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The Communist Successor Parties of Eastern and Central Europe and European Integration

MICHAEL DAUDERSTÄDT

The rich array of party systems evident in the European Union pre-2004 became even more diverse with the accession of ten new member states, with their own party systems, on 1 May 2004. Among the new players in the 'Europolity' we find several communist successor parties. These have undertaken a variety of reform processes dependent on, among other things, the nature of the transition that their societies have undergone. They have therefore taken up different places in their respective national party systems. Subsequently, they have adopted different attitudes towards issues of European integration. The Polish, Czech, Slovak and east German successor parties have encountered different experiences in this regard. While the German PDS is already well integrated into the Europolity, and has developed its own positions on most European policies, the defining issue for the three other parties has been the question of accession and membership. The attitudes of these three parties to the EU's most significant policy areas are nevertheless most often shaped by national policy preferences rather than by any acceptance of broader European goals.

Introduction

For most of the Cold War period relations between the communist countries of Eastern and Central Europe (ECE) and the European Union (EU) were next to non-existent. The Soviet Union and the Soviet-dominated regional integration bodies of Comecon and the Warsaw Pact actively discouraged co-operation with the EU. This freeze thawed in the second half of the 1980s when the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev loosened its grip on ECE. The ruling communist parties slowly started to move towards a rapprochement with the countries of the EU; Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary eventually signed trade and co-operation agreements in 1988–89.

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In 1989 internal dynamics took over in forcing the pace of change. In the Polish elections in June, the communists lost virtually every seat that they contested to the buoyant Solidarity Movement. In the autumn, the communist governments of the GDR and Czechoslovakia collapsed in the face of widespread public demonstrations. In Hungary the communists conceded free elections during Round Table talks that resulted in their defeat in March 1990. By mid-1990, the former ruling parties were in opposition in all Central European countries and were, for the most part, redesigning themselves in a much more social-democratic mould by changing their names, re-registering members, adopting new programmes and resolving conflicts over what they claimed to be party assets. The major exception to that general trend was the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM), which remained communist not only in name but also in many other respects such as its membership and programmatic orientation. In Slovakia, the communists chose at an early stage to follow the general trend, becoming the Party of the Democratic Left (SDL). However, an orthodox faction continued to exist under the name of the Communist Party of Slovakia (KSS), which succeeded in entering parliament in 2002 just as the SDL was in the process of collapsing.[1]

The new programmes of the reformist successor parties incorporated the major elements of the multifaceted transition process from party dictatorship to democracy, away from a planned and towards a social market economy, and from being part of the Eastern bloc to becoming integrated into the open, European and increasingly global economy. In six of the eight former accession countries a further transition took place, namely the building of a new sovereign nation-state. The respective national communist parties supported this transition between 1990 and 1993, leading to the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

Transformation and Integration: Party Competition in the New Member States

The successor parties thus became part of the general political consensus in the transition countries – with the partial exception, again, of the Czech KSČM. That consensus included the so-called 'return to Europe', which was narrowly understood as joining the European Union. The transition countries began to adapt their social, economic and political systems to the criteria set out by the European Union for prospective members. More specifically, this entailed the introduction of democratic structures, the rule of law, a functioning market economy and the adoption of community rules, standards and policies – in short, an acceptance of the *acquis communautaire*. This dynamic ensured that accession preparations continued apace, with a threefold transformation of the communist system plus a partial reversal of the fourth

transition (nation building), with nation-states giving up some of their newly-won sovereignty.

This difficult process of adaptation required a social consensus in the post-communist accession countries which had to be maintained in the face of costs and disappointments that at first were disregarded, but later became palpable (see Table 1). Although the frustrated electorates in Eastern and Central Europe punished and voted out almost every government after only one term in office, the transfer of power prompted only minor corrections to the policy of reform, system transformation and preparations for accession.

In the case of left-wing parties this was particularly striking, since transformation was basically a liberal project for the introduction of capitalism. In the case of the Polish and Hungarian former communists, a pro-capitalist attitude was less surprising as the 'red managers', who had acquired former state-owned enterprises during a sometimes dubious privatization process, now had a vested interest in the maintenance of the new capitalist system. The parties of the left were also prompted – as were the parties of the right that led most ECE states in the early 1990s – to give their view on the 'new' values and requirements of the EU. They needed to elaborate positions on the EU in party programmes and party manifestos, as did left-wing parties who were still committed to communist objectives.[2] The multiparty consensus none the less remained intact, as is illustrated by the fact that the applications for membership were filed by governments of both liberal-conservative and left-wing orientation. Little changed in terms of this fundamental multiparty consensus even during the long negotiation phase up to the conclusion of the accession agreements (see Tables 2 and 3).

