration. In the context of European integration I situate the Länder, as sub-national units, in the process of EU policymaking within the framework of the German federal system. I then outline both the formal and the informal channels of influence that the Länder have to affect policy at the European level since the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty. In this way I emphasize the underlying tension between the present political process and the views of the individual Länder. The picture of institutional brakes and growing regional identity provides the basic analytical backdrop for viewing the role of the Länder in the process of prospective eastern enlargement of the European Union.

The recently published volume *Recasting German Federalism: the Legacies of Unification* edited by Charlie Jeffery offers some interesting insights into the changing nature of the German federal system following unification.⁵ The book provides a comprehensive picture of the legal, structural and practical changes in German federalism in recent years. Two themes stand out in particular, and both are relevant for the remainder of the study.

First, German unification and its outcomes have undermined the system of so-called cooperative federalism and instead have led to noticeably more competitive federal practices, especially in the areas of finance and regional economic policy. In a number of ways this marks a clear departure from the legacies of the pre-unification trend of legislative centralization and especially deep institutional 'entanglement' (*Politikverflechtung*). Contrary to previous decades, the 1990s have been characterized much more distinctly by diminishing cross-Länder solidarity and by new ways in which the Länder have been able to pursue their varying self-interests. In recent years, different Länder have tended to cooperate on specific

⁵ Charlie Jeffery (ed.), *Recasting German Federalism: the Legacies of Unification* (London: Pinter, 1999).

issues. This pattern of each Land wanting to do things its 'own way', sometimes gaining the support of the others, sometimes not, is what Jeffery terms a 'Sinatra Doctrine' of the Länder.⁶

Second, post-unification developments have been accompanied by the deepening of European integration. The Europeanization of previously exclusive domestic competencies has led to a much greater and more direct involvement of Germany's institutions, including its sub-national units, in EU policymaking.⁷ With the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty, the Länder have secured a direct involvement and a decisive say in matters of their exclusive competence that are now being decided at the EU level. In particular, the role of the Bundesrat, Germany's upper chamber, has been strengthened. Through another constitutional amendment the Länder have also managed to ensure their active participation in foreign affairs, independent of the Federal Government.

Both these themes, the empowerment of the Länder in EU policymaking and the competitive nature of German federalism, require more detailed elaboration. The involvement of the Länder in the course of prospective eastern enlargement of the EU offers a specific example that illustrates the limits of their political influence and the degree to which they are able and willing to cooperate - principally with one another but also with the Federal Government. This is apparent from a more detailed account of the views and roles of the four Länder that I consider in the context of eastern enlargement of the European Union. As much as eastern enlargement has been perceived differently by different functional and political interests at the federal level, the issue has received varying attention in different German regions based on specific local interests. Although still largely driven by economic considerations, the case of eastern enlargement shows that cross-Länder cooperation and competition has moved beyond merely money-dominated topics.

The Background: Economic Changes

While becoming most apparent only in the 1990s, the competitive nature of German federalism has its roots in economic changes of the 1970s and 1980s. It is therefore worth reviewing these developments very briefly. In the two decades after 1949 policymaking in Germany became arguably more centralized considering the

⁶ Charlie Jeffery, "From Cooperative Federalism to a 'Sinatra Doctrine' of the Länder?" Jeffery (ed.), p.340.

⁷ Klaus H. Goetz, "Integration policy in a Europeanized state: Germany and the Intergovernmental Conference," *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.3, No.1 (March 1996), pp.23-44.

powers assigned to the Länder in the Basic Law. This stemmed primarily from the commitment of the post-War West German constitution to "the maintenance of legal or economic unity, especially the maintenance of uniformity of living conditions beyond the territory of any one Land" (Article 72 of the Basic Law). Both the Federal Constitutional Court and the Federal Government interpreted the idea of equal standards of living across the Länder, one of the preconditions for the use of concurrent powers by the Federation, rather liberally. The commitment to the uniformity of living conditions also served as a basis for a series of constitutional amendments after 1949 that transferred former Länder competencies to the federal level.⁸ This process culminated in 1969-70 when 'Joint Tasks' of the Federation and the Länder gained new common powers in the areas of higher education, regional development, agricultural structures and coastal preservation. The joint exercise of both financial and political responsibility in these fields by federal and Länder governments marked the full emergence of cooperative federalism in Germany. These joint exercises established an interdependent relationship based on cooperation and compromise-making between the two levels of government.

This effective cooperation began to change with the breakdown of the collective Länder interest in subsequent years. The general economic slowdown of the 1970s, the global shift away from heavy industries, accompanied by the technological revolution, the converse emergence of the service sector and the increased importance of smaller business all had clear regional implications. Ironically, the previously strategic region of Saarland, whose coal helped to rebuild Germany and France after the Second World War and bound together six countries in a common European project, began to decline. Similarly, other areas, especially Lower Saxony and Bremen started to face economic difficulties. Meanwhile, Länder such as Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg continued to prosper by investing in rising high-tech industries and by promoting small and medium-sized enterprises at a regional level.⁹ Consequently, the economic and social differences among the Länder grew and their respective interests diverged.

On the one hand, inter-Länder solidarity decreased, on the other, the importance of regional economic policy increased. As Arthur Benz argues, reactions to the stagflation of the 1970s varied from region to region. Facing the limited territorial mobility of capital and the inability of the existing re-distributive channels to ensure homogeneous living conditions, several Länder governments engaged in independent regional economic policymaking. They used their own resources in

⁸ Charlie Jeffery, "The Non-reform of the German Federal System after Unification," *West European Politics*, Vol.18, No.2 (April 1995), p.253.

⁹ Roland Sturm, "The Industrial Policies of the German Länder and European Integration," *German Politics*, Vol.1, No.3 (December 1992), esp. pp.106-115.

addition to those from the federal sources to improve their local development potentials. They focused on a vast array of projects including, "support for research and technology initiatives, the qualifications of workers, measures to improve the regional infrastructure, environment and housing supply, together with activities designed to create an innovative and stimulating climate for economic activity (PR/promotion, cultural events, and so on)."¹⁰

Contrary to the idea of uniform living conditions, these efforts at regional promotion resulted in even greater economic disparity between the Länder. Inter-Länder tensions became clear in the 1980s when some of the Länder began to issue legal appeals to the Constitutional Court. They complained about the supposed inequities of the equalization system and, depending on the point of view, about their 'profligate' or 'mean-spirited' fellow-members of the Länder community.¹¹ By then it was apparent that the goal of income uniformity was not sufficient. Instead, the weaker Länder needed additional expenditures in order to revive regional growth.

Unification and the New Länder

German unification, and its widespread agenda, has decisively reinforced the departure from cooperative federalism. The creation of a single German state in October 1990 led both to a greater diversity of interests across the German regions and to an increased competition for resources. Wider geo-political interests following the inclusion of the East Länder also diverted the focus of inter-Länder relations away from purely economic and financial matters.

While the fall of the Berlin Wall signaled a new beginning in East-West relations by ending the Cold War, it also altered the existing balance in inter-Länder relations. Most obviously, the number of federal units suddenly increased from 11 to 16.¹² This made compromise among the Länder more difficult. On many issues the lowest common denominator on which all Länder could agree became even lower. In addition to the north-south economic divide (Saarland belonging to the north in this

¹⁰ Arthur Benz, "Rediscovering Regional Economic Policy: New Opportunities for the Länder in the 1990s," Charlie Jeffery (ed.), p.183. For a more specific example of regional policy in one Land, see Reimut Jochimsen, "The Regionalisation of Structural Policy: North-Rhine Westphalia in the Europe of Regions," *German Politics*, Vol.1, No.3 (December 1992), pp.82-101.

¹¹ Jeffery, "The Non-Reform of the German Federal System after Unification," p.254.

¹² The attempt to reduce the number of the Länder to 15 by creating a single Land Berlin-Brandenburg was rejected by the citizens of Brandenburg. Almost two thirds of them voted against the fusion in a referendum held on 5 May 1996. Former East Berlin is now part of the unified Land Berlin.

case), a much deeper cleavage between the West and the East Länder emerged. While the former had worked together for decades, the latter were complete newcomers to the institutional, administrative, economic and political aspects of the federal system. The name *neue* (new) Länder is revealing. Although the *neue* Länder were ready to progress quickly from their destructive experience with communism, they could not simply erase the forty years of the GDR's existence. They brought with them the heavy historical baggage of economic mismanagement and decline, political inexperience with democracy and the existing institutions of the Federal Republic, and finally, geopolitical orientation to the east of the Elbe and of the Oder-Neisse line.

Shortly after unification, the question of financial equalization served as the most striking example of new inter-Länder competition. Here a brief but important caveat is needed. Competition did not imply further decentralization, certainly in the German case of resource distribution across the Länder. Quite to the contrary, in the particular case of inclusion of the eastern Länder in the federal system of financial equalization, it was the Federation that gained more powers.¹³ This was principally due to the inability of the Länder as a group to form a common position. After all, the Bundesrat remains the chief institution through which the Länder exercise their political influence. While regional interests and differences have diverged significantly, the basic structures of the German federal system remain in place. Constitutionally, the regional governments must still act together if they want to achieve anything vis-a-vis the Federation. Practically, however, common action is becoming increasingly difficult. Therefore, one of the interesting aspects of deteriorating cooperative relations is the extent to which the Land or several Länder can hypothetically achieve something against the other political actors, such as the other regions, the Federation or even in some cases the European Union. With the changing nature of the German federal system there has been an increasing scope for new political coalitions.

The East Länder emerged as an obvious candidate for a sub-national coalition. They are far from homogeneous but on key issues they share common interests, especially on the question of money allocation. They suffer from disproportionately high unemployment rates and relatively low economic output. For instance, while the domestic product per worker in 1991 was just 31 percent of the western standard, in 1993 it reached 55 percent of the overall productivity level in the West Länder.¹⁴ Since unification, the East Länder have all experienced extreme levels of

¹³ Wolfgang Renzsch, "Föderative Problembewältigung: Zur Einbeziehung der neuen Länder in einem gesamtdeutschen Finanzausgleich ab 1995," *Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen*, Vol.25, No.1 (January 1994), p.117.

¹⁴ Manfred Wegener, "Produktionsstandort Ostdeutschland," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, Vol.44, No.17 (April 1994), p.21.

de-industrialization and complete economic transformation away from central planning. Yet, despite vast financial transfers to the five East German Länder, they still remain dependent on help from their western counterparts. The explanation lies partly in the way this money has been used. Only 14 percent of the annual transfer, about DM 24 billion, has consisted of direct investment in East German industry. The remainder has simply been consumed.¹⁵

The East Länder have also undergone a comprehensive political transformation. From their totalitarian communist regime they were catapulted straight into West Germany's political structure. This profound and rapid change included the immediate adoption of democratic standards and practices and the creation of a regional structure from a previously centralized state. Thus, not only are the new Länder economically weak, but they are also politically new with a growing sense of identity. At the same time, however, decisions by the Bundesrat require their input and their consent. The concerns of the new Länder have to be taken seriously despite the fact that on some issues they may have less in common with some of the West German regions than they do with areas in neighboring countries - Poland and the Czech Republic. Germany's geographical diffusion, with its economic and political byproducts, has led to a much wider range of voices that cannot be simply silenced.

The Länder and the European Union

In the 1990s, the deepening of European integration enhanced the scope of these voices further. The signing of the Maastricht Treaty was accompanied by the collective empowerment of the German Länder in EU policymaking. With increased competencies assigned to the Länder in the 1990s, German regions have become more involved in other fields of policymaking. Yet, as with domestic politics, the Länder remain constrained by the constitutional need to find a common position if they wish to have any impact on a wide range of EU policy fields. These arrangements create a strain between the existing institutional set-up and the range of the Länder interests.

While EU policymaking represents a relatively recent area of Länder participation, it further underlines the existing economic, political and historic divisions within Germany. Most clearly, the interests of the East Länder are commonly reflected in their lobbying in Brussels for proper treatment given their low economic status and relatively low political profile. The new Länder have also found an ally in the European Commission. With their incorporation into the West

¹⁵ Raimund Krämer, "The Transfederal Relations of the East German Länder," in Jeffery (ed.), p.240.

German state, they automatically became part of the European Community. Initially, Jacques Delors and his team worked out a package of transitory arrangements to help integrate the East Länder, thus anchoring the new Germany ever closer in the European Community.¹⁶ Later, under Delors' second budgetary package for the period of 1993-1999, the new Länder were granted continued support under Objective One of the EU Structural Funds. In short, the Commission has become another actor facilitating the vast reforms in the ex-GDR.

However, the East Länder are newcomers to the European arena relative to their partners in the West. A number of West German regions have for the past two decades benefited from or attempted to influence the process of European integration. On the receiving end, the Europeanization of policymaking was most obvious in the sphere of trade and regional economic policy. With the founding of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) the EC began to complement local and national initiatives for regional development. West Germany, due to its strong economic position, did not benefit much from these activities. Nonetheless, several regions received some funding from Brussels. Bavaria and Lower Saxony with their respective shares of 21.1 percent and 20.8 percent became the largest beneficiaries of the Fund's financial support to Germany between 1975 and 1987. Baden-Württemberg, on the other hand, received only 2.6 percent of the total money transferred to the Länder and Hamburg did not benefit at all from the ERDF.¹⁷ Other Länder also secured additional support from the Community's aid programs. For instance, for political reasons West Berlin qualified for transfers from Structural Funds under Objective II (regions heavily affected by industrial decline). Schleswig-Holstein, Bremen and Hamburg profited from the EC shipbuilding aid program (RENAVAL) and Saarland, North Rhine-Westphalia and Bavaria gained support from the coal and steel aid program (RESIDER).¹⁸

Naturally, different Länder have gained to a different degree from the Community's regional funds. Some have been remarkably independent in their pursuit of economic policies, while others have for years relied on extra help (however small) from Brussels. Fundamentally, the West Länder expressed and exercised often divergent interests and at times contradictory demands in relation to the EC. Yet, they were not legally equipped to assert their voices very far, and moreover were constrained by the Federal Republic's political position within the Community.

¹⁶ George Ross, *Jacques Delors and European Integration* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), pp.49-50.

¹⁷ Kommission der EG, *Europäischer Fonds für Regionale Entwicklung. Dreizehnter Jahresbericht* (Brussels: EC, 1989), p.97.

¹⁸ Sturm, p.111.

These constraints became more relaxed after the end of the Cold War, at the time when European integration also started to build new momentum. Conversely, they were replaced by new mechanisms of political control. Following unification, Germany's new existence 'beyond semi-sovereignty' was marked by its revived commitment to multilateral organizations.¹⁹ The European Community, of course, served as the best example when Germany put itself fully behind the completion of the Single European Market and the subsequent integrationist efforts outlined in the Maastricht Treaty. The Federal Government, with freer hands to act than ever before, opted readily for an additional European constraint. At the same time, the Länder constrained it from within.

Since the adoption of the Single European Act in 1986, the Länder found themselves increasingly marginalized by the Federation in matters of EC policymaking. In the run-up to Maastricht in November 1991, the German regional governments pressed for a fundamental revision of the federal-Länder relationship in European policy. They argued that European integration policy was no longer a form of foreign policy in the traditional sense. The European Community, with its broad legislation cutting across both federal and Länder competencies, could hardly be called an international institution. By now, many EC rules and directives became matters of domestic politics.²⁰ Since Maastricht represented a constitutional change in the Federal Republic, the Bundesrat also had to ratify the Treaty by two-thirds majority. Consequently, the Länder were able to use their threat to veto the ratification process and thus to correct the previously skewed internal balance of power in European policymaking. Unlike in the case of inter-Länder distribution of resources, in this instance the Länder acted as a cohesive unit. Consequently, their negotiating strength vis-a-vis the Federation was enhanced. After all, 'Europe' and its increased powers posed a common threat to all the Länder. Also, the Länder from the former GDR, were completely new to European policy. Even if there were clear cross-regional differences in the EU policy debate, there was little time for them to emerge. Instead, the pressure for more Länder competencies did not wane. Ultimately, it was also decisively reinforced by the lobbying of Bavaria's CSU, one of the coalition partners in Bonn.²¹

¹⁹ The term 'semi-sovereignty' characterizing the FRG originated with Peter Katzenstein's book *Policy and Politics in West Germany; The Growth of a Semi-Sovereign State* (Philadelphia: Temple, 1987). On the changing meaning of this characterization see William Paterson, "Beyond Semi-Sovereignty: The New Germany in the New Europe," *German Politics*, Vol.5, No.2 (August 1996), pp.167-184.

²⁰ Charlie Jeffery, "Towards a 'Third Level' in Europe? The German Länder in the European Union," *Political Studies*, Vol.44, No.1 (March 1996), p.258.

²¹ Heinz Laufer and Ursula Münch, *Das föderative System der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1997), p.220.

By rewriting the old Article 23 of the Basic Law the Länder secured new powers of domestic influence on Community policies. Institutionally, this meant that by acting united, the Länder won a collective voice in Germany's upper chamber. In fact, the Bundesrat rather than the individual Länder was the real winner of the new Article 23. According to the revised constitution, Germany's federal order cannot be further eroded by the effects of European integration unless the Bundesrat also consents to any future transfers of sovereignty to the EU (Article 23/1).²² The Federal Government is therefore required to "furnish comprehensive and timely information" to both the Bundestag and the Bundesrat (Article 23/2). The Bundesrat then participates in matters of the EU in "so far as it has to participate in a relevant internal measure or in so far as the Länder have internal powers." (Article 23/4). This means that in the policymaking process, the Bundesrat has to be consulted in the process of formulation of Federal Government EU policy. In general, "the Federal Government shall take into account the comments of the Bundesrat." More specifically, "where the issue affects the legislative powers of the Länder, the structure of their authorities or their administrative procedure, the Bundesrat's opinion is to be considered authoritative in the policy formation of the Federation." (Article 23/5). Finally, a representative of the Länder nominated by the Bundesrat represents the Federal Republic in the Council of Ministers of the EU wherever "the exclusive legislative powers of the Länder" are affected (Article 23/6).²³

This constitutional change has paved the way for a full-fledged coordination mechanism of the Länder in European policymaking. Structures that gradually began to spring up in the 1980s took their proper form after Maastricht. The Bundesrat with its EU committee, as a collective organ of all the Länder, became the key official channel of political influence in matters concerning the EU. Correspondingly, in October 1992 the Länder created a new coordinating body for European policy - the Conference of the European Ministers of the Länder (*Europaministerkonferenz*, or EMK).²⁴ European issues have also permeated the regular conferences of the other regional ministries and the meetings of the Minister

²² This and all subsequent quotes of Article 23 of the Basic Law are taken from S.E. Finer, et al., *Comparing Constitutions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp.138-139.

²³ In addition to these constitutional prescriptions, a separate law - *Gesetz über die Zusammenarbeit von Bund und Ländern in Angelegenheiten der Europäischen Union* (EUZBLG), passed in March 1993, specifies in more detail the cooperation between the Federation and the Länder in European affairs. The full text can be found in Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, *Europäische Union: Die Vertragstexte von Maastricht mit den deutschen Begleitgesetzen* (Bonn: Europa Union Verlag, 1998), pp.280-284.

²⁴ Florian Gerster, "Die Europaministerkonferenz der deutschen Länder: Aufgaben - Themen - Selbstverständnis," *Integration*, Vol.16, No.2 (April 1993), p.61.

Presidents of the Länder. At the same time, the missions of the Länder in Bonn now assume European affairs as one of their main responsibilities, while the information offices of the Länder in Brussels are an integral instrument of each Land's efforts to pass and to secure information and to promote itself. Although the Federal Economics Ministry is chiefly responsible for supplying the Länder with all relevant EU initiatives, clearly the German regions do not rely on just one informational source. In sum, the new Article 23 of the Basic Law has in the context of Germany's federal institutions led to the creation of a comprehensive system of sub-national - or third level - political activities (*Politik der 'Dritten Ebene'*).

Constitutional change created opportunities for additional independent activities of the Länder. Together with the Europe Article, the new Article 24/1a of the Basic Law was adopted to allow the Länder to transfer sovereign powers to cross-border institutions subject to Federal Government consent, and in so far as the Länder have the competence in the given policy field.²⁵ This has increased the scope for more independent interregional activities particularly on the part of the Länder that are situated on Germany's eastern border. First, it has given more prominence to the phenomenon of Euroregions, the cross-border associations between municipalities and regional administrations. Formed under public law and independent of the European Union, Euroregions have been common in the West Länder since the 1960s. In the 1990s, Euroregions became a natural model for cross-border cooperation in the East.²⁶ Second, common projects with areas outside the EU started to take place under the framework of the INTERREG-II and PHARE programs whereby both EU and non-EU regions became eligible for Community funds. The INTERREG initiative, designed to facilitate cross-border cooperation, has contributed toward the efforts to improve regional networks and infrastructure, especially in the border areas of the former GDR.

Interregional cooperation is just one of several Länder international initiatives that does not focus on exclusively economic issues. Other areas within the competence of the Länder have been included in cross-border projects. More specifically, in the case of Germany's eastern border, cooperation with regional and state representatives in Poland and the Czech Republic have focused on environmental issues, emergency aid and disaster control, the state of border crossings and education.²⁷

²⁵ Rudolf Hrbek, "The Effects of European Integration on German Federalism," in Jeffery (ed.), p.230.

²⁶ Ann Kennard, "The German-Polish Border as a Model for East-West European Regional Integration: Trans-Border Co-operation on the Oder-Neisse Line," *German Politics*, Vol.4, No.1 (April 1995), p.145.

²⁷ Krämer, p.252.

Greater involvement of the Länder in EU matters has naturally made European policymaking a routine part of the regional administrative structures. Although at the Länder level the European Union is still largely a matter for political elites, regional parliaments, civil servants and many local organizations are now regularly involved in current European affairs. The visibility of the Länder as political actors in Europe has undeniably increased since Maastricht. Along with this trend, the Länder governments have widened their range of parallel paradiplomatic activities.²⁸ These obviously focus on areas of Länder competence and most often take the form of travel and cultural diplomacy by the Länder Minister Presidents. Their established contacts and frequent visits abroad serve specific economic, functional and strategic interests of the Land they represent. Again, this is especially relevant in the wider context of relations with the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) and in the more specific context of the prospective eastern enlargement of the EU. Numerous partnerships with the CEECs have been established for the purpose of economic cooperation. For clear geopolitical and historical reasons, the Länder closest to the ex-communist states have been most active in their paradiplomatic efforts with the CEECs. Today, these connections span a whole range of topics, including for instance migration and refugee policies, student exchanges and police cooperation.

In turn, the enhanced involvement of the German regions in European policymaking has been accompanied by more organized lobbying activities both in Bonn and in Brussels. After all, in addition to the Bundesrat, the official channel of political influence, today the Länder possess a number of unofficial means through which they can potentially influence EU policymaking. At home, lobbying focuses on direct contacts with the Federal Government and with members of the Bundestag. The Bavarian CSU, a former partner in the Bonn coalition and directly represented in the Bundestag, is particularly well predisposed in this respect. At the EU level, lobbying activities target primarily the members of the Commission or members of the Council of Ministers. In Strasbourg the Länder are also able to further their interests with the members of the European Parliament. On top of all this, the Länder can exert marginal influence through the Committee of Regions. This official political body, designed after Maastricht to give a more decisive voice to the sub-national level in the European Union, has yet to be very effective in its advisory role to the Commission.²⁹ Consequently, the Länder tend to rely on established domestic, international and independent EU level contacts as targets for lobbying.

²⁸ Michele Knodt, "Auswärtiges Handeln der deutschen Länder," in Wolf-Dieter Eberwein and Karl Kaiser (eds.), *Deutschlands neue Aussenpolitik Band 4: Institutionen und Ressourcen* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1998), p. 161.

²⁹ During its first period in office (1994 - 1997) The Committee of Regions did not realize the ambitious hopes of the Länder for a third regional chamber at the EU level. In the future this

The empowerment of the collective voice of the Bundesrat in European policy has clearly opened up other venues for regional political involvement in Europe. In essence, Article 23 of the Basic Law had a certain trickle-down effect on each individual Land. In some cases, most notably in the *neue* Länder, the post-Maastricht changes institutionalized European policymaking. In other regions, most clearly in Bavaria, these developments gave rise to a more forceful expression of particular regional concerns and goals vis-a-vis the European Union.³⁰ In all cases however, the Länder are now better equipped and able to define and present their own European interests. With the extension of Germany's sub-national level to the supranational politics of the EU, each Land has acquired an added European element that further distinguishes its regional identity.

The 'Sinatra Doctrine' of the Länder and Eastern Enlargement of the EU

The issue of greater regional identity naturally raises several questions about potential tensions between the collective political process and the views of the individual Länder. The competition among the Länder for resources, for extra transfers or for their specific geo-political interests in the context of the European Union is mitigated by an institutional framework that encourages gradual solutions by the way of incremental compromise-seeking and compromise-making. Thus, in real political terms of power and effective influence, the 'Sinatra Doctrine' of the Länder may not be of great consequence. This would appear especially true with regard to the Länder involvement in the European Union. Most obviously, the participation of the Länder in EU matters is fairly recent and their official political impact is largely indirect - via the Bundesrat. Furthermore, Germany has traditionally perceived the European project as generally unproblematic. Since Herbert Wehner, a prominent Social Democrat, spelled out his party's acceptance of Adenauer's western commitment to the EC, there has been a general consensus on European integration among Germany's principal political parties.³¹ The Länder, led by different parties or coalitions of parties, should in principal aspire to the same kind of consensus.

body is also likely to remain only marginally, if at all, influential. See Rudolf Hrbek, "Der Ausschuss der Regionen," Werner Weidenfeld and Wolfgang Wessels (eds.) *Jahrbuch der Europäischen Integration 1997/98*, (Bonn: Institut für Europäische Politik, 1998), pp.105-110.

³⁰ Chapter 4 addresses the question of Bavarian Euro-skepticism in more detail.

³¹ Timothy Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (London: Vintage, 1994), p.32.

Yet, as Roland Sturm argues, the Länder governments have with increasing frequency taken decisions irrespective of party-political interests, emphasizing rather local self-interest.³² Agreement is doubtless more difficult to achieve among sixteen different actors that are not only politically but also economically and geographically diverse. Furthermore, agreement may be equally difficult to achieve between the Federation and the Länder. It is only natural that differences will emerge. Even if common positions on most European issues have generally been attainable, the different Länder have tended to emphasize at times contradictory issues both in and beyond the Bundesrat. Indeed, the ability to set and to pursue a specific European agenda has arguably been one of the key tools of the various individual Länder in their respective attempts to either benefit from or influence European policymaking.

The issue of prospective eastern enlargement offers a good example of the limits of the institutionalized political process that fails to capture clearly the views of the different German regions. Enlargement has been on the agenda of the Bundesrat since the constitutional changes after Maastricht. It has also been a topic frequently entertained by several Minister Presidents and their governments. As I show in the next three chapters, in some Länder, eastern enlargement of the EU has received substantial attention while in others it has been a less important topic. Similarly, in some Länder, enlargement has been somewhat more controversial than in others. One principal cleavage seems to be geopolitical, running between the East and West Länder. A similar but hardly identical cleavage is more purely geographical passing between the Länder bordering the CEECs and those not on the border. Yet, other divisions are more political and economic distinguishing the Länder with particularly strong commercial, cultural and historical ties to the CEECs.

In the following two chapters I address the pronouncements by regional political elites and the actions of the Länder governments in relation to eastern enlargement of the EU in more detail. I examine the views and actions in selected individual East and West Länder. In order to assess the extent of a 'Sinatra Doctrine' in the case of eastern enlargement, I also pay special attention to the independent activities of the Länder, their lobbying and the context in which this is a relevant topic. I particularly look at issues linked to enlargement as a sign of support or as an indicator of demands for concessions in the process of negotiations. In assessing the differences between the views of two East and two West Länder, I examine the various motivations of each Land as a result of its geopolitical, economic and historical legacies. I also address the role of party politics and political personalities, the character of inter-Länder ideological differences, divergent socio-economic conditions, and the function of local lobbying groups.

³² Roland Sturm, "Party Competition and the Federal System: The Lehmbruch Hypothesis Revisited," Jeffery (ed.), p.213.

Next, I consider the collective voice of the Länder and the extent to which the institutional structure has managed to bring together the different attitudes and cross-Länder political agenda related to enlargement. I highlight in particular the tension between the attitudes of the individual Länder and the political process and the corresponding institutional constraints they face. While the Länder have consistently maintained their political commitment to enlargement, and are likely to continue to do so, they disagree on concrete policy issues linked to the widening of the EU.

The analysis of attitudes toward eastern enlargement of the EU offers an important example of how each Land's pursuit of goals is principally conditioned by its increasing sense of local self-interest. The contrast is especially apparent between the old West and the new East Länder. The evidence reveals some clear differences and several nuanced divisions. Nonetheless, since the goal of enlargement has already prompted distinct reactions in the various Länder based on their regional interests, it is likely to become increasingly problematic as the date for accession of new member states becomes official. While, 'doing it my way' may be rather difficult given the limited powers of the Länder, it could bear some fruit. After all, the institutional pressure for some basic cross-Länder solidarity may be increasingly difficult to maintain, unless all the Länder have their key interests properly represented.

Chapter 3

EU ENLARGEMENT AND THE EAST LÄNDER: THE CASES OF SAXONY AND BRANDENBURG

This chapter explores the views on enlargement in two East Länder. First, I outline the political and economic background in Saxony and Brandenburg. Next, I explain in what ways these Länder are in a unique position vis-a-vis the prospective eastern enlargement of the European Union. Finally, I examine the basic perceptions of and concerns about the widening of the EU to the east. I argue that the extension of the European Union to the CEECs has been a particularly salient issue since the early days of the whole process. Given their political experience over the past five decades and the recent transformation in reunified Germany, both Saxony and Brandenburg have repeatedly emphasized the vital importance of eastern enlargement. Each has pursued its own mini-Ostpolitik by calling on the EU to widen.

However, while the socio-economic considerations, historical legacies and current political leadership all point to the merits of the eastern expansion, the very same factors have also led to some real tensions and problems that accompany this step. Nonetheless, the political support for enlargement remains strong, in part because the whole process has been elite-driven and few clearly definable interests are bound to lose out. In short, eastern enlargement has been perceived as a largely beneficial project that must be handled sensitively and in direct engagement with Central and Eastern Europe.

Background

Brandenburg and Saxony are two medium-sized Länder. Each holds 4 votes in the Bundesrat.³³ Both have emerged from the post-unification developments with a strong sense of regional identity that goes back several centuries. Brandenburg was a core part of Prussia and the sense of being distinct remains despite its incorporation in the highly centralized East German state. For instance, in the 1996

³³ The four large Länder (Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg, North-Rhine Westphalia, Lower Saxony) have 6 votes, while the four small Länder (Saarland, Bremen, Hamburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania) possess 3 votes each. Five other Länder have 4 votes, while Hesse is the only Land with 5 votes.

referendum on the fusion of Brandenburg and Berlin into a single Land, almost two-thirds of Brandenburg's voters rejected the proposal, fearing centralization and domination from Berlin. In a recent poll assessing the identity of the local population, 55 percent identified themselves as German, 38 percent as 'Brandenburger', while only 4 percent said they were European.³⁴

Saxony has perhaps an even stronger sense of regional identity with its long history of independent existence. Labeled *Freistaat Sachsen*, Saxony emerged in a strong position to assert and defend its local interests despite the unitary GDR years. By virtue of its initiatives and independent policies, it has been nicknamed the "Bavaria of the East" - reflecting Bavaria's exceptional position in Germany's politics and in turn Saxony's special role among the other East Länder.

Politically, the two Länder differ in their dominant political parties. The issues they face, the problems and their remedies are however remarkably similar given the common past. Since unification, Brandenburg has been governed by the Social Democrats (SPD) headed by Manfred Stolpe. Although the SPD gained an absolute majority in the 1994 state elections, there were two independent ministers in the regional government. One of independent Ministers was Hans Otto Bräutigam, responsible for Justice and Federal and European Affairs.

Saxon politics, on the other hand, have been dominated by the Christian Democrats (CDU) and the personality of Kurt Biedenkopf, the former General Secretary of the CDU and a longtime rival of Helmut Kohl. Biedenkopf is, in many ways, the key to understanding Saxony's role in today's Germany.³⁵ For almost a decade the Christian Democrats have led the state which was one of the traditional strongholds of the Social Democrats in pre-War years. In fact, Saxony was in 1999 the only Land in the whole of Germany where the CDU possessed an absolute majority. Yet, only 20 percent of the population are Catholic and although Dresden once used to be a strong Protestant center, most of the state's population today has no strong religious affiliation. The secularization, not just of Saxony but of all the East Länder, is one of the many legacies of the forty-year long communist rule. Indeed, it is principally Biedenkopf's personal appeal coupled with generally strong anti-communist feeling that make Saxony unique.³⁶

In EU matters both Saxony and Brandenburg are part of the new block of East German Länder. Together with the other East Länder, they have pursued the common agenda of maintaining and in fact increasing their aid in the form of

³⁴ *Märkische Allgemeine*, 1 June 1996.

³⁵ Interview with Stephane Beemelmans, Personal Assistant to the Head of the *Sächsische Staatskanzlei*, Dresden, 7 December, 1998.

³⁶ Leipzig, in particular, but also the other urban centers in Saxony were the scenes of the strongest anti-communist resistance in the days of the *Wende* - the political revolutions of 1989.

Structural Funds under Objective One. At the same time, they have called for extra help with the transformation of the agricultural sector. Specifically, in the context of the Agenda 2000, they demanded a halt in the decline of subsidies to large farms which were typical of the GDR and survive to date. Institutionally, Brandenburg and Saxony have tried to gradually become more visible both in Bonn and in Brussels. While lacking the resources and institutional tradition of the West Länder, they have nonetheless often successfully defended and asserted their particular local interests. Saxony, in particular, has been known for its special approach to the EU matters. Generally warm relations between the Commission and the East Länder soured somewhat for Saxony after the dispute over its subsidy to a Volkswagen car plant that, according to the Commission, defied the EU competition rules.³⁷ Similarly, Kurt Biedenkopf has on several occasions expressed his skepticism about the launch of EMU and in the end Saxony did not support the Bundesrat's resolution on the introduction of the euro.

However, while the Saxon stance was particularly distinct, the East Länder in general, and Brandenburg and Saxony in particular, have followed their own 'Sinatra Doctrine' that was not solely confined to Structural Funds and other EU subsidies. Namely, the two Länder have pursued their own mini-Ostpolitik by emphasizing the importance and the merits of eastern enlargement and the inclusion of East Central and Eastern Europe into the European Union. Drawing on recent experience and their immediate connection to this part of the Continent, they began to stress the issue of enlargement as one the key objectives for the Union shortly after unification, thus adding their regional slant to the wider EU agenda.

Unique Position vis-a-vis Eastern Enlargement

In September 1997, just a few months before the official launch of the enlargement negotiations with the five Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) and Cyprus, Bundesrat named both Brandenburg and Saxony as the official Länder representatives on the EU working group 'enlargement' in Brussels. On March 30 1998, Hans Otto Bräutigam, Brandenburg's Minister of Justice and European Affairs, took part in the political opening of the enlargement talks in Brussels as the official representative of the Bundesrat.³⁸ The East Länder, and Brandenburg and Saxony specifically, have taken up the issue of eastern enlargement of the EU with a fervor that differentiates them from many of the other German regions.

³⁷ *Teilungsfolgen Materialsammlung zum Streit um staatliche Beihilfe an die Volkswagen AG für ein Investitionsvorhaben im Freistaat Sachsen*, Sächsische Staatskanzlei, Dresden, 1996.