Positions on European integration unfold along both of the axes that typically structure electoral competition: first, the socio-economic axis

TABLE 1
SUPPORT FOR EU ACCESSION IN THE THEN CANDIDATE COUNTRIES (AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL RESPONSES)

	1993	1996	1997	1998	2001	2002	2003 Referendum	
							% of votes cast	% of electorate
Estonia	79	76	29	35	33	39	67	43
Poland	80	93	70	63	51	61	77	46
Czech Republic	84	79	43	49	46	50	77	43
Hungary	83	80	47	56	60	77	84	39
Slovenia	92	79	47	57	41	62	90	54
Latvia	78	80	34	40	33	54	67	49
Lithuania	88	86	35	40	41	53	91	58
Slovakia	84	88	46	62	59	69	92	48

Source: Eurobarometer and <http://www.mdr.de/eu/aktuell/938582.html>.

TABLE 2
PARTY POLITICAL ORIENTATION OF GOVERNMENTS AT THE TIME OF APPLICATION FOR EU MEMBERSHIP

Country	Date of application	Ruling coalition	Political orientation
Czech Republic	23 January 1996	ODS + ODA + KDU–CSL	Centre-right
Estonia	24 November 1995	EK + EME + others	Centre
Hungary	31 March 1994	MDF + KDNP + FKgP	Centre-right
Latvia	13 October 1995	LC, DPS, LZS	Centre-right
Lithuania	8 December 1995	LDDP	Left
Poland	5 April 1994	SLD + PSL	Left
Slovakia	27 June 1995	HZDS	Populist
Slovenia	10 June 1996	LDS + SKD	Centre-right

Source: Nick Crook, Michael Dauderstädt and André Gerrits, *Social Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe* (Amsterdam: FES, 2002), p.20.

where left-wing parties stand for stronger market regulation and wealth redistribution; and, second, the politics of identity axis where left-wing parties generally oppose authoritarian-nationalist projects.[3] Doubts about the prevailing pro-European consensus could stem from fears concerning its distribution effects (considerable in the case of Polish farmers and orthodox communists, for example) or its consequences for the survival of national values (considerable among, for example, the religious right in Poland). In terms of economic interests and the protection of national industries and issues of wealth distribution, however, the left can hope to regain some of the declining influence of the nation-state at the European level. This is particularly true when one remembers the ever-deepening processes of European integration and economic globalization that are taking place.[4] A further motive influencing positions taken towards European integration is the type of capitalism that each of the parties has to deal with (be it Rhineland capitalist, social market economies or more free market neo-liberal varieties).[5]

TABLE 3
PARTY POLITICAL ORIENTATION OF GOVERNMENTS AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE ACCESSION AGREEMENT, END OF 2002, COPENHAGEN

Country	Ruling coalition	Political orientation
Czech Republic	CSSD + KDU-CSL + US-DEU	Centre-left
Estonia	EK + ER	Centre-right
Hungary	MSzP + SZDSZ	Centre-left
Latvia	JP + LPP + ZZS + TB/LNNK	Centre-right
Lithuania	LSDP	Left
Poland	SLD + UP + PSL	Left
Slovakia	SDKU + SMK + KDH + ANO	Centre-right
Slovenia	LDS + ZLSD + SLS+ SKD + DeSUS	Centre-left

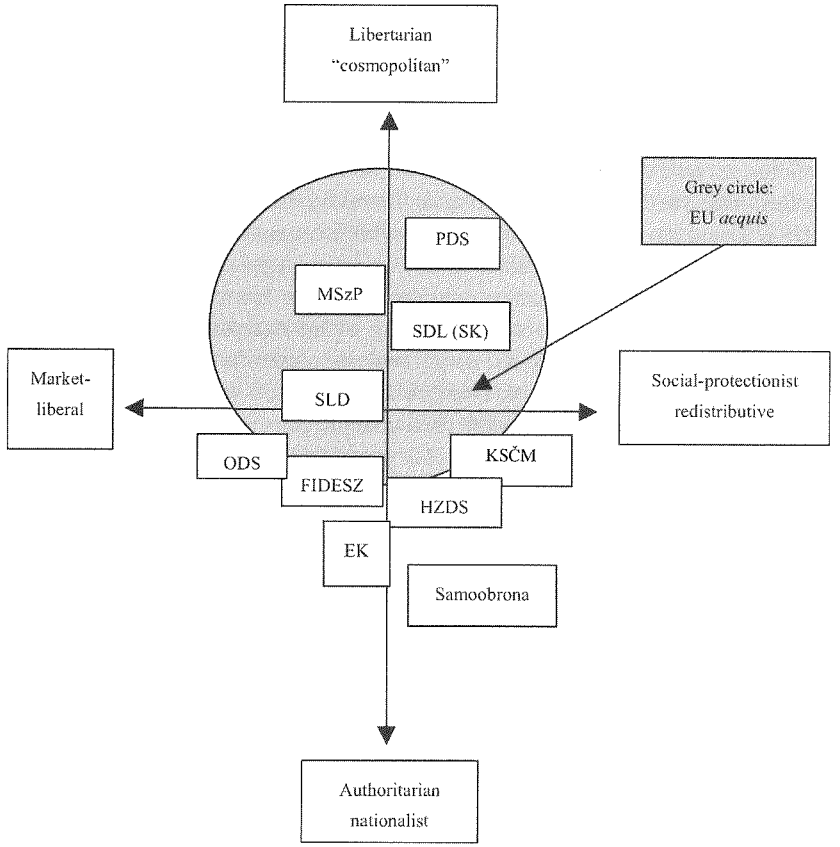
In this context, left-wing parties strive to protect the social components of the market economy, while liberals seek to avoid the feared return of elements of a planned economy. If one looks at the course and outcome of the accession negotiations, it becomes clear from the host of conflicting demands and transition regulations agreed that the structures and interests of the former accession countries are far from congruent, and very considerable differences have emerged.[6]