³⁸ *Brandenburg Landtag-Drucksache 2/5167* (Grosse Anfrage 52).

Brandenburg's and Saxony's unique perspective toward the prospective eastern enlargement of the European Union stems from two principal factors. First, the two Länder, formerly part of the GDR, formed a part of the political East. Prior to the Wende in 1989 they were economically tied to the rest of the Soviet block and at the same time represented one of its most industrialized areas. Saxony had an especially long tradition as an industrial stronghold. Before the Second World War it ranked very high among Germany's most developed regions. After the War, and following the division of Europe into separate power blocks, Brandenburg and Saxony continued to exist in a centralized East German state. The GDR's trade pattern focused almost exclusively on the communist world. So did its cultural, social and travel activities. Conversely, when Brandenburg and Saxony emerged as constitutive units of an enlarged Federal Germany in 1990, they had just come out of more than forty years of complete dependence on the COMECON and on the political and military structures of the East.

Despite the fundamental changes that followed after unification, the importance of economic ties and political contacts did not suddenly vanish. While trade with the other former COMECON countries fell dramatically, today its share is still relatively high: accounting for around 30-40 percent of the foreign trade of all the East Länder.³⁹ Imports include mainly basic materials, such as oil and gas, and exports are heavily dominated by manufactured and finished products. Similarly, political contacts with Central and Eastern Europe have intensified since unification. New political relationships have replaced the old and largely forced connections. In addition to the binding past, the East Länder, in contrast to the West Länder, could also share their experience from the transition process. Their advice, help and cooperation are therefore particularly valuable to those countries that are only now beginning to negotiate their entry into the EU - something that the East Länder acquired automatically with unification.

Second, the special position of Brandenburg and Saxony in relation to future enlargement arises directly from the geographic position of the two Länder. Together they share the longest stretch of Germany's eastern border with Poland and the Czech Republic, two of the most important candidate countries for EU membership.⁴⁰ The same border is also the outer frontier of the European Union. Both Brandenburg and Saxony are thus in a special position both within East Germany and the EU. Although

³⁹ Krämer, "The Transfederal Relations of the East German Länder: The Case of Brandenburg," p.246.

⁴⁰ The other two Länder on Germany's eastern border are Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania in the north and Bavaria in the south (see the map of the Federal Republic of Germany). Of the four Länder Saxony has the longest border: 566 kilometers (km). Brandenburg's frontier with Poland is 250 km long.

they face many similar issues and problems to the other East Länder, their cases are unique due to the immediate proximity of Poland and the Czech Republic.

There are, however, differences between the two Länder. On the one hand, the border between Brandenburg and Poland is effectively new and was only finally confirmed as Germany's eastern boundary during the 2+4 negotiations in the run-up to German unification. The tension between Brandenburg, and Germany as a whole, and Poland goes back several decades. As a result of the Second World War Brandenburg lost about 30 percent of its territory located east of the Oder and Neisse rivers. Following the post-War division into two power blocks, the divide between the GDR and Poland was denoted as the "friendship border" (*Freundschaftsgrenze*) and prior to the rise of the Solidarity in Poland, it enjoyed a moderate easing in tension and an increase in travel and traffic. However, the border became open in the western sense only after unification.

Although marked by the stain of the German occupation of the Sudetenland in 1938 and the expulsion of the ethnic Germans by Czechoslovakia following WWII, the border and the relations between Saxony and the Czech Republic are seen as largely politically unproblematic. First, Saxony and the Czech Republic share one of the oldest and most stable borders in Europe that has now for over 500 years separated the two parts by the natural divide of the Erzgebirge. The same is hardly true about Poland and Brandenburg. Second, unlike on the virtually non-existent frontier between East Germany and Poland where the cross-border traffic was extremely limited, the border between the GDR and Czechoslovakia enjoyed a comparatively liberal rule. There was a considerable flow of traffic across the border, which has continued to soar in recent years. Today, one major task facing both Länder, and Brandenburg in particular, is the construction of trans-European road networks connecting Western with Central and Eastern Europe that the EU sees as vital in the context of future enlargement.

These factors play an important role in the assessment of the situation on the border where developments have been further complicated by the persistent problems between the Federal Republic and the Czech Republic, and more specifically between the Sudeten Germans in Bavaria and the Czechs. As I discuss the latter in the next chapter, Saxony's relations with its eastern neighbors were comparatively much less problematic.

In sum, the two Länder were in a unique position to take up eastern enlargement of the EU as an important political objective and to press their particular perspective on the issue. This reflected their historical background and their geopolitical and socio-economic interests that in turn continue to affect the conditions required for an acceptable enlargement in the future. Today a general political will to push for enlargement mixes with specific functional and sectoral interests that have so far helped mold the views of Saxony and Brandenburg on the prospective enlargement of the EU.

Between Strong Commitment and Wider Issues

The speed with which both Brandenburg and Saxony took up the issue of eastern enlargement of the EU is particularly striking, and distinguishes the two Länder from most of their western partners. It also illustrates some of the complexities of the potential effects of the EU expansion. This is notably true of Brandenburg whose strong stake in enlargement has to be underpinned by a sensitive approach to neighboring Poland, the largest and - both politically and economically - arguably the most important state in the whole process.

Since the Land's emergence on the western political scene, eastern enlargement became one of the principal points on Brandenburg's European agenda. Manfred Stolpe and Hans Otto Bräutigam took a very personal interest in the issue and have consistently called for a quick inclusion of the CEECs into the European Union. Importantly, these calls have explicitly left the question of candidates open to everyone who ultimately fulfills the criteria laid down in Copenhagen. Membership should be open to all countries in "East Central and Eastern Europe", a point that Stolpe stresses frequently.⁴¹ It is in Brandenburg's commercial and broader strategic interests to widen 'the stability zone' of the EU as far to the east as possible. The dangers of doing otherwise are clear. The most recent example includes the recurrent Russian economic crisis and its repercussions on the CEECs. What happens between the Oder and Moscow matters not only because of Brandenburg's trade relations - the exports to the CEECs account for 24 percent of the total - but also in a more physical sense. Instability in Central and Eastern Europe poses a potential security threat. While Potsdam is only some 360 kilometers (km) from Prague, 620 km from Warsaw and even 1,850 km from Moscow, a number of western cities seem and in fact are further away: London 1,020 km, Paris 1,090 km and Madrid 2,490 km.

In addition to the obvious economic and broader political benefits, there is a strong moral element that has underscored Brandenburg's attitude towards the CEECs. First, the pervasive sense of duty was well summed up by Stolpe in the early days of the enlargement process:

"Especially we in Brandenburg and in the other new Länder, that by joining the Federal Republic of Germany also became part of the EC, see our duty. Without 'Charter 77' in Czechoslovakia, without Solidarity in Poland, without the opening of the iron curtain in Hungary, Gorbachev's action would not have broken up the Soviet power block so quickly and the political change in the GDR in the fall of 1989 would not have been conceivable... Its forerunners' role in the introduction of democracy in Europe east of

⁴¹ Interview with Dr Petra Erler, Head of the EU Department, Brandenburg Mission to the Federation, Bonn, 14 October 1998.

the unilateral iron curtain gives these countries a moral right to be admitted to the European Union that after the Maastricht Treaty sees itself as a community of democratic nations."⁴²

Two aspects of the quote are particularly worth emphasizing since they shed good light on the East German understanding of enlargement and the EU in general. One is the sense of a strong moral commitment to the CEECs based on the historical developments that resulted in the fall of the Berlin Wall. The internal opposition in the other communist countries was crucial in the run-up to the *Wende*. Therefore, these countries have the same right to become part of the Union as the former GDR; "Europe does not end on the Oder..." This is true not just of the common historical and cultural legacies, but is true principally for the current political developments. Hence, the CEECs naturally belong in the EU. Second, the European Union is viewed as the only legitimate framework that can guarantee stable and secure development on the whole Continent. Brandenburg's perception of the EU is intimately tied to its own experience whereby the Community was one of the key facilitators of the political and economic changes in the Land. In short, the ethical obligation to help the CEECs is accompanied by a similar set of arguments that were evoked at the time of the Spanish and Portuguese accession in 1986: only membership in the Community can ensure a democratic, stable and ultimately prosperous future.

The moral reasoning has another dimension. Based on Brandenburg's experience, solidarity plays an important role. Between 1991-93 Brandenburg received 500 million ECU as a 'special case' for Structural Funding. Today it qualifies for more Structural Funds under Objective One.⁴³ The European Union has obviously performed an important role in Brandenburg's transition. Stolpe envisioned that the EU could carry out similar tasks in the countries aspiring to join. In that same speech from 1993, he sketched out a concrete proposal. Stating that "[t]he resources of the Community for East Central and Eastern Europe should already now be used with a view to full membership in the future", he proposed the creation of a so-called "Transformation Fund". Drawing a parallel, Stolpe thought that such an additional source of money would support the process of restructuring in the countries with Europe Agreements in similar ways and in similar order as the Cohesion Fund used in the poorer states on top of the Structural Funds. While he recognized the problems of sharing scarce resources amongst a greater number of states, referring in particular to difficulties with distribution and equity that have

⁴² Manfred Stolpe, "EG muss Jahrtausendchance einer Osterweiterung wahrnehmen," *Presse Dienst Brandenburg*, 5 November 1993.

⁴³ For the period 1994-99 Brandenburg was assigned 2.3 billion ECU in Structural Funding.

plagued Germany since unification, Stolpe stressed that not all options were exhausted. In his view, the prospective accession of the comparably better-off EFTA states could in fact enlarge the pool of Community funds.⁴⁴

The comparison with the Cohesion Fund is interesting and important in itself as it highlights the political salience of eastern enlargement for Brandenburg. Although the Cohesion Fund was in part set up to foster further social and economic equalization within the EU following the Maastricht Treaty, its principal rationale was to help the poorer countries with convergence for EMU purposes.⁴⁵ As much as EMU represented a clear political objective for the Union, Brandenburg saw eastern enlargement in the same category of goals. Manfred Stolpe reiterated this strategic importance shortly before the Luxembourg Meeting of the European Council in December 1997: "[t]he door must stay open to all who have been given the promise of accession. I plead therefore quite emphatically that the opening conference on enlargement works out a detailed timetable... It would be terrible if the citizens of Central and Eastern Europe had the feeling that the European Union does not stand by its word."⁴⁶ Clearly, enlargement to the east has been one of Brandenburg's most important priorities and the Land leadership has accorded it corresponding attention.⁴⁷

Yet, Brandenburg is also in a delicate position vis-a-vis enlargement because of its immediate proximity to Poland. East Germany is now in the EU and a party to the Schengen agreement. In addition to the negative historical legacies and cultural differences, Poland and Brandenburg are now separated by new barriers. These encompass very tangible economic restrictions, consisting of tariffs and quotas imposed on specific products, and less apparent constraints, resulting from socio-economic and environmental differences.

The attempt to launch the so-called Stolpe Plan in 1992 illustrates the need for dialogue and sensitivity in relations between Poland and Brandenburg.⁴⁸ The aim of this project was to support economic development on both sides of the border but it

⁴⁴ EFTA stands for European Free Trade Association. Three of its members - Austria, Sweden and Finland - joined the European Union in January 1995. Sweden and Austria are today net contributors to the EU budget. I refer to the 1995 enlargement in more detail in chapter 5.

⁴⁵ David Allen, "Cohesion and Structural Adjustment," Helen Wallace and William Wallace (eds.), *Policy-Making in the European Union* (Oxford: OUP, 1997), p.218.

⁴⁶ Speech by Manfred Stolpe, at the European Summit of Regions and Towns, Amsterdam, 16 May 1997.

⁴⁷ Senior civil servants both in Bonn and in Potsdam emphasized in their interviews the importance that Manfred Stolpe assigned to eastern enlargement shortly after unification.

⁴⁸ *Berliner Zeitung*, 24 July 1991.

was heavily criticized by the Poles, and ultimately failed. The main reason was that the proposed economic zone very closely resembled the pre-WWII map of Germany when the Polish territory was part of the Third Reich.

Despite such setbacks, cross-border cooperation has increased at least in institutional terms. Today there are three Euroregions that operate on both sides of the border - Vidriana, Spree-Neisse-Bober and Neisse. More importantly, Brandenburg has refused to place "extra conditions on the admission to the European Union, as the Bavarian Minister President Stoiber demanded them in relation to Poland and the Czech Republic."⁴⁹ I discuss these conditions in the next chapter, but suffice it to say that unlike Bavaria, Brandenburg does not threaten to veto the entry of these states into the EU. It does not raise property demands on behalf of the ethnic Germans expelled from post-WWII Poland, nor does it claim their *Heimatrecht*: the right to domicile in western Poland today. While a considerable number of expellees (*Vertriebene*) did end up in the GDR and in Brandenburg specifically, they were largely assimilated with the rest of the population. More significantly, in subsequent years, the one-party rule and the communist ideology that accepted the post-War settlement effectively silenced any such potential demands. Today, Bavaria is the only Land with a political voice backing the expellees. Brandenburg has consistently denounced these calls.

As one of the senior local civil servants poignantly put it, "the relations between Poland and Germany and Poland and Brandenburg have not been so good in two hundred years."⁵⁰ In reality this means that the political climate between Poland and Germany has become "less emotional and more matter-of-fact... with the collapse of the communist dictatorship it has become superfluous to keep alive the old, overcome enemy pictures."⁵¹

The countries share two principal common goals, and Brandenburg plays a crucial role in both. First, Germany actively supports the membership of Poland out of its own well-understood interests and at the same time Poland wants to join the EU. Second, both countries wish to normalize their relations and increased cross-border cooperation represents the first step.

Still, there are several important obstacles that must be overcome before the barriers between Brandenburg and Poland begin to fall and Germany's eastern

⁴⁹ Statement by Hans Otto Bräutigam, Landtag Brandenburg, *Plenarprotokoll*, 88. Sitzung. 25. Juli 1998, p.7172.

⁵⁰ Interview with Dr Jochen Bethkenhagen, Head of the International and European Affairs Department, Ministry of Justice and Federal and European Affairs, Potsdam, 3 December 1998.

⁵¹ Hans Otto Bräutigam, "Im Osten der Europäischen Union: Aufgaben und Chancen," *Pressedienst Brandenburg*, 24 November 1994.

neighbor joins the Union. Brandenburg's concerns vary and they become more acute as the prospects of accession approach.

The apparent physical worries include the situation on the border itself. In 1994 the Land leadership announced: "[o]n border crossings to Poland the pile-ups of vehicles have reached unbearable proportions."⁵² On the one hand, it calls for further common projects such as building of modern border-crossings and improving the poor network of roads. On the other hand, it naturally raises concerns within the local population. Popular fears about smuggling, drug trafficking and illegal migrants have grown. Consequently, the anxiety about enlargement and an even more open border has risen.

More generally, the cross-border tension touches directly on broader issues, particularly trade and labor mobility. In the run up to the Meeting of the European Council in Luxembourg in December 1997, Bräutigam tried to avert the public apprehensions about further opening of the existing market beyond Brandenburg's eastern border:

"The countries that will be invited to accession negotiations form a large market with more than 60 million people. That is especially interesting to Brandenburg's small and-medium enterprises. When you look at the development of German exports, you will realize that the biggest rates of growth are in Eastern Europe. After all, an entrepreneur from Frankfurt on the Oder sees more opportunities to export 50 kilometers further east than in Portugal. That also creates jobs."⁵³

The appeal of more job prospects is promising especially considering the evolution of the unemployment rate that in Brandenburg rose from 7.4 percent at the end of 1990 to 14,2 percent in 1995, and has continued to hover around the 15 percent mark since then.

However, the prospects of outsiders taking up some of these new jobs are much less attractive. Free movement of labor is Brandenburg's one true worry linked to eastern enlargement. Bräutigam affirms the concern, but also suggests that some compromise will be worked out in the future: "I have some ideas about the time horizon for restrictions. These must then be negotiated. In certain areas I can imagine transition periods of about eight to ten years."

While Agenda 2000, the Commission's blueprint in preparation for the next wave of new members, received at times a cool response in the different West Länder, Brandenburg did not find the proposals especially controversial. Its key goal, like that of the other new Länder and widely believed to be achievable, was to

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Interview with Hans Otto Bräutigam in *Tagesspiegel*, 20 July 1997.

secure "the continuation of overall Objective One support."⁵⁴ The second principal goal was to stop or even reverse the declining financial support from the Commission to the large farms in the state. This, in fact, was again an aim shared by the other East Länder. Although these subsidies are expected to gradually diminish, this is likely to occur at a slow pace. In any case, while in 1995 4.8 percent of the work force still worked in agriculture, this figure has been gradually falling. Without strong lobbying power or backing by the leading political party, which in the case of the SPD is unlikely, the farmers in Brandenburg have little chance of opposing the enlargement process. The lack of family farming and the short tradition of dependence on the CAP distinguish Brandenburg and other East Länder from their western counterparts. Consequently, this aspect of eastern enlargement is subject to less scrutiny.

Saxony largely shares Brandenburg's views and concerns although inevitably there are some differences that stem primarily from the Land's geography and its desire to stand out and not to comply with Brussels' interventionism at all times.⁵⁵ Fundamentally, Saxony's commitment to enlargement echoes the same kind of moral responsibility. Speaking in Prague in April 1995, Kurt Biedenkopf put it succinctly: "[t]he election of the Polish Pope showed the indivisibility of Christian Europe." It took eleven years to achieve this indivisibility in practice. The same goes for the indivisibility of democratic Europe: "[w]hen the Czech Republic soon joins the EU, only then will the new Europe ratify what before went without saying."⁵⁶

The importance of its own mini-Ostpolitik is reaffirmed directly in the Saxon constitution: "The Land supports cross-border regional cooperation that is aimed at the expansion of good neighborly relations, at the growth of Europe and at peaceful development in the world."⁵⁷ Saxony, situated on the outer fringes of the EU, understands the importance of fostering all those economic, social and cultural transnational ties that are bound to become stronger as enlargement approaches. As with Brandenburg this has two dimensions again. First, there is the immediate proximity of the Czech Republic and Poland.⁵⁸ Second, in a more general sense, Moscow, the Baltic states and most other former Soviet satellites are in fact closer to Dresden than Lisbon, Athens or Dublin. There is a genuine concern that the best way to secure a stable future is to actively engage and support all the CEECs

⁵⁴ *Position der Landesregierung Brandenburg zur Fortsetzung der EU*, Potsdam, 11 February 1997.

⁵⁵ Interview with Stephane Beemelmans.

⁵⁶ Kurt Biedenkopf, "Dimensionen der Zukunft - das historische und das neue Europa," *Sächsische Staatsregierung Pressemitteilung*, 28 April 1995.

⁵⁷ Article 12 of the Saxon constitution.

⁵⁸ Saxony's border with Poland is short and of little significance for transport.

aspiring to join the EU.⁵⁹ Already, less than a week after the German unification, Kurt Biedenkopf emphasized this Saxon role of a 'bridge' to the east: "We have good neighbors among the Länder in the west. But we also have neighbors in Europe: Poland and the CSFR [The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic]. Many common interests connect us with both... We have the task together with Brussels, in cooperation with the Federal Republic of Germany to foster conditions under which this partnership can develop."⁶⁰

In more concrete terms, the establishment of Euroregions, based on local and often very grassroots initiatives for cooperation and financed by the EU's PHARE and INTERREG programs, has greatly facilitated extensive cross-border activities. There are four different Euroregions that cut across Saxony's eastern boundary.⁶¹ The Saxon *Staatskanzlei* has actively encouraged the various public and private cooperative efforts that take place on the border. Annually, it contributes a modest, but nonetheless important, sum of 300,000 DM to projects carried out in the context of Euroregions. These range from symbolic cultural exchanges to more tangible activities that focus on the environment, transport, infrastructure and the regional economies. In addition, the *Staatskanzlei* is closely involved in larger and longer-term cross-border schemes. The best recent example from the present is the attempt to complete the highway connection between Prague and Dresden.⁶²

A further interesting caveat must be made about cross-border cooperation: the old ties are being revitalized in a completely new political environment. While the former COMECON connections lost their old importance immediately after the fall of the communist regimes, they also became less attractive especially to the CEECs. Shortly after 1989 in most ex-communist states there was a great deal of euphoria about 'going west'. This was also true of new official economic and political connections. For instance, training programs, seminars and exchanges of civil servants or other public employees organized in West German cities, such as Cologne, Munich or Bonn were infinitely more interesting to people coming from the CEECs with their previously limited opportunities to travel. This is now changing, as travel is no longer constrained and the West has less money to dedicate to such links. Conversely, old contacts between Dresden and Prague or Potsdam and

⁵⁹ Interview with Dr Cornelia Hensel, EU Department, Saxon Mission to the Federation, 29 October 1998.

⁶⁰ Government statement by Kurt Biedenkopf before the Landtag of Saxony, Dresden, 8 November 1990.

⁶¹ Euroregion Neisse includes Saxony, Brandenburg and Poland, Elbe-Labe and Erzgebirge are common to the Czech Republic and Saxony and Egrenzis also includes Bavaria.

⁶² Interview with Juttar Seidel, Eastern European Department, *Sächsische* Staatskanzlei, Dresden, 7 December 1998.

Bratislava are picking up again and gaining in importance. Against this new political and economic backdrop, there has been a gradual normalization of relations between the East Länder and the CEECs.

Saxony's broader interests in eastern enlargement of the EU include the potential economic benefits of new open markets. As the most industrialized and most populous (4.8 million) East German Land, Saxony established its own commercial office in Prague with the aim of using it as a springboard for cooperation and for access to markets. It is designed to specifically cater the needs of Saxony's enterprises and their contacts.⁶³

One of the major problems in the East Länder is high unemployment. Saxony is no exception - in 1996 the jobless rate reached 16 percent. In this context, eastern enlargement may or may not be beneficial. On the one hand, it offers an abundance of potential opportunities to reduce the number of unemployed in the future. In particular, exports with the CEECs have been soaring and if further improved, they could help create additional jobs inside Saxony and the other Länder. Especially important are the old links with the CEECs that in several areas have increased. Citing a specific industry, a senior official at the European Commission responsible for industry recently argued:

"The new Länder will benefit in particular from the planned enlargement of the EU to the east, more than any other region in Europe. The East German chemical industry is in a good starting place due to its geographic position, its good knowledge about the Eastern European markets and more traditional connections to these countries. The exchange of goods with Eastern Europe is already today noticeably more intensive than the EU-average. More than 20 percent of East Germany's chemical exports after 1995 went to Russia, Poland, and the Czech Republic. The EU-average was only 6.2 percent."⁶⁴

Clearly, Saxony and its neighbors could boom and prosper again as their export-oriented industries grow at an accelerated pace. On the other hand, however, the opening of eastern markets brings up serious concerns in at least two principal ways. The first stems directly from the already mentioned disagreement with the European Commission over the Saxon subsidy to Volkswagen AG. Unless Volkswagen had received some financial boost, it would have moved part of its production line to Bratislava, the Slovak capital, thanks to much lower labor cost. Thus conceivably in the future, certain jobs may be lost in favor of cheaper locations. Second, due to Saxony's proximity, the extension of the EU internal labor market to the CEECs could prove dangerous. Saxony, like Brandenburg, has called for transitory

⁶³ *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, 8 March 1997.

⁶⁴ *Die Welt*, 20 October 1997.

arrangements in the question of the free movement of labor. These arrangements are to be negotiated during the accession process and similarly to the Spanish and Portuguese entry into the EU and should prevent the influx of cheap labor force from the CEECs over several years.

Other concerns, especially with respect to the Agenda 2000, were essentially identical to the position of Brandenburg. The goal is to continue to receive Structural Funds under Objective One in the next EU budgetary period that will run through the end of 2006. While today there is no reason to cut Structural Funding to the East Länder, in the future the demands placed upon the Union are likely to grow with more resources devoted to enlargement and corresponding cuts made elsewhere. By that time, Saxony and other regions in the area may no longer qualify for Structural Funds whose current distribution is bound to be changed by the next wave of expansion.

Agriculture is at the moment of even less significance to Saxony than it is to Brandenburg. Only 2.7 percent of the local population remain active in this declining sector. They are mostly concentrated in large farms whose size and structure were inherited from the previous regime. As a result, their stake in the CAP is a lot less direct than that of a Bavarian family farm.

Finally, the issue of the German expellees (*Vertriebene*) is of extremely marginal political importance in Saxony. There are some expellees here, but their number is small and they exercise no organized political influence. This has not changed since German reunification. The expellees were assimilated in the GDR days and they continue to be an integral part of Germany's public mainstream.

Implications and Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the views on the prospective eastern enlargement of the EU in two East German Länder: Brandenburg and Saxony. The two Länder present a particularly clear voice in relation to the widening of the European Union. While the various attitudes are marked by some nuanced differences, these reflect largely their respective geographies and histories. On the whole, there is a generally unified opinion more widely emblematic of the ex-GDR, although in this case the salience of enlargement is further highlighted by the importance of Germany's eastern border shared by both Brandenburg and Saxony.

Despite some fears about its consequences, the firm political support in favor of eastern enlargement of the EU has largely prevailed. The support has been principally elite-driven with the initiative taken up by the two Minister Presidents - Manfred Stolpe and Kurt Biedenkopf. Both underscore the strategic importance of an enlarged EU. Both stress the historical, moral and geopolitical justifications in

favor of the fast inclusion of the CEECs in the unpredictable and fragile post-Cold War Europe. Their key focus is on the need for some durable political solution to the stable future east of the Oder and of the Elbe.

The interests of Saxony and Brandenburg, however, also extend to specific functional fields of direct-cross border cooperation and more broadly to the commercial field. The gradual rediscovery of the old connections with Central and Eastern Europe in a transformed political landscape offers measurable benefits to the two Länder. Specifically, high unemployment has plagued East Germany since reunification. Indeed, the high unemployment rates in the East Länder stand in a stark contrast to the comparatively lower rates in the West Länder. The prospects of additional markets for exports seem therefore favorable. Even if eastern enlargement raises new fears about the inflow of cheap labor, on balance it guarantees both stability and offers new economic opportunities. Most importantly, there are no politically organized strong local groups, such as farmers or the post-Second World War German expellees, who could openly oppose these claims. Rather the Land governments and their articulated visions tend to dominate the political scene in these two regions.

The constant focus on cooperation with the candidate countries, as opposed to confrontation, is chiefly rhetorical. Yet it does reflect the extent to which both Brandenburg and Saxony depend on the Commission and its funding and the extent to which they view the whole European project as a cooperative undertaking with cross-national solidarity at its core. In the context of the prospective enlargement of the European Union, the two Länder have their natural concerns that they want to see met. One is the question of continued funding from Brussels, and another is a set of some initial protectionist measures against the influx of cheap labor. Yet, it is only reasonable to expect that some kind of a compromise is going to be reached on these issues. After all, Brandenburg's and Saxony's political project of mini-Ostpolitik, that has so far received strong and steady support in these Länder, will not be completed without full EU membership for those who qualify.

Chapter 4

EU ENLARGEMENT AND THE WEST LÄNDER: THE CASES OF BAVARIA AND BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG

In this chapter I explore how eastern enlargement has been perceived in two West Länder - Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria. I begin by illustrating the differences in emphasis enlargement has thus far received across Germany's regions, drawing on specific examples from different West Länder. I then focus on particular attitudes in Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria by examining their views vis-a-vis enlargement. I consider the geopolitical context and the importance of EU policymaking in the two regions and conversely the extent to which each Land has asserted its particular views toward enlargement. I expose these in the light of the Agenda 2000, in view of specific local concerns, ideological and institutional resources and with respect to particular historical legacies - namely, the impact of the Sudeten German issue in Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg's special relationship to Hungary and Romania.

The Länder in general differ in their opinions on specific issues that are linked to eastern enlargement, in particular those contained in the Commission's proposal for reforms - the Agenda 2000. Naturally, the East German regions are satisfied with the proposed sums devoted to Structural Funding under Objective One. The rural areas, on the other hand, are bound to be less pleased with the suggested cuts to the Common Agricultural Policy. The Länder that depend little on financial aid from the European Union, such as Baden-Württemberg or the city-state of Hamburg, are more inclined to oppose Germany's high budgetary contribution, while the East Länder lean closer to the present status quo. Differences also exist in regard to some operational aspects of enlargement. Bavaria, with its geographic position and its fervent opposition to intervention from Brussels, certainly does not want to see the Commission usurping more powers as the accession process gains additional momentum. Yet those Länder, fighting to gain some extra support from the new budgetary arrangements, tend to be less explicit in their criticism of the European Commission.

Enlargement obviously encompasses a significant geographical dimension. Germany's interest in 'building a European peaceful order' through enlargement of the EU is of double importance to the regions situated directly on the border.⁶⁵ It also

⁶⁵ Klaus Kinkel, "Zu den Schwerpunkten der deutschen Präsidentschaft im Rat der Europäischen Union," *Das Europaarchiv*, 25 June, 1994.

means that most of the West Länder do not have to face the immediate problems arising from cross-border traffic, poor infrastructure, crime and smuggling. On the other hand, these Länder are much less affected by the positive aspects of the proximity to the CEECs, such as border exchange and trade and the establishment of small businesses that have benefited from the fall of the iron curtain.⁶⁶

The geographically western parts of Germany do not have a fundamentally different attitude toward enlargement. The West Länder are politically committed to it. They share the general anxieties and benefits arising from it, but may have comparatively fewer specific issues they wish to address. For instance, both North-Rhine Westphalia and Lower Saxony maintain a number of bilateral partnerships and are involved in numerous regional projects in the CEECs. They have been part of common attempts to establish new forms of interregional cooperation with the CEECs. Many of these predate the launch of the accession negotiations, but are now seen as an integral part of the broader enlargement strategy encouraged by the Bundesrat. Lower Saxony maintains official partnerships with two Polish regions - Poznan and Wroclaw - and is involved in numerous other projects with the Czech Republic, Hungary and Lithuania.⁶⁷ The activities of North-Rhine Westphalia span even wider. They include frequent contacts and involvement in common projects in the Russian Federation, Latvia, Bulgaria and former Yugoslavia but also in Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic.

The numbers, however, are not everything. The importance of these external relations must be placed in the context of other contacts. North-Rhine Westphalia's principal regional partners are Flanders and Wallonia, two regions in Belgium located on Germany's western border. Together they share more than North-Rhine Westphalia may ever have in common with parts of western Poland or the Czech Republic. These regions have a common border and they cooperate together in many areas of mutual interest, such as transport, environment, culture and education.⁶⁸ Cooperation is also made easier as a result of long-established ties and a set of

⁶⁶ On positive and negative aspects of cross-border exchange see Tomasz Kaczmarek and Tadeus Strykiewicz, "Die Formen der sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Aktivität in Deutsch-Polnischen Grenzgebiet," Karl Eckart and Hartmut Kowalke (eds.), *Die Euroregionen im Osten Deutschlands* (Berlin: Duncker&Humboldt, 1997), pp.33-34 and p.44.

⁶⁷ The Declarations of Cooperation with Wroclaw and Poznan were signed on 22 and 23 April 1993 respectively.

⁶⁸ For more detail on the focus of these partnerships, see *Vereinbarung über die interregionale Kooperation zwischen dem Land Nordrhein-Westfalen und der Region Wallonien*, Düsseldorf, 5 November 1990 and *Vereinbarung über die interregionale Kooperation zwischen dem Land Nordrhein-Westfalen und der Region Flandern*, Düsseldorf, 7 November 1991.

shared EU rules and standards under which these regions' policies operate. Naturally, the Land has devoted the bulk of its resources for interregional cooperation to these two partnerships. Given the limited financial and administrative capacities aimed at various international projects, North-Rhine Westphalia has placed less emphasis on relations with the different CEECs. Similarly, eastern enlargement of the EU has not been an especially salient or a politically divisive issue. The Land authorities simply share the commitment of the Federal Government to enlargement.⁶⁹

To demonstrate the point, while reaffirming the necessity of enlargement and their commitment to it, the representatives of North-Rhine Westphalia have been otherwise indifferent to more detailed aspects of eastern expansion. Rather, they have tended to stress very Land-specific issues. North-Rhine Westphalia's main demand in the context of the Agenda 2000 has focused on the declining coal and steel sector in Germany's Ruhr region. The State Government's key goal for the next budgetary period is to gain access to Community Funding under Objective II in order to support the structural changes in its heavy industrial sector.⁷⁰ In short, while the Agenda 2000 is clearly linked to enlargement, North-Rhine Westphalia's concerns are with Structural Funds rather than with and independent of its general commitment to eastern enlargement of the EU.

It is difficult to generalize about the geographical divide, and more fundamentally about the political divide, and the attitudes of the various Länder toward enlargement. However, it is even more difficult to deny the existence of such divides. Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria offer illustrative examples where geography together with other equally important factors have played a formative role in their respective views toward eastern enlargement. Both located in southern and predominantly Catholic Germany and both part of the political West, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg have been especially active participants in European policymaking. Arguably, they have been two of the most visible and vocal German Länder in the European political arena. They have both called for greater involvement of regions in the EU affairs and have consistently demanded more subsidiarity in implementation of EU policies.

Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg are the backbone of Germany's economic strength. They stand in a clear contrast to Saxony and Brandenburg. In 1995

⁶⁹ Interview with Dr Christian Engel, EU Department, North-Rhine Westphalia Mission to the Federation, Bonn, 18 December 1998.

⁷⁰ Speech by Heide Dörrhöfer-Tucholski, North-Rhine Westphalia's State Secretary, at the Conference 'Germany and the European Union: The German Presidency of the Council of the European Union, January-June 1999', Mission of North-Rhine Westphalia to the Federation, Bonn, 26 November 1998.

Bavaria's unemployment rate reached 7 percent which was considerably below 9.3 percent, the average rate for the West Länder. In 1996 the same figure in Baden-Württemberg's was 8 percent.⁷¹ The two Länder depend little on outside aid or intervention. Yet at the same time, they have been longstanding beneficiaries of the Community's Common Agricultural Policy and of Structural Funds devoted to rural areas affected by a declining agricultural sector. Although generally independent and striving for more self-expression, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg both have reasons to see the continuation of some current EU policies.

Both have viewed eastern enlargement as an important strategic objective of the EU, and both have perceived it through particularly western lenses that differ in important ways from the positions in the two East Länder described in the last chapter. In particular, the evidence suggests greater concerns about the effects of enlargement on the West Länder. For instance, the fear of competition from and open borders with Central and Eastern Europe that could result in economic losses is arguably greater and strongly articulated. On the other hand, it is difficult to argue that Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg have less interest in a wider Europe. The basic point is however, that these two Länder, and especially Bavaria alone, see more explicit risks and contentious issues that are associated with eastern enlargement. Given their position in EU policymaking, they assert their concerns and demands accordingly. In this sense there is a clear divide that runs between the East and the West Länder. However, the differences are often nuanced. Moreover, differences also exist between the two West Länder. Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg have each given their own response to the challenge of enlargement. As the following pages demonstrate, they have tended to emphasize it for different reasons and in different ways. They have also expressed their respective self-interest vis-a-vis enlargement to a different degree. Baden-Württemberg's position is especially interesting. While the case of Bavaria demonstrates the clear distinction between the East and the West Länder, the views of Baden-Württemberg show the greater subtlety of such differentiation.

Widening and Widening: Some Initial Differences

First, geopolitical differences clearly matter. Bavaria has consistently expressed its full support to the fast inclusion of the ex-communist countries into the EU. While noting the economic, cultural and general political advantages of eastern enlargement, Bavaria has particularly emphasized its security interests in pursuing the goal of a wider Europe. Surrounded for over forty years by two communist states

⁷¹ In that year the average figure for the unemployment rate in the West Länder rose to 10.1 percent.