Linked with this are ideas concerning the future development of the integration project. This has two dimensions: first, the relationship between national sovereignty and supranational European governance; and, second, the extension of 'positive integration' or, more specifically, the control and regulation of trans-national markets which emerged as a result of 'negative integration'. The Eurosceptical attitude of the former Czech prime minister and now state president Václav Klaus of the liberal-conservative Civic Democratic Party (ODS) was founded on his economic-liberal rejection, for example, of the Common Agricultural Policy,[7] as well as his desire to defend Czech sovereignty from attacks by 'Brussels bureaucrats'. The Czech and German successor parties complain about the lack of strong economic governance at the European level, which should, they assert, protect workers and the environment, and provide for social justice. Figure 1 depicts this situation.

In Figure 1, the shaded circle represents the political positions permissible within the framework of the *acquis* and the Copenhagen Criteria. It leans towards market-liberal orientations, since the EU is at present characterized more by market integration than by supranational market control and redistribution. Before the Amsterdam Treaty, the position of the EU circle was even more inclined in this direction. Some parties have exemplary positions that are either fully EU-compatible (for example those of the Hungarian Socialist Party, MSzP), while others have more ambiguous stances that place them in potential conflict with European positions. These parties include the Hungarian *Fidesz*, the Czech ODS, Vladimír Mečiar's HZDS in Slovakia, the Czech communists, and the Estonian Centre Party, EK (which, before the Estonian referendum, called on voters to reject accession). Some lie well outside the EU consensus, the most notable of which is Andrzej Lepper's *Samoobrona* in Poland.

The extent to which parties attempt to enhance their profile with a European policy position, and particularly with a stance on EU accession, also depends on the importance of this issue in the society and politics of their country. A big party will not go out on a limb explicitly to oppose a broad national consensus in favour of integration (see Table 1), while in a more sceptical environment this can certainly be an option (as was the case, for example, in Estonia). Also important here is whether the parties in question form part of the government or not.

FIGURE 1
ACCESSION COUNTRY POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE EUROPEAN POLITICAL FIELD



In this respect Eastern and Central Europe is not particularly different from the 15 member states of the old EU. The question of European integration plays a relatively minor role in shaping and moulding electoral competition. No important and electorally significant party is against EU membership or accession. Even in countries where the population is relatively Eurosceptical, such as the UK, Sweden and Denmark, or the Baltic states among the accession countries (see Table 1), the big parties are not totally against membership, but rather reject particular policies (for example, the single currency) or the further restriction of national sovereignty. Although the advocates of accession achieved satisfactory – indeed, often considerable – majorities in their referendums, turnouts were frequently very low. The 'yes' vote, as a

proportion of all those entitled to vote, exceeded 50 per cent only in Lithuania and Slovenia (see Table 1).

The European Policies of Selected Successor Parties

In order to gain a closer understanding of how communist successor parties deal with questions of European integration, it is necessary to look at the policies, as well as statements and (if available) programmes, of the successor parties concerned (in this case Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and the GDR). Those investigated here are the successor parties of the former state-socialist parties whose character is now mostly social-democratic: the SLD in Poland, the SDL in Slovakia and the MSzP in Hungary. The KSČM in the Czech Republic represents something of an exception, since it retains the word 'Communist' in its name and is committed to corresponding aims.[8] The German Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the successor party of the Socialist Unity Party (SED), represents another special case as it became part of the party system of a unified Germany, which has always been a member state of the EU. In the following sections, I analyse the programmatic positions of the parties listed above, and the extent to which they are embedded in the party system of their respective country and, in particular, their European policy positions.