(the GDR and Czechoslovakia), by two neutral countries (Austria and Switzerland) and the rest of West Germany, Bavaria was in an especially exposed position within the FRG and indeed within the European Community as a whole. It is therefore no surprise that after the break-up of the bipolar world, Bavaria wished to normalize relations with its eastern neighbors and thus repel any future communist threat.

During his visit to Budapest in 1994 Edmund Stoiber, the state's Minister President, called for an accelerated integration of the Visegrad group (Poland, Hungary and the Czech and Slovak Republics) and Slovenia, and moreover suggested the possibility of granting a form of "partial membership" to these countries.⁷² Stoiber's idea of "partial membership" focused on cooperation in the fields of common and foreign and security policies as well as justice and domestic policies. Effectively, Stoiber wanted these Central and Eastern European countries to gain some form of a political membership while keeping them away, at least for some time, from the economic and trade *acquis* of the Community.⁷³

When the European Union was beginning to devise its own strategy toward the future potential members from among the CEECs, Bavaria clearly articulated its desire to see these states under the EU umbrella of political and security norms. Undeniably, this reflects in part the moral commitment to the former communist countries, many of whose exiles and dissidents found in Munich a fertile ground for resistance against their regimes at home. Most notably, the American-sponsored Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe was based in Munich.⁷⁴ However, Bavaria's push to somehow bind its eastern neighbors to the institutional and legal framework of the EU also mirrors its wider self-interest in the secure future.

First, the Bavarian political elites are still concerned about the unstable regimes in East Central Europe and especially about instability in Russia. They are therefore looking for a safe buffer zone on their eastern border.⁷⁵ Second, they are looking to prevent any unexpected or illegal immigration and all forms of smuggling. Indeed, this is one area where the EU proves more useful than NATO because of its legislation and a set of rules that could be extended to the CEECs. The Bavarian

⁷² Laszlo Kiss, "The Federal Republic and Central and Eastern Europe: German-Hungarian Relations and Europe," in Tamas Szemler, *Relations Between Germany and East Central Europe until 2000: Prospects and Policy Options* (Budapest: Institute for World Economics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1994), p.32.

⁷³ The terms *acquis* or *acquis communautaire* describe the accumulated obligations and commitments agreed under all the treaties and legislation of the European Union.

⁷⁴ Jeffery and Collins, "The German Länder and EU Enlargement: Between Apple Pie and Issue Linkage," *German Politics*, Vol.7, No.2 (August 1998), p.90.

⁷⁵ Interview with Dr Michael Mentler, EU Department, Bavarian Mission to the Federation, Bonn, 4 November 1998.

government followed this line in its assessment of consequences of eastern enlargement: "The subsequent incorporation in the EU-security system together with the application of the EU security standards aimed at free and secure existence of people in both the old and the new member states will through the cross-border cooperation result in political and security benefits..."⁷⁶

Although the idea of "partial membership" has long since been abandoned, the specific emphasis on these issues, given Bavaria's precarious location, has hardly diminished.⁷⁷ Bavaria continues to believe that enlargement of the EU is the best way to ensure future protection. The recent comprehensive statement issued by the state government, puts it plainly: "Through the accession of the CEE-states into the EU, the danger of uncontrolled political developments in the East, which would particularly affect Bavaria, will be significantly reduced." Furthermore, "according to the conditions laid down in the Agenda 2000 the applicant countries must be in a position to adopt and to apply the full EU-*acquis*, including also the present security *acquis* (set of rules dealing with 'justice and internal affairs')." ⁷⁸ The demands placed upon the states wishing to join the European Union are clear. Bavaria is concerned both with any external threat and with the preservation of its internal security whose legal standards it wants to see transplanted into the neighboring states.

Baden-Württemberg's situation, on the other hand, seems a lot less affected by such immediate geopolitical considerations. Obviously, the Land, west of Bavaria, was in the past less acutely exposed to the dangers of communism. It shares a common border with France and Switzerland and consequently faces fewer direct threats to its internal security. Conversely, the state government, unlike the political leadership in Bavaria, did not articulate an especially nuanced position toward enlargement in the early stages of debates about the eastern expansion of the EU. In this sense, Bavaria's stance was unique and it underlines its interest in the question of enlargement shared - for obvious geographical reasons - with Saxony and Brandenburg.

⁷⁶ *Bayerischer Landtag-Drucksache* 13/11632 (Interpellation).

⁷⁷ Edmund Stoiber, Bavaria's Minister President, confirmed during his presentation co-sponsored by the Slovak Foreign Policy Association in Bratislava on 3 May 2000, that indeed Bavaria gave up the idea of "partial membership" some time ago. One can only speculate on possible reasons. At least two seem very plausible. First, the EU's enlargement strategy, still very open in 1994, has been more clearly defined since the summit in Luxembourg in December 1997. Today the idea of "partial membership" - excluding the Union's first pillar - is no longer an option open to candidate states. Second, from Bavaria's standpoint, NATO's enlargement to Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary must have alleviated some of the Land's security concerns.

⁷⁸ *Bayerischer Landtag-Drucksache* 13/11632 (Interpellation).

Baden-Württemberg has consistently subscribed to the Bundesrat's resolutions on enlargement while its politicians have on occasions tended to highlight the role of the individual Länder in this process, "The support of the reform states in Central and Eastern Europe,..., on the way to the European Union is not just a task of the Federal Republic. It is also a task of the German Länder that have a decisive say in many areas of German policymaking."⁷⁹

The Land's leadership addressed the issue of enlargement in a comprehensive manner first in its response to Agenda 2000. It took a broader geopolitical view than Bavaria, underlining the general importance of a wider Europe. The resolution confirmed the need for reform in order to prepare the Union for "future membership of up to 27 states."⁸⁰ In two important ways it accentuated the notion of a complete inclusion of the CEECs. First, no country should be excluded from the enlargement process: "the progress of every country, that is not in the first round of negotiations, should be inspected annually with regard to an inclusion in negotiations." All applicant countries and especially those still preparing to start the accession talks, "should be supported and strengthened in their efforts to reform." Second, any future members of the EU must fulfill the criteria set out by the Meeting of the European Council in Copenhagen. While allowing for some transitory arrangements, they all have to subscribe to the fundamental democratic principles, to observe human and minority rights and to operate in an established market economy.

Baden-Württemberg's security concerns are less immediate. In contrast to Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg has taken a more encompassing view of enlargement: "A free, secure and prosperous Europe can in the long run only be achieved through the integration of the Central and East European countries into the European Union."⁸¹ Peter Straub, Chairman of the Landtag, emphasized in November 1998 that enlargement of the EU offers a chance for "durable peace, stability and welfare in Europe"⁸² The basic notion is that the EU must export stability to Central and Eastern Europe, otherwise it may end up importing many inevitable dangers. Stability in its extensive sense seems to be the goal behind eastern enlargement. This includes the existence of democratic institutions, the rule and enforcement of law and also open economic relations. At the same time, the reference to "the Union of up to 27 members" indicates that the goal of enlargement includes a wider circle of candidates. Baden-Württemberg has strongly endorsed this open door policy.

⁷⁹ Speech by Gustav Wabro, Baden-Württemberg's State Secretary, at the Hungarian Economic Day, Ehingen, 26 October 1996.

⁸⁰ Staatsministerium Baden-Württemberg, *Agenda 2000 - Bewertung aus Landessicht* (Beschluss der Landesregierung), 10 November 1997.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Speech by Peter Straub, Chairman of the Landtag, at the Conference on Agenda 2000, Stuttgart, 13 November 1998.

Perception of Eastern Enlargement: EU Policy and Broader Factors

Geopolitics certainly represents one set of considerations that help account for differences in attitudes toward enlargement and in this case shed some light on Bavaria's special stance toward countries in East Central Europe. More important is the bigger picture of the Länder involvement in EU policymaking and how this reflects upon the enlargement debate. Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg have on many occasions voiced their concerns about centralized decision-making from Brussels. With the new Article 23 of the Basic Law, both have attempted to defend their competencies and assert their interests in the EU context. They have together taken a leading role in the efforts of Europe's regions to play a meaningful part in EU policymaking following the creation of the Committee of Regions. They have also actively pursued their EU-related interests in Germany's domestic political setting. Indeed, the Preamble to the Constitution of Baden-Württemberg clearly states the Land's commitment to "develop as a member of the Federal Republic of Germany in a united Europe whose construction complies with subsidiarity and follows federal principles." Furthermore, the pledge is extended to "the creation of Europe of regions" and to "the promotion of cross-border cooperation."

Still, there are definite differences in the degree to which each Land has followed the 'Sinatra Doctrine' in EU matters and in the degree to which each differs from the East Länder in their view toward eastern enlargement. These include primarily ideological divisions, institutional and economic resources, the role of personalities and other particular political agendas. By general consensus, Bavaria stands out as the most outspoken Eurosceptic among the Länder.⁸³ Labeled as *Freistaat Bayern*, it has a unique position within Germany due to its historic tradition of statehood. It is also politically distinct. Bavaria has its own party - the Christian Social Union (CSU) - that has for decades controlled the state with its absolute majority and that was also a member of the governing federal coalition until the elections in September 1998. During the past ten years, it has developed a highly organized political apparatus for dealing with European-level decision-making. It has a tight system of coordination between the offices in Munich, Bonn and Brussels. Bavaria's uniqueness can be further highlighted by a political controversy over the official reference of the Bavarian *Staatskanzlei* to its Information Office (*Informationsbüro*) in Brussels as the 'Bavarian Mission to the EU' (*Vertretung des Freistaates Bayern bei der EU*).⁸⁴ Also, since coming to power in 1993 the Minister President Edmund Stoiber has made European policy an important part of both his image and local politics.

⁸³ Jeffery and Collins, p.89.

⁸⁴ Laufer and Münch, p.235.

The significance of and the particular attitude toward eastern enlargement undoubtedly stem from the broader salience of EU policies in Bavaria. The phrase 'doing it my own way' is especially applicable. Stoiber and his government have consistently expressed an anti-interventionist position toward the EU. This has been reflected in the enlargement debate in two basic ways. First, it has reinforced the support for enlargement over deepening of the EU's institutional and policy framework, stressing the importance of a decentralized Union and one where the member states play a key role. Gustav Matschl (CSU), the chairman of the Committee for Federal and European Affairs at the time, put it clearly to the Bavarian Landtag: "mere deepening to allow for enlargement, like the known formula states, that's not my position and cannot be our position. We have to recognize that in enlargement of the European Union, the member states have a central role..."⁸⁵

The need for widening over deepening of the European Union makes the issue of eastern enlargement seem as the vehicle for fundamental reforms which could curb the centralizing powers of European institutions. In its critical response to the proposals made in the Agenda 2000, the Staatskanzlei argued that the changes suggested by the Commission were inadequate: "they could have made the EU more effective, slimmer, more subsidiary and fairer." But instead, "the competencies of the Union are to be enlarged, the financial resources increased and Germany's role of main contributor cemented... With this insufficient approach to reform, the EU will be in no position to master enlargement first by six and later by more member states."⁸⁶

Although fully behind enlargement, Bavaria also clearly expressed its concerns about how wide the Union should spread. It voiced its reservations about the institutional and operational implications of any future expansion by subscribing to the Commission's proposal to begin negotiations only with a limited number of applicants: "the restriction of the number of states in the first wave of accession appears understandable not only on the basis of the presented criteria but also on the basis of efficiency."⁸⁷ The focus on efficiency highlights Bavaria's Euro-sceptic attitude. The general support for widening is explicitly supplanted by other practical considerations. Indeed, the official reaction to the Agenda 2000, "supports the candidacies of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia." Interestingly, there is no mention of Estonia that was also in the first group of candidates for the EU membership picked at the Luxembourg summit in December 1997. For Bavaria, it is not simply a choice between deepening and widening of the EU. Rather, widening itself clashes with other specific regional interests.

⁸⁵ Bayerischer Landtag, *Stenographischer Bericht*. 112. Sitzung. 09 Juli 1998, p.8085.

⁸⁶ Bayerische Staatskanzlei, *Memorandum der Bayerischen Staatsregierung zu den Vorschlägen der Europäischen Kommission*, 16 September 1997.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

This brings up the second aspect of Bavaria's anti-interventionism and how it relates to the prospective enlargement of the EU. Edmund Stoiber recently threatened to make his vote in the Bundesrat on any future enlargement subject to popular referendum in Bavaria.⁸⁸ He clearly indicated that Bavaria wished to forcefully present and to defend its interests. On the one hand, these include more amorphous positive terms such as the cultural and historic importance of eastern enlargement. In some cases, such as security, the specific interests are more substantiated. Similarly, Bavaria's interest in cross-border cooperation with the Czech Republic is strong. Trade with the CEECs is another important area: "Between 1993 and 1996 Bavarian exports to the Czech Republic have risen by 68%, to Hungary by 80%, to Poland by 60% and to Slovakia by 100%."⁸⁹ The Czech Republic is Bavaria's seventh largest import partner and eleventh largest export market and the Land's trade volume with this country and other East Central European states has been steadily rising.

On the other hand, Bavarian politicians have been very vocal about many of the potentially negative aspects of eastern enlargement. In more general terms, they did not like the strategy proposed by the Commission in Agenda 2000. Agenda 2000 and other substantial issues related to eastern enlargement became important electoral tool in the run up to the state elections in September 1998.⁹⁰ Bavaria's CSU clashed with its coalition partners in Bonn, and especially with the FDP, over its strong opinions toward enlargement that the party voiced during its electoral campaign. Wolfgang Gerhardt, The FDP chairman, criticized the situation: "The international responsibility of the Federal Republic cannot be the object of Bavarian Land elections."⁹¹

It hardly stopped the politicians from stating their views. More specific economic concerns included the future of the CAP, the Structural Funds and the size of Germany's contribution as well as the effects of an enlarged single market. The last is directly relevant to the question of eastern enlargement. In a position paper from July 1998 the Bavarian government openly stated that any free movement of labor following the future accession should first occur only in the year 2015.⁹² Protectionism was also expressed in relation to Bavarian agriculture, "if from one day to the next the volume of agricultural products in the European market increased

⁸⁸ *Der Spiegel*, 18 May 1998.

⁸⁹ Quoted in the speech by Dr Falthäuser, the State Minister, in Bayerischer Landtag, *Stenographischer Bericht*. 112. Sitzung. 09 Juli 1998, p.8090.

⁹⁰ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 23 July, 1997.

⁹¹ *Die Welt*, 12 May 1998.

⁹² Interview with Joachim Würmeling, head of the Department - Relations to EU Institutions, *Bayerische Staatskanzlei*, Munich, 26 November 1998.

by 50%, our financial possibilities would be completely over-challenged; with this our Bavarian agriculture would also be fully destroyed from one day to the next."⁹³ At the same time, the Bavarian government demanded creation of EU level tools in order to help alleviate the social and economic impact of enlargement on the regions directly bordering the Czech Republic.

Political concerns targeted primarily the sizeable population of Sudeten Germans who were expelled from Czechoslovakia following World War II and who are now trying to claim their right to domicile, the so-called *Heimatrecht*.⁹⁴ They were expelled on the basis of the decrees signed by the Czechoslovak President Edvard Benes in 1945-46. These decrees are today seen as an organic part of the constitutional legal order of the state and the Czech Republic does not recognize the *Heimatrecht*. The German side, however, perceives these acts as illegitimate or in conflict with present norms of international law.⁹⁵ The expellees (*Vertriebene*) form the core of the CSU's electoral basis and the Bavarian party has always very openly acted on their behalf.

The CSU has vowed on several occasions to make the entry of the Czech Republic into the EU subject to complete renunciation of the Benes decrees. The hope is that this may open up a wider settlement of the Sudeten German claims whereby the Czech side should accept full responsibility for the expulsion and stop talking about the 'transfer' as the Czechs refer to the re-settlement of the Sudeten Germans. In the very least such recognition ought to establish the claim to the *Heimatrecht* in the Czech Republic today.

The local political leaders proceeded to Europeanize the issue of the Benes decrees and seek their claims in the context of the criteria set out by the Copenhagen meeting of the European Council in 1993, especially prior to the Bavarian elections in September 1998. This strategy was in part due to the fact that domestically the Bavarian position is largely isolated and in part due to the outcome of the Czech-German Declaration on Reconciliation signed in January 1997 that did not satisfy the demands of the Sudeten German expellees.

Addressing the situation of the *Vertriebene* in Germany, Edmund Stoiber in a speech in the Bundestag, Germany's lower chamber, stated the Bavarian position very explicitly. Referring to the Benes decrees, he threatened to block the membership of the Czech Republic in the EU: "The European Union has established that expulsion has taken place. If the Czech Republic maintains that these laws

⁹³ Speech by Dr Falthäuser.

⁹⁴ Just over one million expellees from the Sudetenland resettled in Bavaria following the end of WWII.

⁹⁵ Vladimir Handl, "Czech-German Declaration on Reconciliation," *German Politics*, Vol.6, No.2 (August 1997), pp.152-153.

[the Benes decrees] are still valid, then in light of this, it will be difficult to take her into the European Union."⁹⁶ Similarly, Theo Waigel, then Chairman of the CSU, spoke out very clearly at the Party meeting in Munich prior to the Bavarian elections: "in the process of eastern enlargement the concerns of the expellees must also be addressed: the condemnation of the expulsion as injustice, the break with discriminatory legal rules - I mention the Benes decrees."⁹⁷ By internationalizing the issue and by relying on the basic criteria for enlargement, Bavaria, led by the CSU, once again attempted to bypass the federal government and to assert its distinct and generally complex position vis-a-vis upcoming enlargement of the EU.

Baden-Württemberg's attitude has been generally marked by less complexity than Bavaria's view on enlargement. As argued earlier, this stems in part from the Land's geopolitical position. It also mirrors its overall involvement in the EU affairs and the lack of specific contentions with the applicant countries.

Unlike Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg does not have similar longstanding traditions of independent existence. It was created artificially in 1952 out of the original states of Baden, Württemberg and parts of old Prussia. The state's religious make-up is more split when according to 1995 figures: 39.2 percent of the inhabitants are Protestant and 43.8 percent are Catholic. In addition, foreigners make up 13.2 percent of the Baden-Württemberg population, in absolute numbers ranking second just after North-Rhine Westphalia in the total of immigrant population among the Länder.⁹⁸

The Christian Democratic Union (CDU) has dominated the state's political landscape. However, its dominance falls short of the CSU's performance in Bavaria. While between 1972 and 1992 they were able to govern alone, more recently the Christian Democrats shared power in coalitions with the Social Democrats - the SPD (1992-96) and the Free Democrats - the FDP (after 1996).

Baden-Württemberg has played an active role in EU policymaking. For one, this involvement reflects its economic strength - it is the third largest Land according to GDP per head figures. Within the EU it maintains intensive partnerships with the economically strongest regions - Rhone-Alpes, Catalonia and Lombardy - that together call themselves the 'four motors of Europe'. Baden-Württemberg also maintains other international contacts that are particularly relevant to its economic interests. This too involves a number of the CEECs that have applied for EU membership or that cooperate closely with the Union.

The Land's EU organizational structure is well-established. Erwin Teufel, the Minister-President since 1992, took a personal interest in EU issues and frequently

⁹⁶ Bundestag, *Stenographischer Bericht*. 239. Sitzung, 29 May 1998, p.22039.

⁹⁷ Speech by Theo Waigel, CSU Party Day, Munich, 5 September 1998.

⁹⁸ Uwe Andersen and Wichard Woyke (eds.), *Handwörterbuch des politischen Systems der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Bonn: Leske + Budrich) p.249

spoke of the need for greater individual engagement of the Länder. On a number of occasions, he tended to emphasize the importance of subsidiarity in the participation of the Länder in EU affairs: "We stand for a Europe of variety... Subsidiarity must become the leitmotiv of Europe. Europe must be built from the bottom to the top."⁹⁹

The Land's view toward enlargement is probably best characterized by undisputed political commitment and by moderate reservations about more particular issues linked to enlargement. The backing in favor of expansion is obvious and has been more consistently expressed since the introduction of the Agenda 2000. In Erwin Teufel's words, EU enlargement is a "political and economic necessity."¹⁰⁰ Germany, and most of all Baden-Württemberg, are already today the most important commercial partners of the Central and East European countries. Hungary is one of the ten biggest trade partners of Baden-Württemberg.

Teufel also openly spoke in favor of 2002 as the date for the first accessions from East Central Europe. He hinted at the positive experience with fixed deadlines that in the past helped reach the goals of Single European Market and of European Monetary Union. At the same time, however, he was clear what a deadline does not guarantee: "the ability of each candidate to adopt the *acquis* is decisive." For Baden-Württemberg, eastern enlargement represents a basic strategic goal that should be treated as such by the whole Union. The demands laid upon the applicant countries should be supplanted by stated objectives from the EU.

In essence, the position of Baden-Württemberg is similar to Bavaria's stated opinion to the extent it supports widening. However, it does not share the same kind of 'Euro-skepticism', otherwise typical of Bavaria. The calls for more subsidiarity is one thing. Bavaria's threats to veto EMU or more recently the Amsterdam Treaty is another matter.¹⁰¹ While Baden-Württemberg practices the former, it has consistently supported all major EU initiatives. Enlargement is naturally no exception.

In some ways this is no surprise given the political composition of the state. Led by the coalition of the CDU and the FDP since 1996, it largely followed the federal line on EU policy. Although cross-Länder cooperation has turned increasingly

⁹⁹ Government statement by Erwin Teufel before the Landtag of Baden-Württemberg, Stuttgart, 9 December 1998.

¹⁰⁰ "Ministerrat befasst sich mit EU-Osterweiterung und 'Agenda 2000'," *Pressemitteilung Baden-Württemberg*, 23 February, 1999.

¹⁰¹ Josef Janning, "Bundesrepublik Deutschland," Werner Weidenfeld and Wolfgang Wessels (eds.), *Jahrbuch der Europäischen Integration 1997/98* (Bonn: Institut für Europäische Politik, 1998), p.316.

difficult on many issues, Europe-wide topics tend to be a bit less contentious. Whereas Bavaria frequently attempts to bypass the Bundesrat, Baden-Württemberg still regards the upper chamber as its policymaking tool.¹⁰²

Nonetheless, Stuttgart's perception of enlargement remains unique. For one, this is the result of its economic presence in Central and Eastern Europe. At the same time it mirrors the political involvement of the Land in this region. Baden-Württemberg's engagement includes principally its ties to Hungary. The other Visegrad countries are also important and so are other states, such as Romania, Croatia and the Baltic countries.

The connection to Hungary goes back several centuries. Since the 18th century, large numbers of people from what is today southern and southwestern Germany migrated further east down the Danube. Many of these settled in Hungary. Today there are about 220, 000 of the so-called Danube Swabians (*Donauschwaben*) living there.

In 1954, Baden-Württemberg assumed the partnership with the Swabian minority and since then has developed a whole array of common projects with the Hungarian *Donauschwaben* and with Hungary as a whole. The mutual cooperation covers many areas. There is the Cultural Foundation of the Danube Swabians (*Donauschwäbische Kulturstiftung*). There are about 180 school partnerships and 22 University partnerships between Hungary and Baden-Württemberg. The Land also sponsors more practical exchanges and training programs in the areas of science, research, internal security and public administration. These operate under the bilateral framework between Hungary and Baden-Württemberg but try to involve the German minority in Hungary as much as possible.¹⁰³

The common projects in the economic realm are equally intensive. More than four hundred enterprises from Baden-Württemberg are active in Hungary. About one hundred of these have their own branches or operate joint-ventures. The volume of trade amounts to more than four million DM.

The political contacts between Hungary and Baden-Württemberg have conversely been very frequent, and on many occasions the representatives of the Land have expressed their support for Hungary's membership in the EU. Gustav Wabro, the State Secretary, stated in a meeting with the Hungarian Foreign Minister Martonyi that his Land would continue to "accompany (*begleiten*) actively" Hungary's negotiations on the way to the EU.¹⁰⁴ In addition to the vocal support,

¹⁰² Interview with Dr Elisabeth Dette-Koch, EU Department, Baden-Württemberg Mission to the Federation, Bonn, 9 October 1998.

¹⁰³ Internal document of the State Ministry, *Arbeitsprogramm der Gemischten Kommission Baden-Württemberg/Ungarn für die Jahre 1998 und 1999*.

¹⁰⁴ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 August 1998.

Baden-Württemberg has helped promote Hungary's aspirations to enter the Union. Two recent examples stand out.

First, just two weeks before the official launch of the enlargement process, on 17 March 1998, the Land organized a public presentation "Hungary and Baden-Württemberg - a successful partnership in Europe in its Information Office in Brussels." Second, the Hungarian Ambassador to Germany delivered a speech and actively participated in the conference 'Agenda 2000' organized by the Landtag and involving many local parliamentarians, some members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and highly ranked representatives from the Commission.¹⁰⁵

Hungary is not the sole focus of Baden-Württemberg's activities in Central and Eastern Europe. While initially the projects of the *Donauschwäbische Kulturstiftung* concentrated exclusively on Hungary, starting in 1994 they have now expanded into Romania and the former Yugoslavia. Romania is especially relevant with its Schwabian minority of about 90,000. Travel diplomacy has played a substantial role in these places as well as in the Baltic states with regular visits by the Minister President Teufel and the State Secretary Wabro.¹⁰⁶

During the conference 'Agenda 2000', Wabro echoed the concerns of several countries that are still waiting to be included in the official negotiations. Mentioning Romania, Slovakia, Latvia and Lithuania, he emphasized the need to "open the circle of negotiations as soon as this is permissible." Reflecting upon his recent visit there, he also pointed to the need to involve Croatia more: "Croatia is not at all part of this process and despite this the people there expect that one day they too will join the European Union. I have already said it before, we should open the PHARE-program to Croatia."¹⁰⁷ Undoubtedly, Baden-Württemberg has perceived eastern enlargement of the EU as an inclusive process due to its general political commitment to it, but even more fundamentally due to its particular economic, diplomatic and cultural connections to a number of countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

¹⁰⁵ The conference was held in Stuttgart at the Landtag on 13 November 1998. For the proceedings see Landtag von Baden-Württemberg, *Agenda 2000: Gemeinsame Veranstaltung von Landtag und Landesregierung von Baden-Württemberg und des Europäischen Parlaments* (Landtag: Stuttgart, 1998).

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Hartwig Stahn, Baden-Württemberg Mission to the Federation, Bonn, 16 November 1998.

¹⁰⁷ Landtag von Baden-Württemberg, *Agenda 2000: Gemeinsame Veranstaltung von Landtag und Landesregierung von Baden-Württemberg und des Europäischen Parlaments*, (Landtag: Stuttgart, 1998), p.38.

In light of these considerations, the political elites in Baden-Württemberg never explicitly opposed the Union's eastern expansion. However, there have been some voices of dissent and the Land's leaders have expressed caution about the wider aspects of enlargement, especially the CAP reforms proposed in the Agenda 2000. The local farmers are also concerned. In a meeting of German farmers' unions at the beginning of 1996, Ernst Geprägs, the president of the farmers' unions in Baden-Württemberg, spoke out against eastern enlargement of the European Union "at the expense of German farmers."¹⁰⁸ The criticism hinted at the experience of German unification: "Eastern enlargement will be expensive. East Germany's adjustment cost from state-run to private agriculture demonstrates it clearly." Whereas the large farms in the East receive 80 percent of their income in the form of state aids, in the West it is only 40 percent. The fear is that with further enlargement eastward, the western farmers will be squeezed even more severely. Therefore, they demand higher compensation and greater protection now.

In its official response to the Agenda 2000, the state government expressed mild criticism on issues of particular regional importance: "the proposals are a good basis for coping with the tasks of the EU in the next years. However, in various areas negotiations are still necessary." These "various areas" refer to two major points: the proposed CAP reforms and the proposed changes to the Structural Funds.

The main criticism of the CAP reforms called for a general halt to the declining subsidies and to some degree of national co-financing. However, the issue of reforms was not tied solely to eastern enlargement. Rather the issue was linked to the GATT/WTO negotiations. The demands for world prices in the EU, "do not account for higher environmental, social and hygiene standards in the European Union."¹⁰⁹

The concern with the proposed changes to the Structural Funds was more direct. It involved the scrapping of the separate Objectives 5a and 5b. These respectively are earmarked for agricultural and forestry assistance and for the development of rural areas mainly via diversification away from traditional agricultural activity. Agenda 2000 suggested that both objectives 5a and 5b should be placed under the Objective 2 (regions affected by industrial decline), thus effectively no longer paying special attention to exclusively agricultural areas.

In the run-up to the Berlin summit of the European Council, these issues were pressed more firmly. While Minister President Teufel was clear to say that the present pressures and problems did not result from the accession process, he lobbied for fundamental changes that would not disadvantage Baden-Württemberg. His Agriculture Minister Gerdi Staiblin, led three sets of talks with the Commissioner

¹⁰⁸ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 10 January, 1996.

¹⁰⁹ *Agenda 2000 - Bewertung aus Landessicht* (Beschluss der Landesregierung), p.20.

Fischler. She was also scheduled to meet with Jacques Santer at the beginning of March to once again reiterate the position of Baden-Württemberg.¹¹⁰

All this suggests that although it was relatively easy to separate the policy reforms from the issue of enlargement, as pressures grow and the accession date comes closer this may no longer be possible. It is undeniable that the question of the CAP and its future plus the role of agriculture in the CEECs, both now and after enlargement, is of vital importance to Baden-Württemberg. Unless sweeping reforms to allow for future entry of new member states are passed soon, the tension between economic and political interests in eastern enlargement and the regional concerns will become greater.

Implications and Conclusion

In this chapter I have illustrated that there is a clear difference between the East and the West Länder in their respective approach to eastern enlargement of the EU, first more generally and then using specific examples of Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg as the representatives of the West German regions. This is apparent from their overall emphasis on eastern enlargement of the EU and in their focus on specific wider issues linked to enlargement. Furthermore, the differences occur even between such comparatively similar Länder as Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg. They touch not only on policy issues particularly relevant in the regional context - such as agricultural reform or regional aid - but also include a more general approach to enlargement and its specific operational aspects.

The extent to which particular local interests wield political influence in these Länder is a major point of departure from the conclusions in chapter 3. Although the political support in favor of eastern enlargement is broad and firm, the elites are having to cater to political lobbies and explicit Land interests that constrain them. Two areas are especially obvious. First, the agricultural sector relies greatly on the support it receives from the CAP. Naturally, therefore the farmers and their Land governments have consistently opposed major revisions of the existing subsidies in the context of Agenda 2000, thus effectively threatening to slow down the enlargement process as envisioned by the Commission. Second, the political influence of the Sudeten German group in Bavaria is great and the local political leadership has repeatedly affirmed its commitment of the expellees' interests in the run-up to enlargement.

The comparatively smaller dependence of Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg on Brussels' funding allows these Länder more readily to pursue their own agenda in

¹¹⁰ "Ministerrat befasst sich mit EU-Osterweiterung und 'Agenda 2000'."

the context such as the prospective EU enlargement. In the case of Bavaria this fact is compounded both by the unique position of the CSU in German politics and its immediate proximity to the Czech Republic. Unlike in the two East Länder, unemployment rates are considerably lower and the level of economic performance is much higher in both Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg. For these reasons, the concerns about the potentially negative consequences of enlargement are significant. Although the West Länder see the commercial and economic merits of a wider EU, they seriously worry about lost jobs and the disappearance of their competitive edge. To put it plainly, if enlargement goes wrong, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg have a lot more to lose than Saxony and Brandenburg whose situation probably could not get substantially worse.

The strong ideological Euro-skepticism, most notably in Bavaria, naturally permeates the elite attitudes toward further expansion of the European Union. Rather than solidarity, the focal point is competition among the Länder and indeed in the wider EU scene. Neither Land wants Germany to contribute more to the EU budget, and each has its own views as to how enlargement should proceed and which CEECs should be included. The concept of 'doing it my way' is increasingly decisive. Although the principal political commitment to enlargement remains unchanged, the practical specifics of the accession process vary widely. This is true not only about the more general East-West cleavage but also about other more local differences that, as this chapter has illustrated, warrant divergent reactions even between such similar Länder as Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria.

Chapter 5

EU ENLARGEMENT AND THE INSTITUTIONAL CONFINES OF THE LÄNDER

In this chapter, I explore how the issue of enlargement was treated and viewed by the Bundesrat and by the other political bodies that coordinate the involvement of the Länder in European policymaking. Bearing in mind the different views in the East and the West Länder, I investigate how such strains of opinion have been resolved and accommodated by the political bodies in which the Länder participate.

I argue that although the consensus about enlargement among the Länder has been remarkable, this does not guarantee an automatic acceptance of the next round of accession. I use European Monetary Union (EMU) as an example of a contested EU objective and I emphasize the constitutional importance of the Bundesrat in EU enlargement pointing to the 1995 entry of additional member states. I therefore maintain that while the consistent unanimous support by the Länder in favor of the prospective EU enlargement shows their political commitment, particular regional and functional interests can possibly undermine this support.

By focusing on the period from 1993 to 1998, I explore the tension between the basic pledge to enlargement and the self-interest of the Länder. Specifically, I draw out the existing divide between the East and the West Länder. In the final section, I demonstrate how the Länder on Germany's eastern border have voiced their views toward enlargement in a separate conference forum, thus using other means besides the domestic institutional structures to pursue state their agenda. The tension within the Bundesrat and the independent voices of the Länder point to the limits of the existing institutional set-up and they highlight that competing self-interests, while largely mitigated, have the potential to undermine the present arrangements.

Eastern Enlargement: Not Quite Like Apple Pie

In their recent article Charlie Jeffery and Stephen Collins write, "For the German Länder, eastern enlargement of the EU has much the same quality as apple pie is said to have in the United States: it is one of those fundamentals of life which nobody

could conceivably oppose.¹¹¹ Indeed, in the Bundesrat resolutions on the IGC and later on the Agenda 2000, and in the conclusions of both Minister Presidents' and the European Ministers' Conferences, the Länder have repeatedly stressed the need to prepare the Union for enlargement and to begin the accession process as soon as possible. However, despite the grand pronouncements about enlargement, some clear regional and functional differences can be observed even at the collective sub-national level of policymaking. Therefore, the official pledge of all the Länder to eastern enlargement should not be downplayed. Rather, this support has been real and there is no doubt that the Länder have over time clearly expressed their political commitment to enlargement.

Yet, enlargement encompasses a whole set of other issues that are important to the Länder and that should by no means be underestimated. The comparison with apple pie has its limits. Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) brings up an interesting parallel.

EMU has undoubtedly been much more distinctly a strategic objective of the European Union than eastern enlargement. Unlike enlargement, EMU was legally entrenched in the Treaty on European Union. It followed a clear schedule with a target date set for the introduction of the euro. In effect, the signing of Maastricht, with its explicit commitment to EMU, created a political momentum that could hardly be stopped. EMU was like apple pie that everyone had to eat and many wanted to swallow. Neither applies wholly to eastern enlargement. The lack of a schedule and the lack of an accession date leave the question of widening of the EU a lot more open.

Still, even long after Maastricht the idea of the monetary union was strongly contested, and not just in Britain or Denmark. In Germany, EMU also proved controversial. While Helmut Kohl and Oskar Lafontaine, the leader of the opposition SPD at the time, continued to insist that the euro was on schedule and assuredly in 'Germany's interest', others were more sceptical of EMU's merits and desirability.¹¹² As the official date for its launch approached, EMU was subjected to strong criticism in the German domestic debate. This criticism came primarily from social scientists, unions and journalists. However, politicians were also critical and especially some Länder reacted skeptically to the timing and the supposed economic benefits of the euro. In particular, the Minister Presidents Biedenkopf, Stoiber and Schröder - respectively representing Saxony, Bavaria and Lower Saxony - articulated their criticisms in public.¹¹³

¹¹¹ Jeffery and Collins, p.86.