The Polish 'Union of the Democratic Left'

The Union of the Democratic Left (*Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej* – SLD) is the social-democratic successor of the old state-socialist party. The SLD was founded before the parliamentary elections in 1992. It consists of some 30 groupings, led by the Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland (*Socjal-demokracja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* – SdRP).[9] The SLD no longer describes itself as openly left-wing and clearly distances itself, particularly in terms of economics, from the objectives of its socialist predecessors.[10] The SLD has even been criticized as 'crypto-liberal' by its current coalition partner, the Union of Labour (UP), which – on account of its trade union past (in Solidarity) – possesses stronger social-protectionist orientations.[11]

The SLD won the national election in 1993 and the government that it led (together with the Polish Peasant Party – PSL) submitted the Polish accession application in 1994. During its 1993–97 term of office, and also since 2001, it has decisively driven the Polish reform and EU preparation process. The SLD Prime Minister, Józef Oleksy (1995–96), sat as representative of the parliament in the European Convention. During the accession negotiations, the party found it much more straightforward to reach agreement with the EU than did its conservative predecessor because, unlike the centre-right coalition, it did not have to take account of strong Eurosceptical forces

within its own camp.[12] In the Polish party system, however, the SLD has taken on – just as the weak liberal right has done – pro-European positions, while a large part of the religious right and rural parties range from sceptical to positively anti-European. Indeed, the Alliance called on its supporters before the referendum to vote for accession.[13]

In the EU Accession referendum on 7 and 8 June 2003, 77.45 per cent of Poles who voted did so in favour of accession to the European Union and 22.55 per cent against; the turnout was 58.85 per cent.[14] Before the referendum four of the parties represented in parliament backed accession – the SLD, the PSL, the Citizens' Platform (*Platforma Obywatelska* – PO) and Law and Justice (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* – PiS). Among the opponents of accession were the two national-conservative parties, the Polish League of Families (*Liga Polskich Rodzin* – LPR) and the Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland (*Samoobrona Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*).[15]

Our understanding of the SLD's European policy stance is mostly based on statements by the Polish foreign minister, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz (SLD), and the president of the Sejm's European Committee, Józef Oleksy (SLD). These statements concentrate primarily on national security and the EU's policy towards all its eastern neighbours. Although they emphasize the significance of the EU as a community with shared values, this – both quantitatively and qualitatively in SLD rhetoric – plays a comparatively minor role as both politicians have focused their attention much more on external policies. Only during the convention on the future of Europe were they forced to develop their positions further on the internal structure and policies of the EU.

Four 'institutions of security' in particular are associated with the security aspect of the party's European policy: the US, NATO, and the EU's common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and security and defence policy (ESDP). Foreign minister Cimoszewicz makes it clear that maintaining Poland's security is the principal goal of Polish foreign policy and that the guaranteeing of this security is directly linked to NATO membership. He also supports the development of the CFSP and the ESDP, while emphasizing that one aim of this development should be support for the US. By this he means that Europe should not become 'stronger' for its own sake or as a counterweight to the US, but rather it should be a stronger partner of the US as Europe's security depends upon America and transatlantic co-operation.[16] For this reason a European security and defence identity should be kept within NATO structures and not detached from the alliance.[17] Cimoszewicz makes it clear that Poland is striving to become the main partner, not of other European countries, but of the United States:

> Through co-operation and dialogue with the USA we will strive to exert adequate influence on decisions concerning the policy of NATO

> towards the states of Central and Eastern Europe, especially on issues regarding the further enlargement of the Alliance and its partnership with Russia. In this way we would like to consolidate the image of Poland as the main partner of the United States in the region and one of the most important partners of the USA in Europe.[18]

This verbal confirmation of Polish solidarity was shortly followed by action when Prime Minister Leszek Miller (SLD), with seven other European leaders, signed a letter entitled 'Europe and America must stand united', supporting the US position on Iraq.[19]

The second main emphasis of Polish European policy is the relationship with the non-EU-accession countries of Eastern Europe. For all the importance which Poland attaches to its relationship with the West, it has a strong interest in not shutting out 'the East' and once more having to endure a divided continent. Asked what it meant when the former president of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, mentioned on a number of occasions that Poland was important for the EU in its relations with countries to its East, Cimoszewicz replied:

> We attach particular importance to building a civic society – a fundamental guarantee that all democratic tendencies last ... Poland's task will consist in explaining, motivating and directing our European partners to define the policy toward Eastern Europe exactly in this fashion.[20]

There are no developed ideas concerning the future structure or 'finality' of the EU in the statements of SLD members. Only the president of the Sejm's European Committee, Józef Oleksy (SLD), has anything to say on that subject within the framework of a debate on the future of Europe. Here too, however, he only vaguely endorses a federal system, while the details will be discussed only after accession.[21] The SLD-led Polish government strongly supported the inclusion of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the Constitution,[22] while Cimoszewicz (SLD) strongly defended the idea of including a reference to God (sought by conservative Polish representatives).[23]

The Czech Republic's Neo-Communists (KSČM)

The neo-communist Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (*Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy* – KSČM) did not undergo substantial reforms after 1989, although it does now accept the democratic system within which it now finds itself. Within the Czech party system, it occupied positions on the far left, while the centre-left was colonized by the Social Democrats (ČSSD), a group with long-standing historical roots in the country. Indeed, the Czech Republic is the only post-communist polity where historical

social democrats rather than reformed successor parties won elections and formed a government.

The KSČM emerged from the most recent election in 2002 with 18.51 per cent of the vote, making it the third-strongest party after the Social Democrats with 30.2 per cent of the vote, and the conservative Civic Democratic Party (ODS) with 24.47 per cent. The KSČM was none the less the only Czech party that actually increased its share of the vote. In the referendum on EU accession on 13 and 14 June 2003 the Czech people returned a clear majority in favour: 77.3 per cent of the voters said yes to the EU on a turnout of 55.2 per cent.[24] The share of yes votes by party was above 80 per cent for all major parties except for the KSČM, where only 37 per cent of supporters voted for accession.[25] In the European election of 2004, the KSČM benefited from its opposition role and won six of the 24 Czech seats in the European Parliament.

The KSČM advocates European integration but is strongly opposed to the EU in its current form.[26] The KSČM expressly emphasizes that the Czech Republic's future does not lie in isolation; that integration, both economic and political, is of central importance; and that the development of this integration will lead to both greater economic efficiency and cultural enrichment.[27] At the same time, it takes the view that the European Union is not capable of handling this development in the right way:

> However, [the KSČM] does not overlook the harsh pressures in the present European Union, which are aimed at restricting social certainties, or the mushrooming bureaucracy and increasing profits of the biggest transnational monopolies, made at the expense of wide sections of the population. We reject the EU in its current form.[28]

Although the Czech communists believe that the project of economic and political integration needs to be fundamentally restructured, the KSČM does accept the need and value of the Social Charter, EU environmental policy and aid programmes for regional development.[29] However, the party rejects the European Central Bank in its present form.[30] One area which, according to the KSČM, should not be integrated into the EU – and definitely not into NATO – is security and defence policy. The Czech communists regard the OSCE as an alternative which could constitute 'a realistic and efficient structure of European security'.[31] 'It [the KSČM] emphatically rejected NATO membership and promoted the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) as an alternative'.[32] The KSČM pleads consistently against the further 'Americanization' of the European continent and for the creation of an alternative to the EU, for a 'common project for a socialist Europe'.[33] In so far as the common European security and defence policy

(ESDP) serves the purpose of developing an independent European policy separate from the American line, the KSČM supports it.[34]

In terms of a referendum on EU accession, it was mainly the Communists who came out strongly in support of the people being given the opportunity to decide. In the course of the national debate on EU accession the KSČM's stances became increasingly clear, and it ended up by calling for a rejection of Czech accession.[35] In the *International Herald Tribune* the KSČM president was quoted as saying 'people can expect to be disillusioned. The conditions we negotiated for our country are bad',[36] while deputy leader Václav Exner expressed himself in similar fashion at a press conference at KSČM party headquarters:

> We continue to take the view that the accession conditions negotiated by the Czech government, like the accession conditions negotiated by the new member states in general, are unfavourable. The outcome of the referendum has done nothing to change that.[37]

The Slovak 'Party of the Democratic Left'

The Party of the Democratic Left (SDL) was one of the most vigorous earlier reformers among the various successor parties in Eastern and Central Europe. Its position in the Slovak party system was determined by the unique polarization of the Slovak polity between the long-dominant Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), led by the authoritarian populist, Vladimír Mečiar, and all other parties. The HZDS remained the strongest party at the 2002 election. Mečiar, with his nationalist-authoritarian rhetoric, had long blocked further EU integration. As a result, Slovakia was not included in the Luxembourg group of first candidates in 1997. In 1998, however, a broad democratic coalition managed to remove Mečiar (as had previously been achieved in 1994, but only temporarily). The SDL was prominently represented in both victorious anti-Mečiar coalitions in 1994 and 1998. Although the SDL possessed a number of portfolios in the cabinet, the most prominent of this was clearly the finance ministry, where Brigita Schmögnerová drew much criticism for her reform-oriented austerity measures. Internal party conflicts eventually led to Schmögnerová's resignation in 2002, and ultimately to electoral defeat.

The SDL's share of the vote in 2002 fell from over 13 per cent to 1.4 per cent, and it is no longer represented in parliament. The Slovak left is now deeply divided and weak, not least because its electoral potential was for a long time drawn off by the HZDS. In parliament the left is now represented by the orthodox communists (KSS) and a new party, *Smer* (Direction). In the European elections of 2004, the SDL won one seat (for its vice-chairman

Vladimír Manka) in an electoral coalition with *Smer*, which won three of the 14 Slovak seats.