¹¹² *TIME International Magazine*, 23 February, 1998.

¹¹³ Josef Janning, "Bundesrepublik Deutschland," Weidenfeld and Wessels (eds.), p.312.

Of these, Kurt Biedenkopf proved the staunchest opponent of the scheduled introduction of the common currency in January 1999. He already threatened to oppose EMU in 1996, riled by the objections of the European Commission to Saxon subsidy to Volkswagen AG for investment in automobile-manufacturing plants in the towns of Mosel and Chemnitz.¹¹⁴ Two years later Biedenkopf's Saxony was the only Land that did not vote for the Bundesrat resolution on the third stage of EMU.¹¹⁵

Biedenkopf, representing his government and the Landtag, decided not to support the Bundesrat's commitment to EMU on economic rather than purely political grounds. According to him, the resolution completely ignored the advice of the Bundesbank to which it was explicitly committed and to which it in fact referred.¹¹⁶ The Bundesbank, like the European Monetary Institute did not recommend Germany's membership in EMU beginning from January 1999, based on the achieved economic and monetary convergence. The decision to go ahead with EMU was principally political. As such, it directly undermined the credibility of the expressed commitment to no "additional EU transfer payments" directed at sustaining the achieved convergence. This posed danger for the future. In Biedenkopf's words, additional transfers "for the maintenance of the stability pact could become necessary and for political reasons they could not be refused, thus competing with the domestic efforts aimed at the recovery of eastern Germany."¹¹⁷

At least according to his official explanation Biedenkopf did not vote for the euro project because he thought it would hurt Saxony. More fundamentally, however, Biedenkopf acted as an economist and as a nationally respected politician who was making a rather symbolic statement by disagreeing so openly. After all, Saxony's vote was not going to stop EMU, so one can argue that he had little difficulty casting it and making a political statement. The Bundesrat's opinion was not constitutionally binding. There was no threat of a veto: even an overwhelming opposition by the Länder would have resulted only in search of a compromise in further negotiations with the Federal Government.

That brings up an important point. Enlargement, much less a political objective of the EU, can possibly also be opposed by some Länder. By threatening to vote against it, politicians especially with national aspirations like Bavaria's Edmund Stoiber could seek to extract further concessions. More poignantly, by saying 'no', they could also make an important public statement. However, the key difference between EMU and enlargement is that the Länder can veto the latter.

¹¹⁴ *TIME International Magazine*, 9 September, 1996.

¹¹⁵ Bundesrat, *Stenographischer Bericht*. 724. Sitzung. 24. April 1995, p.198.

¹¹⁶ See *Bundesrat-Drucksache* 300/98 (Beschluss).

¹¹⁷ Bundesrat, 24, April 1995, p.197.

The Länder can legally block prospective EU enlargement. The precedent was set in the vote on the Treaty on the accession of Norway, Austria, Finland and Sweden signed on 24/25 June 1994.¹¹⁸ After the treaty had been accepted in the Bundestag, the Bundesrat voted unanimously in favor of the 1995 enlargement on 8 July 1994. The unanimous nature of the vote hid the far-reaching differences of opinion among and also within Germany's chief political bodies - the Federal Government and the two parliamentary chambers - about the constitutional basis for the ratification of the accession treaty.¹¹⁹ Ultimately, it was decided that because enlargement changed the legal foundation of the European Union, the treaty had to be ratified by a 2/3 majority in both the Bundesrat and the Bundestag. This decision established the model for dealing with future rounds of enlargement. Consequently, the Bundesrat cannot be either legally or politically ignored in the run-up to the next round of EU enlargement.

The current scenario naturally leaves three possible outcomes: a unanimous vote in favor, a split vote in favor or a rejection. The Bundesrat's decision on the past enlargement and the present commitment of the Länder to eastern expansion suggest that a unanimous outcome is most likely. Yet, there are some clear differences between the past case and the prospective case.

Germany was largely seen as the key proponent of Austrian, Swedish, Finnish and Norwegian accession. For instance, during the ratification debate in the European Parliament, the Dutch, the French and the southern Europeans in particular expressed their opposition to the proposed deal. They all criticized the treaty pointing to the spectre of "German overweight" and referring to the negotiations with the candidate countries that were allegedly "rushed through 'with brute force'" by the German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel.¹²⁰

The Bundesrat had definite pragmatic reasons for its full endorsement of enlargement in 1994. After all, the countries that joined the EU in 1995 were not complete newcomers to the Union. As members of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) they had long since cooperated with EU member states. Even more positively, given their high economic standards, Austria and Sweden instantly became net contributors to the EU budget upon their entry into the Union. The Länder had little to worry about being flooded with cheap labor from Scandinavia

¹¹⁸ Norway was included in the Treaty. The referendum rejecting the entry into the Union came only later in 1994.

¹¹⁹ See for details on constitutional implications of this decision, Dr Sven Hölscheidt and Dr Thomas Schotten, "Die Erweiterung der Europäischen Union als Anwendungsfall des neuen Europaartikels 23GG," *Die Öffentliche Verwaltung*, Vol.48, No.5 (March 1995), pp.187-193.

¹²⁰ *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 18 April 1994.

or from neighboring Austria. The inclusion of the new members in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) was also relatively smooth.¹²¹ The opposition to enlargement expressed in the European Parliament was largely concerned with Germany's increasingly central role in the EU rather than with specific economic or functional issues.

Eastern enlargement, on the other hand, presents many more political, economic and institutional challenges. It also embodies a fundamental historic challenge and a set of important geopolitical considerations that extend far beyond the internal confines of the EU. In this sense it differs crucially from the 1995 enlargement. Arguably, the eastern enlargement is much more politicized than any previous round of expansion. At the same time, the gap between the economic standards, the legal practice and institutional structures of the CEECs and of the EU member countries is larger than in the case of any past enlargement. This is a result of two trends. First, the actual content of the *acquis communautaire*, the comprehensive set of the EU's rules and structures, has changed remarkably since the first three waves of widening. Second, before 1989 the CEECs developed and functioned in a completely different political and economic system and it is only recently that pluralism and market forces have begun to replace the old practices.

The latest round of enlargement followed the principles and political objectives of the Maastricht Treaty. Austria, Finland and Sweden, due to their favorable starting position, had few difficulties accepting the EU *acquis* on the future of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), on Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), on Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) and other provisions of the Treaty. The CEECs, however, are already proving that the adoption of the complex and demanding EU standards based on an ever-increasing lowest common denominator is likely to prove difficult and slow.¹²² Conversely, in the German domestic context, the Länder together, and in particular those on the eastern border of the EU, have thus far approached the issue of enlargement with greater caution with respect to the specifics of the process. This is clear from the collective voice of Germany's sub-national level to which I now turn and which further highlights the nuances of different opinions in the East and the West Länder.

¹²¹ Francisco Granell, "The EU's Enlargement Negotiations with Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol.33, No.1, pp.117-142.

¹²² John Eatwell, Not "*just another accession*": *the political economy of the EU enlargement to the east* (London: Institute for Public Policy Research, 1997), especially chapter 1.

Eastern Enlargement and the Politics of the 'Third Level' in Germany

The Länder coordinate their European policy vis-a-vis the Federation and the EU through regular conferences of the European Ministers (*Europaministerkonferenz*, or EMK) and of the Minister-Presidents (*Ministerpräsidentenkonferenz*, or MPK). Other Ministers also discuss EU related issues in their particular policy area (e.g. finance, culture, internal affairs). The conclusions of these meetings, based on mutual consensus, provide the basis for common positions of the Länder that is then further discussed in the Bundesrat before resolutions are passed. Eastern enlargement has been a regular item on the agenda of all the institutionalized forms of inter-Länder coordination. Most notably, the conclusions of the European-Ministers' conferences have consistently reaffirmed the commitment to prospective enlargement. Yet, other regional ministries and specific Länder have been a bit more calculating about the implications of enlargement. This has become more apparent with the progress of the accession process following the Luxembourg meeting of the European Council and the Commission's proposal 'for a stronger and wider Union' - Agenda 2000.

On 25 February 1993, in the first substantive meeting of the newly constituted European Ministers' Conference, the Länder expressed firmly their political commitment to eastern enlargement. In the final resolution they stated, "The accession of the reform states of Central and Eastern Europe - initially Poland, Hungary, the Czech and the Slovak Republics - must remain the declared aim of the Community and the precondition for a united Europe. The cooperation in the context of the Association Agreements (also known as the Europe Agreements with the CEECs) is the appropriate way toward the inclusion of these states in the political and economic system of the [European] Community."¹²³ The Länder clearly stressed the strategic importance of enlargement and the need for further mutual collaboration between the EC and the CEECs. In individual declarations attached to the main text of the final resolution, two individual Länder emphasized their particular involvement with other countries in Eastern and Central Europe. Saxony-Anhalt stated that, "the accession of the reform states of Bulgaria and Romania should remain the goal of the Community and the precondition for a united Europe." North-Rhine Westphalia used a different formulation: "The political and economic ties with Bulgaria, Romania and the Baltic states, with the option of a later accession, should be actively pursued."

The Länder put themselves fully behind eastern enlargement even before the Union officially opened its doors to new members from the ex-Soviet block at the

¹²³ *Beschlüsse der Europaministerkonferenz*, Bonn, 25 February, 1993.

European Council Meeting in Copenhagen in June 1993. The individual declarations by Saxony-Anhalt and by North-Rhine Westphalia also underlined the inter-Länder diversity of interests even on a topic as vague and as broad as enlargement. Subsequently, the decision of the European Council in Copenhagen to offer the prospect of membership to CEECs created further momentum for the involvement of the Länder. In September 1993, Saxony, initiated discussion of eastern enlargement of the EC at the EMK held in Ettlingen. It asked for further support and participation of the other Länder in the societal and economic changes of the CEECs. In the words of Günter Ermisch, Saxony's Representative for Federal and European Affairs, "all German Länder have responsibility toward the young democracies in Central and East European states and must therefore help to bring about eastern enlargement of the EC soon."¹²⁴

Ermisch's emphasis on the obligation of the Länder toward greater enhancement of stability on Germany's eastern border was received positively as the conclusions of the EMK held in the wake of Germany's Presidency of the EU suggest.¹²⁵ At the meeting in Konstanz in June 1994, the European Ministers called once again for closer cooperation with the CEECs in the context of the already existing Europe Agreements. They also explicitly asked the Federal Government to conclude, while holding the Presidency of the EU, the Europe Agreements with Slovenia and the Baltic states. The EMK's final resolution focused particularly on the need to intensify the political dialogue with the CEECs and to work toward "the realization of a single economic space" with these countries. The Länder called especially for greater exchange of goods through easing of the restrictions in Europe Agreements. They stressed the need for deeper cross-border cooperation and regional partnerships with the CEECs. The EMK was pleased with the establishment of an independent EU budget devoted to regional cooperation through the INTERREG II and PHARE programs. The subsequent resolutions of the EMK stressed the issues of cross-border and regional projects even further, focusing specifically on joint action in education, training and culture.¹²⁶

In sum, the explicit commitment of the Länder to eastern enlargement comes clearly through in the numerous conclusions of the EMK. The geographic bias whereby the East Länder have shown an especially strong interest in enlargement is also apparent. Most notably, Saxony and Brandenburg have represented the Länder on the German delegation to the Council working group 'enlargement' in Brussels.

¹²⁴ As quoted in a press release to *Europaministertagung am 16./17.9.1993*, Saxon Mission to the Federation, Bonn.

¹²⁵ *Beschlüsse der Europaministerkonferenz*, Konstanz, 8 June 1994.

¹²⁶ See *Beschlüsse der Europaministerkonferenz*, Bonn, 16 February 1995, and Bremen, 23 April 1998.

The working group monitors the progress of the enlargement process. It, for instance, helped prepare the opening of the accession talks announced at the EU summit in Luxembourg. The task of the representatives of the Länder is to defend their specific collective concerns vis-a-vis enlargement, to inform the other Länder about the progress of the consultations and if necessary to propose new resolutions.¹²⁷

The Bundesrat and the conferences of Minister-Presidents (MPK) have generally followed a similar line of support for eastern enlargement. The political commitment to enlargement was most clearly expressed in several Bundesrat resolutions on the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) that culminated in the signing of the Amsterdam Treaty in June 1997.¹²⁸ In particular, the Länder called for far-reaching institutional reforms of the EU in order to prepare the Union for entry of new members from East Central Europe. Both implicitly and explicitly, enlargement was seen as one of the key reasons for the launch of the Maastricht review IGC in 1996.¹²⁹

Yet, with prospects of enlargement becoming real, the Länder began to pay more attention to specific policy issues that needed to be addressed and reformed in order to carry out the goal of enlargement in practice. Some sectors, in particular justice and home affairs, welcomed the fast adoption of the *acquis* by the CEECs. The Länder were naturally interested in reducing the external boundaries in areas such as the fight against international organized crime, migration and asylum.¹³⁰ However, other sectors of inter-Länder cooperation, most notably agriculture and finance, expressed their reservations about enlargement.

There is indeed nothing especially surprising about the more skeptical views of Agriculture and Finance Ministers of the Länder. These fit well into the pattern of general tensions with regards to enlargement between the various Federal Ministries, most notably Foreign Affairs and Finance.¹³¹ They are also emblematic of a certain general move to 'realism' in Germany's approach to EU policymaking

¹²⁷ Interview with Dr Petra Erler.

¹²⁸ *Bundesrat-Drucksachen* 169/95 (Beschluss), 667/95 (Beschluss), 813/96 (Beschluss).

¹²⁹ For a good and comprehensive summary of the objectives of the Länder for this IGC see Wolfgang Fischer, 'Forderung der Länder zur Regierungskonferenz 1996/97', Franz H.U. Borkenhagen (ed.), *Europapolitik der deutschen Länder: Bilanz und Perspektiven nach dem Gipfel von Amsterdam* (Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 1998), pp.9-27.

¹³⁰ For emphasis on cooperation in this area between the Länder and the CEECs see specifically, TOP 6.2. Heranführung der MOE-Staaten an die EU im Bereich Innen und Justiz, *Beschluss der Europaministerkonferenz*, Potsdam, 11 October 1996.

¹³¹ See the skepticism expressed by Theo Waigel, the Federal Finance Minister, in an interview in *Europa*, 9 December 1994. At the same time, see the response of the FDP, in charge of the Foreign Ministry, F.D.P. Bundestagsfraktion, *Osterweiterung nicht in Frage stellen*, 19 December 1994.

that was for the first time articulated by Helmut Kohl at the meeting of the European Council in Cardiff in June 1998 and more recently much more clearly expressed by Gerhard Schröder. "No more extra Deutschmarks for Europe," as the new Chancellor put it plainly.¹³²

More interesting however, in the context of the Länder policy coordination, is the extent to which particular regional interests preclude or undermine unanimity on practical sectoral issues and at the same time these reflect the geographical divide between the East and the West Länder. Two instances stand out. First, the report from the Conference of the Agriculture Ministers held in Saxony's Radebeul in November 1995, pointed to a wide divergence of opinion. On the one hand, in its declared statement, Bavaria, protecting the merits of the CAP, argued that "the EU alone could never be a sufficient outlet for the enormous production potential of the CEECs." On the other hand, Saxony, referring to agricultural imports from the CEECs, expressed a much less protectionist view, "one does not mind if Polish milk gets processed in our own plants." Inevitably, such differences result in more nuanced and often vague compromises. In this case, the collective resolution called, with reference to eastern enlargement, for extended transitory phases so that "structural and market faults on both sides [Germany and the CEECs] can be avoided."¹³³

Second, a different illustration comes from the field of finance. The Finance Ministers of the Länder have consistently pointed out the need to restructure the EU budget and to cut Germany's contribution to it. Simply put, "Germany's [financial] discrimination (*Benachteiligung*), which results in grave consequences for the German balance of payments, is not sustainable in the long run. The finances of the European Union have to be reorganized."¹³⁴ Still, there are clear regional differences between those who subscribe to the view that Germany is paying too much and those who, at least publicly, accept Germany's role of a substantial net contributor. When at the beginning of 1996 the Conference of European Ministers adopted their common view on the reform of EU finances after 1999, Brandenburg was the only Land that abstained from the resolution.¹³⁵ Referring to the idea of European solidarity, a senior civil servant from Brandenburg later explained, "we have never publicly raised the issue of Germany's net contributions to the EU budget."¹³⁶ Reflecting the benefits of EU funding, Brandenburg, like the other East Länder, naturally has more reason to object to cuts in Germany's budgetary contributions.

¹³² *Die Tageszeitung*, 9 December 1998.

¹³³ *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 11 March 1995.

¹³⁴ *Beratungsergebnis der Finanzministerkonferenz*, Berlin, 28 September 1995.

¹³⁵ *Beschluss der Europaministerkonferenz*, Brussels, 24 January 1996.

¹³⁶ Interview with Dr Petra Erler.

The differences between the East and the West Länder, cutting across several policy sectors, became even more pronounced in the run-up to the Luxembourg meeting of the European Council in December 1997. On the one hand, in their reaction to the Commission's proposal the Agenda 2000, published in July 1997, the Länder reaffirmed the political commitment to enlargement while stressing the need for full adherence to the *acquis*. On the other hand, a number of additional and at times contradictory policy issues permeated the collective documents. The demands of the Länder vis-a-vis eastern enlargement started to be more explicit. In March 1997, the Minister-Presidents' Conference dealing with the reform of structural and regional policy of the EU called for greater support for "inter-regional and cross-border cooperation - also on the external borders of the EU." At the same time, the conclusions of the Conference stated that, "the integration of the CEECs after their accession in the EU system of structural promotion (*Strukturförderung*) should take place with suitable transitory regulations (*Übergangsregelungen*)."¹³⁷ The Länder, having accepted expansion, now proceeded to voice their concerns and define the kind of enlargement they wanted.

They did so in a fairly comprehensive manner in the Bundesrat resolution on the Commission's proposal 'the Agenda 2000 - for a stronger and wider Union'. To begin, the list of regional concerns became longer. In addition to the need for full adherence to the *acquis* and to other appropriate regulations, the resolution also declared the need to "take into account the special interests of the border areas."¹³⁸ The text was generally positive and mutually accommodating stating that any regulations "should have the character of exceptions and should serve to avoid the economic and social faults in the Community and in the CEECs." Enlargement was perceived as a common project of the EU and the CEECs, rather than a unilateral event.

Yet, other parts of the resolution and the discussion in the Bundesrat suggested that despite the general agreement about the desirability of enlargement, there was a lot less agreement about how to prepare for it in the EU, and more specifically in the Länder. Two instances stand out. First, on the proposed reform of the CAP, the resolution explicitly stressed the fundamentally different views of the West and the East Länder on direct income support. These were due to "the varying structural conditions in agriculture." They captured the difference in the size of the farms ranging from small family business, typical of southern Germany and large farms, typical of the former GDR. Immediately before unification the average collective farm in East Germany covered an area of some 4,500 hectares, while the average

¹³⁷ *Ergebnisprotokoll der Konferenz der Ministerpräsidenten der Länder*, Berlin, 20 March 1997.

¹³⁸ *Bundesrat-Drucksache 904/97* (Beschluss).

size in West Germany was only 13.3 hectares.¹³⁹ Today the East German farms still remain disproportionately large, although their size has gradually diminished. Nonetheless, while farmers in the ex-GDR continue to receive subsidies from the Federal Government, the EU's contribution is steadily decreasing.

Second, differences also arose over the proposed reforms of the EU Structural Policy. Bavaria was especially unhappy with the final text of the resolution. In a statement submitted to the Bundesrat, Ursula Männle, Bavaria's State Minister for Federal Affairs, affirmed the Land's commitment to enlargement, but complained about the inadequate concern for rural areas undergoing economic transition. She also declared that despite Bavaria's opposition to the collective view, "the political weight of the Bundesrat's resolution to the Agenda 2000 is particularly strong if it is formed unanimously. Therefore, Bavaria consents to the resolution."¹⁴⁰ In the end, every Land adopted it. However, this outcome was more due to the political need to do so rather than due to the genuine support of all the Länder.

Eastern Enlargement and the Politics of the 'Third Level' in the EU

A closer look at the resolutions of the Bundesrat and especially the collective documents preceding such resolutions indicate some underlying tensions among the Länder, on the question of enlargement poignantly highlighting the unique position of the East Länder. However, the resolutions are also generally vague and necessarily dilute the voices of the Länder with particularly strong interests in enlargement. Chapters 3 and 4 exposed these attitudes in more detail in the individual East and West Länder. This section will briefly show how some Länder have pursued their agenda collectively outside the confines of the Bundesrat and in fact outside of Germany.

At the end of 1997, Bavaria and the Austrian region of Steiermark initiated a conference of the EU regions bordering the CEECs during which local concerns vis-a-vis enlargement would be clearly addressed in a comprehensive statement. The conference took place in Graz, Austria on 29 January 1998 and regional representatives from Germany, Austria, Italy and Finland came. The *Grazer Konferenz* was dominated by the German and Austrian representatives both in terms of the number of regions involved and also in terms of their domestic political weight given the federal system in the two countries. Four Länder attended - Brandenburg,

¹³⁹ Grit Viertel, "In Gemeinsame Agrarpolitik und neue Bundesländer: Bonner Leitbild ohne Zugkraft (Fallstudie)," Barbara Lippert et al. (eds.), *Die EG und die neuen Bundesländer: Eine Erfolgsgeschichte von kurzer Dauer?* (Bonn: Institut für Europäische Politik, 1993), p.211.

¹⁴⁰ Bundesrat, *Stenographischer Bericht*. 719. Sitzung, 28 November 1997, p.563.

Berlin, Saxony and Bavaria - and all signed the final resolution that asserted very explicitly the fears and concerns about the effects of enlargement on the regions situated on the EU's eastern border.¹⁴¹ Specifically, the participants called for long-term restrictions on the free movement of labor. They demanded additional EU funding to cope with the alleged losses in their competitiveness following the influx of cheaper goods. They also requested further subsidies and adherence to strict environmental and hygienic standards in order to keep out agricultural imports from East Central Europe. In sum, the tone of the resolution was confrontational and it stressed disproportionately the negative aspects of enlargement.

The German Federal Government and in particular the European Commission distanced themselves from the conclusions of the conference in Graz. The applicant states hardly welcomed the statement. For instance, in February Bavaria received a number of protests from the embassies of the Central and Eastern European countries. While the aim of the resolution was to bring out the real difficult issues associated with enlargement, the words used were unfortunately harsh and they sent the wrong message.¹⁴²

As a result, there was an immediate attempt to organize a new conference that would produce a more accommodating outcome. This time the German Länder took the initiative and in particular Saxony and Bavaria pushed for another meeting to be held in Bavarian Hof. To rectify the one-sided involvement in Graz, the push came to invite also representatives from Central and Eastern Europe. Interestingly in the run-up to the conference the tension between the East Länder and Bavaria became clear. The dispute was over the participation of the national ambassadors and other invited delegates from the candidate countries. While Bavaria preferred an observer status for these guests, Saxony wanted the representatives from East Central Europe to communicate their ideas and exercise the right to speak. In fact, two days before the meeting in Hof it was not clear whether or not Saxony would participate. Günther Meyer, Head of the *Staatskanzlei* responsible for EU policymaking, refused to attend unless the guests from the CEECs could also address the participants.¹⁴³

In the end, 13 regions participated, including Saxony and representatives from Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and the Czech Republic came and could voice their views although the final resolution was drafted only by the invited regions. In addition, several members of the European Parliament attended and representatives from the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs took part as observers. The important

¹⁴¹ *Resolution der an die mittel- und osteuropäischen Länder angrenzenden Regionen der EU-Mitgliedstaaten betreffend die Herausforderungen der EU-Osterweiterung*, Graz, 29 January 1998.

¹⁴² Interview with Dr Mentler.

¹⁴³ Interview with Stephane Beemelmans.

departure from the message in Graz was the direct engagement with the candidate countries. Although, the final resolution adopted in Hof called for similar regulations to be applied to the border regions, the language was different.¹⁴⁴ From the strong unilateral demands there was a clear call for dialogue with the CEECs. The fruitful outcome was to underscore the mutual benefits of eastern enlargement.¹⁴⁵ Thus, for instance the final resolution stressed that completely free movement of labor in the next few years would hurt both the EU regions and the Central and Eastern European countries as the latter could suffer substantial losses of skilled and educated labor. Similarly, Structural Funding should be applied to the EU-border regions only in so far as it does not hamper the regions that receive aid already. There was also a greater emphasis on cooperation and the long-term benefits of economic development on both sides of the border that cannot take place in isolation with greater protectionism in the EU.

The immediate political importance of the conferences in Graz and Hof was obviously not high. Nonetheless the regions, bound to be affected by enlargement, have taken the issue outside the national boundaries into the EU arena. The main goal of the two resolutions was to point out the significance of eastern expansion and the need to address the complicated issues linked to it. It was primarily an agenda-setting exercise. The 20-point declaration from Hof was sent to about 620 different politicians, diplomats and other important public figures both within the EU member states and in the applicant countries. This included someone as prominent as Romano Prodi, Edmund Stoiber's friend, former Italian Prime Minister and future President of the European Commission.¹⁴⁶

The active participation by Bavaria and the other East Länder reflected their determination to make the issue of eastern enlargement public and in fact to speed up the negotiating process by setting out their detailed concerns. More generally, the key role of the German Länder also mirrored their strong political status among Europe's regions. Finally, the divide between the East Länder and Bavaria stood out once again. Perhaps, one real achievement of the two conferences was to draw these Länder closer and induce Bavaria but also the richer Austrian regions to compromise during the second event in Hof.

¹⁴⁴ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 27 July, 1998.

¹⁴⁵ *Hof 20-Punkte-Katalog zur EU Erweiterung: Entschliessung der 2. Konferenz der EU-Grenzregionen*, Hof, 25 July 1998.

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Joachim Würmeling, EU Department, Munich, 26 November, 1998.

Implications and Conclusion

The institutional confines of the Bundesrat and the mechanisms of political coordination among the Länder in effect conceal the different individual views. Since 1993 the Länder have collectively expressed consistent support for enlargement and the EU sponsored projects with the CEECs. The more detailed analysis reveals that amidst the grand statements about eastern enlargement of the EU, there are some clear regional differences of opinion. These are concerned with specifics of the pre-accession strategy but also with other issues directly or indirectly linked to enlargement. In particular, there is a definite East-West regional divide both in the emphasis on fast accession of the ex-communist countries into the EU and in the views on policy issues linked to the enlargement process. These encompass questions about the CAP reform, the future of Structural Funds and Germany's budgetary contribution.

While the institutional brakes mitigate some of these differences, the spectrum of views cannot be ignored. The tension between the political process and the attitudes of the individual Länder, reflecting special regional interests, has risen since the enlargement process gained new momentum following the launch of the Agenda 2000 and the Meeting of the European Council in Luxembourg.

In a wider sense, EU enlargement reflects the recent competitive trends in German federalism. First, although search for compromise and for consensus prevails, the Bundesrat's constitutional prerogatives give the individual Länder more room for negotiations. This is true both vis-a-vis the Federal Government and in relation to the other Länder. Second, the attempts by the geographically eastern Länder (this includes Bavaria) and other European regions on the EU's eastern border to voice their worries and to express concerns about the enlargement process illustrates the possibility for cross-border coalitions of regions. Although these have little political influence and vary widely in their interests and political make-up, they provide an arena in which the Länder can express and publicize their views more freely. Their voices will have to be considered as the date for accession of new member states is set and the political pressure for an accommodating compromise increases.

So far, eastern enlargement may resemble apple pie. However, it will only continue to be appetizing if the Länder collectively agree and help define it or have their respective self-interests individually satisfied.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

The recent trends in German federalism have given rise to a more competitive environment in which at least some of the Länder tend to define and pursue their own self-interest and at times find it difficult to compromise on a common position. In this study I have sought to shed important light on this self-interest by comparing the views of two East and two West Länder toward eastern enlargement of the European Union. I have also tried to assess the political implications of general divisions between the Länder by looking at the collective decision-making process.

The exposition of views in chapters three and four demonstrates the general and persistent commitment to enlargement. The analysis of elite attitudes toward enlargement in Saxony and Brandenburg and in Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg reveals that while clear differences exist along the East-West historic divide, the issues are more complex. On occasions, they cut through this geopolitical line inside Germany.

On the part of the West Länder, Baden-Württemberg stands out perhaps surprisingly as the Land with important ties to East Central Europe, and above all to Hungary, reflecting its engagement with the Swabian minority there. The government in Stuttgart would like to see Hungary in the European Union as early as in 2002. The leadership of Baden-Württemberg has also reaffirmed its commitment to a wider circle of candidates including countries like Croatia in the Balkans. In addition to the importance of traditional links, Stuttgart's support has in part been driven by the desire to further new trade connections. Lothar Späth, the Minister President between 1978 and 1991, pursued his own regional economic policy that among other things encouraged the emergence of small and medium-sized firms.¹⁴⁷ Today, part of Baden-Württemberg's strategy is to aid those enterprises to reach new markets and to find new partners by engaging Eastern and Central Europe.

The combination of its Euro-skepticism and the physical proximity to Central and Eastern Europe naturally predestines Bavaria to a similar if not higher degree of support. Indeed, Stoiber's early initiative of a 'partial membership' indicates the seriousness with which the Land has taken on the challenge of enlargement. Yet, Munich's attitude has been surrounded by a degree of unusual controversy. Playing

¹⁴⁷ Arthur Benz, "Rediscovering Regional Economic Policy: New Opportunities for the Länder in the 1990s," Charlie Jeffery (ed.), p.187.

into the hands of its electorate, dominated by farmers and the Sudeten Germans, the regional leadership has instrumentalized enlargement for its own domestic purposes by threatening to oppose the entry of additional member states. With Edmund Stoiber's potential aspirations to gain greater prominence in Germany's domestic political scene¹⁴⁸, a further appeal to the *Vertriebene* in the name of German national interests is only likely. The loss of the federal elections in September 1998, when as a result the CSU went into opposition, indicates that Bavaria might explore all other means to assert what it deems as its legitimate self-interest.

Brandenburg and Saxony have maintained a strong and undisputed commitment to eastern enlargement. Their attitude reflects the dominant position of the two Minister- Presidents, Stolpe and Biedenkopf respectively, who have both taken a resolute personal interest in the eastern expansion. Confronted with an already dire economic situation at home - unlike in the West Länder - and still with substantial trading links with a lot of countries in Eastern and Central Europe, the two Länder have strongly backed enlargement. The course of cross-border cooperation has enhanced their support. Although impeded by the common problems of those on the border, namely low cost imports of both goods and labor, and the physical and bureaucratic barriers of Schengen, cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe has been largely unblemished by the likes of the fervent demands by Bavaria's *Vertriebene*. Dialogue and shared projects between the East Länder and Poland and the Czech Republic have been comparatively more productive, though they remain in need of a larger financial injection required to help with local infrastructure.

Structural Funds are a wider issue linked to enlargement and perceived very differently in the two East and the two West Länder. While Brandenburg and Saxony are at the moment defending their right to hold on to funding under Objective One, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg have both called for extra help from the Commission to halt the decline of their agricultural sectors. The bottom line is however that once the new members join, the finite amount of money will have to be redistributed. That in fact is bound to prove a real test of Brandenburg's and Saxony's commitment to solidarity.

The implications for policymaking are examined in chapter five. The pursuit of the Länder self-interest is fundamentally constrained by the participation structures in the European policy, as these were created in accordance with Article 23 of the Basic Law. Although underneath the grand statements about enlargement, disputes prevail, the Länder essentially agree not to disagree in order to deliver a coherent

¹⁴⁸ Although during his presentation co-sponsored by the Slovak Foreign Policy Association in Bratislava on 3 May 2000 Edmund Stoiber denied such political aspirations, the possibility of Stoiber's active role in German federal politics remains real and very open in the coming years.

collective message to the Federal Government. Yet, agreement among 16 members of the Bundesrat on a number of issues linked to eastern enlargement has proved difficult. The cases studied in this study show that there are certain fundamental socio-economic and ideological differences between the Länder that may be impossible to square. The differences surface even once one digs deeper into the collective documents of the Länder.

Consequently, the Länder together find themselves weakened vis-a-vis the Federation. This 'agreement not to disagree' can hardly foster a forceful stance under "the constitutional framework for German federalism...predicated on notions of consensus and coordination."¹⁴⁹ As Jeffery points out, 'doing it my way' may be difficult and controversial as long as that framework remains in place.

Yet, as the initiatives by the EU-border regions with crucial participation by the Länder show, German regions have an important tool in being able to set and air their agenda. They can do so individually or collectively in a wider coalition, as they mobilized on the question of eastern enlargement during the conferences in Graz and Hof. By doing so they can reach out to a much wider audience and disseminate important information that is then subject to significantly less stringent constraints than those that result from negotiations inside the Bundesrat. While the Federation or the European Commission may not approve of such independent activities, these are becoming an integral part of the different strategies pursued by some Länder.¹⁵⁰

Agenda-setting on its own has no immediate political impact except in so far as it serves as a warning of what demands one may expect next. However and this is crucial, it is still important because enlargement is subject to a constitutionally binding vote by the Bundesrat. While the vote on the 1995 accession was unanimous, the pressures and the inter-Länder differences about that enlargement were relatively small. Now the situation is more complex and ultimately very challenging. The Länder possess the power to veto this process. Two thirds of the votes are needed in order to ratify any future agreement. That gives some real leverage to those who may wish to extract concessions of various kinds, material pay-offs or simply political capital by gaining extra publicity. Local politicians with national ambitions and contentious views, such as Edmund Stoiber, whose CSU no longer exerts the same influence on federal politics, might choose to go down this path. Stoiber already threatened to veto the Amsterdam Treaty and there is no reason to suppose that he would not do the same with other treaties.

¹⁴⁹ Jeffery, "From Cooperative Federalism to a 'Sinatra Doctrine of the Länder?'" Jeffery (eds.), p.340.

¹⁵⁰ Note also for instance the conference about 'Agenda 2000' organized by Baden-Württemberg and discussed in chapter 4.

The political commitment to eastern enlargement has been generally unwavering. Much progress has already been done in the area of cross-border cooperation without which one could hardly conceive of a successful implementation of enlargement. Clearly the expansion to the east is on course. However, it is still bound to be a long process before enlargement takes place. The difficult decisions on contentious issues that are likely to provoke different reactions by the different Länder have not taken place.¹⁵¹ Here, the parallel between the Länder and the fifteen EU member states is particularly striking. The policymaking processes at the level of the European Union and at Germany's sub-national level share important similarities. Any successful enlargement will necessitate an agreement by all EU member states. In addition, Germany's support for the Union's widening will require an agreement to which a decisive majority of the Länder is going to subscribe. In coming years the discussion of enlargement can further accentuate the tensions between the interests of the individual Länder and the common institutional framework which confines them.

Once the difficult issues associated with enlargement fully enter the political agenda, the big question for both the East and the West Länder is what will be the immediate and the long term costs and benefits of enlargement to the various Länder. The comparisons undertaken in this study suggest that these distributional aspects remain a potential source of future controversy - principally between the Länder, but also in relation to the CEECs applying for the EU membership and in relation to the Federation. With the growing sense of regional self-interest, the present East-West cleavage and other more nuanced differences in attitudes of the Länder toward eastern enlargement can only become more visible, thus rendering the existing political structures potentially even less adaptable.

¹⁵¹ Lykke Friis and Anne Murphy, "Amsterdam-Luxembourg: Express or Slow Train to Meeting Enlargement and Legitimacy?" *Danish Institute of International Affairs Working Papers*, No.1998/5 (1998), pp.27-28.

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