At the referendum on 16 and 17 May 2003 the Slovaks showed that they were, to some extent, tired of voting: only 52 per cent of the electorate – a mere two per cent above the minimum 50 per cent threshold required for the vote to be valid – found their way to the polling booths, although they came out surprisingly strongly in favour of accession, 92.5 per cent of voters backing it.[38] According to surveys, the Slovak people associate the EU with prosperity, and hope to find a solution to their economic and social problems through EU accession.[39]

The SDL was always one of the driving forces behind Slovakia's EU accession. At the first meeting of the National Convention on the Future of Europe both Jozef Migaš, at that time speaker of the parliament and SDL party chairman, and Peter Weiss, at that time chairman of the parliament's foreign policy committee (and SDL founding chairman), made important speeches. Migaš was in favour of a Europe of citizens, federal structures and a strengthening of the European parliament. Weiss underlined the political significance of European unification and of the European social model and called for the incorporation of the charter of human rights into the European Constitution.[40] After having left the Slovak government, Brigita Schmögnerová wrote a book on the European social model, calling for a 'third way' between traditional redistribution and neo-liberal dismantling of the welfare state.

In terms of the role of the EU Commission, the SDL called for the direct election of the EU president, and supported an increase in the commission's power to initiate legislation. It favoured a reduction in the number of commissioners in order to improve internal efficiency. As regards the council of ministers, the SDL supported its transformation into a chamber of nations. The SDL opposed an additional chamber of national parliaments since institutionally it would represent a retrograde step. The SDL wanted to strengthen the European parliament's co-decision-making rights, and it supported the introduction of a European Constitution that would contain fundamental rights and a division of powers between the institutions. The charter of fundamental rights should, so it was asserted, also be incorporated into the Constitution and this should be binding, and clearly reflect the importance of maintaining the European social model. The Union should none the less know its limits and remember that it exists to facilitate member states and citizens, as well as to defend the multicultural character of the European continent.[41]

The emphasis placed on the European social model by the SDL reflects domestic political cleavages. The conservative–liberal government enacted one of the most liberal reform programmes among all new member states and the SDL hoped to use European integration as a way to protect as much as possible of the Slovak welfare state.

The manifestos that the SDL produced for the European elections demanded 'a strong and social Europe'. That implied a further deepening of political and economic integration in order to meet the expectations of the citizens regarding an effective union while avoiding a European 'super-state'. The SLD wanted stronger co-ordination of the EU's economic and social policies, including more democratic control of the European Central Bank. The freedom of movement of labour should not, so it was said, be constrained to states within the EU. Regional policy needed to be strengthened so that it focused on investment in infrastructure and the promotion of rural tourism. The Common Agricultural Policy would need to be reformed, in order to create more jobs in rural areas and more ecological, agricultural production. All citizens should have access to free public services, and in particular education including (in the long term) access to the internet. In the area of foreign policy, the SDL favoured a common foreign policy of the EU independent from NATO. This independence should not, however, endanger the transatlantic relationship, although quite how this would work in practice was never made clear. The SDL supported further enlargements of the EU, applying the same criteria and conditions Slovakia had to face during its candidacy.[42]

The German Party of Democratic Socialism

The Party of Democratic Socialism (*Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus* – PDS) is the successor party of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* – SED), the ruling party of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The GDR ceased to exist when it acceded to the FRG in October 1990, concurrently joining the European Union. The PDS has remained for the most part a regional party with relatively strong support in the five eastern *Länder* and Berlin, where it benefits from grievances that have arisen from the consequences of unification, such as de-industrialization, widespread unemployment and rising socio-economic inequality. In the western *Länder* it tries to occupy the role of a radical left-wing party: a position that a number of minor communist parties and the Green Party have fought for over a number of years. At the federal level the PDS has never won much more than five per cent of the vote, frequently relying on direct mandates in eastern Berlin constituencies to enter parliament. Within the German party landscape, the PDS is often seen as a protest party that does not offer a feasible policy alternative, but asks for radical reform – if not a fundamental change – of the system. That attitude applies to its European policy just as it does to other areas.

As a party of an existing EU member state, the PDS participated in several European elections and won seats in the European parliament in 1999 and 2004. In 2004, it benefited from the weakness of (and the voters' disgruntlement with) the ruling SPD, acquiring seven of the 99 German seats. In the European parliament it is a member of the umbrella United European Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) group that encompasses, among others, the United Left of Spain, the Communist Party of France, Communist Refoundation of Italy, the Communist Party of Portugal, the Communist Party of Greece, *Synaspismos* of Greece, the Left Party (VP) of Sweden, the Left Alliance (*Vas*) of Finland, and the Socialist People's Party (SF) of Denmark.[43] In many regards, the PDS has developed its European policy much more than the successor parties in the former accession countries. This is not surprising given its much deeper involvement in European politics.

Its European policy focuses primarily on economic and social areas.[44] The PDS's positions derive from its ideological heritage as a leftist party and from its position in the German party system. Above all, it seeks a strong state that is not scared to intervene in social and economic affairs and particularly in the battle against unemployment and social injustice. Since it sees the viability of these policies as being endangered by the forces of globalization, the PDS favours a strong European social model. On the other hand, it is well aware of the fact that market integration within the EU reinforces the very same competitive pressures that often lead to more inequality and unemployment. It criticizes, in particular, the stability and growth pact because of its stability bias, which prevents national Keynesian policies of demand management and redistribution that could be used to counteract the effects of globalization and integration.

Since the PDS is to a large extent a regional party, representing a relatively poor part of Germany, it seeks to protect the flow of EU regional aid into the new *Länder*. Thus it supports continuing assistance for poor regions in the old EU-15 that will suffer on account of the EU's enlargement. The concomitant lowering of the EU average income may end the eligibility of much of eastern Germany for the EU's regional funds, since their per capita income will no longer be below 75 per cent of the EU average.

The PDS favours a pacifist CFSP with a strong emphasis on multilateralism and 'soft power'.[45] It rejects US policy towards Iraq but goes beyond that: it did not support NATO intervention against Serbia, and does not want a military role for the EU at all. Instead, it wants to expand and strengthen European efforts in the fields of human rights policy, development co-operation and a more just world order.[46]

Conclusion: Co-operation and Conflict in the Enlarged European Union

In terms of electoral competition within the former accession countries' political systems, the successor parties have adopted very different attitudes

towards European integration. The Slovak and Polish successor parties were strong advocates of accession and of the ongoing integration process. Opponents that base their political platforms on nationalist grounds are usually to be found overwhelmingly on the right, although the orthodox Czech (and Slovakian) communists combine arguments about sovereignty with left-wing ideological positions (primarily against international capital and imperialism). However, in the latter field, the orthodox communists do admit that only a united Europe would have a chance of going its own way, as this is something that is no longer practical for individual countries. The social objective of all left-wing forces is to preserve a European welfare state model in the face of the forces of economic globalization. Neither the German PDS nor the Czech KSČM is against European integration as such, but they do favour a social (or socialist) Europe with a much stronger emphasis on protecting the interests of European citizens.

The evolving European policy of the successor parties in the new member states cannot be understood without taking into account the intensive dialogue and networking with their West European sister parties. West European parties, particularly social-democratic ones, in the old member states have tried to steer their partners in the accession countries towards compatible development paths. For this purpose, particularly within the framework of the Socialist International (SI) or the Party of European Socialists (PES), the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity has been useful, co-ordinating with foundations close to national political parties (such as the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the Alfred Mozer Foundation, the Karl Renner Institute, the Olof Palme Centre and the Jean Jaurès Foundation). The radical left, through bodies such as the PDS-affiliated Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, also sought to network with its European partners, even if this was difficult because of some of their inherent Euroscepticism (the KSČM being the best case in point).

The successor parties are now likely to become rapidly embedded in their respective party families. As early as 1995, the Slovak SDL and the Polish SLD were granted observer status by the Party of European Socialists (together with four other leftist parties of Eastern and Central Europe). At the PES congress in 1999 in Milan, the 12 observer parties from Eastern and Central Europe became associate members.[47] In May 2003, the presidency of the PES decided to grant full membership to six parties, among them the Polish SLD, while the weak and fragmented Slovak SDL remained an associate member. A similar process took place within the Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL), which accepted the German PDS first as an associate member and as a full member from 1999. In 2003, as part of the accession process, seven parties joined the group, with parties from Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Latvia and Slovakia becoming observers. Among the three new Czech observers, the KSČM is by far the most significant.

The attempt to generate political and institutional co-operation and integration has brought about some verbal harmonization but it has not been able to prevent major conflicts, in particular in the area of foreign policy. The leader of the Polish SLD was one of those Central and East European statesmen who signed the 'letter of eight' which sided with the US and the UK against Germany and France over the Iraq War. If one looks at the foreign policy standpoints of individual parties more closely one may discern a clear dividing line between – roughly speaking – 'Atlanticists' and 'Europeans'. The first place the security issue in the foreground and emphasize the need for American engagement on European soil, and the integration of European security structures in NATO. In this group we find above all the Polish SLD. It is interesting that two communist successor parties, the SLD and the LSDP, are among the Atlanticist 'hardliners', having fully distanced themselves from their earlier aims and ideals.

On the other 'European' side one can find the Czech CSSD and also a successor party, the Hungarian MSzP. Their party programmes are markedly different from those of the other parties. Both give political integration considerable emphasis and advocate the reinforcement of supranational structures with the European Union – even, in the case of the MSzP, at the expense of national sovereignty. The second point of emphasis in their EU agenda is that of European identity, to which the Czechs and the Hungarians apparently feel more strongly bound than do the Poles or the parties in the Baltic states. The Czech KSČM is an exception as it is in favour of deeper European integration but is opposed to the EU in its present form, and is the only successor party to declare its loyalty to communist ideas emanating from its past as a state party.

These conflicts over foreign policy will be complemented and superseded by further conflicts regarding the core business of the European Union: institutional and constitutional questions (voting weights and so on), the budget and the reform of major spending policies such as the common agricultural policy, regional policy and economic and monetary union.[48] Thus, the attitudes of the post-communist parties in Eastern and Central Europe reflect the conflicts that the old EU-15 has had to cope with, and these conflicts are likely to continue not just because of the scale of the EU's enlargement, but also because of the heterogeneity of the parties involved.

NOTES

1. For a general overview on the development of the post-communist successor parties after 1989, see J.T. Ishiyama (ed.), *Communist Successor Parties in Post-Communist Politics* (Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science, 1999); A.M. Grzymala-Busse, *Redeeming the Communist Past: The Regeneration of Communist Parties in East Central Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); A. Bozóki and J.T. Ishiyama (eds.), *The Communist Successor Parties of Central and Eastern Europe* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2002); J.L.

Curry and J.B. Urban (eds.), *The Left Transformed in Post-Communist Societies: The Cases of East–Central Europe, Russia and Ukraine* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003).

2. See N. Crook, M. Dauderstädt and A. Gerrits, *Social Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe* (Amsterdam: FES, 2002), p.22; J. Sloam, *Policy Transfer and Programmatic Change in Communist Successor Parties in East–Central Europe* (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, Institute for German Studies, 2003), available at <http://www.igs.bham.ac.uk/research/Policytransferweb.pdf>, accessed 3 July 2003; P. Taggart and A. Szczerbiak, 'Parties, Positions and Europe: Euroscepticism in the EU Candidate States of Central and Eastern Europe', Working Paper No.46, Sussex European Institute, 2001, pp.11–12.
3. See H. Kitschelt, Z. Mansfeldova, R. Markowski and G. Tóka, *Post-Communist Party Systems: Competition, Representation, and Inter-Party Co-operation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
4. See G. Marks and C.J. Wilson, 'The Past in the Present: A Cleavage Theory of Party Response to European Integration', *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol.30, No.3 (2000), pp.433–59.
5. See P.A. Hall and D.W. Soskice (eds.), *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
6. See M. Dauderstädt, 'Interessen und Hindernisse bei der EU-Osterweiterung. Die Rolle des "acquis communautaire"', in *Politikinformation Osteuropa 98* (Bonn: FES, 2002).
7. It was the common agricultural policy that caused Václav Klaus to demand in Davos that the EU revise its policy rather than force the then candidate countries to adopt it, at which EU Commissioner van den Broek made his famous remark that it was the Czech Republic that wanted to join the EU, not the opposite.
8. On terminology, see M. Dauderstädt, A. Gerrits and G. Markus, 'Three Roots of Social Democracy in Post-Communist Societies', in M. Dauderstädt, A. Gerrits and G. Markus, *Troubled Transition. Social Democracy in East–Central Europe* (Amsterdam: FES, 1999), p.69ff; G. Meyer, 'Demokratie und Marktwirtschaft – ohne soziales Netz? Parteien, Wählerverhalten und politische Kultur. Konflikte und Konjunkturen der Macht: Das Beispiel der Sozialdemokraten', in Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg (ed.), *Der Bürger im Staat*, No.3 (1997), p.2; Kitschelt *et al.*, *Post-Communist Party Systems*, p.16.
9. See K. Ziemer and C.-Y. Matthes, 'Das politische System Polens', in W. Ismayr (ed.), *Die politischen Systeme Osteuropas* (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 2002), pp.215–16; D. Bingen, 'Die "Sozialdemokratie der Republik Polen" (SdRP) in der "Demokratischen Linksallianz" (SLD)', in G. Hirscher (ed.), *Kommunistische und postkommunistische Parteien in Osteuropa: Ausgewählte Fallstudien* (Munich: Hanns Seidel Stiftung, 2002), pp.70–71.
10. See K.-O. Lang, 'Polens Demokratische Linksallianz – eine post-postkommunistische Partei? Vom Bündnis SLD zur Partei SLD', *Aktuelle Analysen des Bundesinstituts für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien 4* (Cologne: Bundesinstitut für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien, 2000), p.3.
11. See J. Bugajski, *Political Parties of Eastern Europe: A Guide to Politics in the Post-Communist Era* (London: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 2002), p.172.
12. See N. von Redecker, 'Polen', in W. Weidenfeld and W. Wessels (eds.), *Jahrbuch der Europäischen Integration* (Berlin and Bonn: Europa-Union Verlag, 2002), p.421.
13. According to Mildenberger, populist anti-Western voices within the leadership occasionally make themselves heard: see M. Mildenberger, 'Der Europäische Integrationsprozess aus Sicht der Beitrittskandidaten Polen, Tschechien und Slowakei', *DGAP-Jahrbuch 2000* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg-Verlag, 2001), p.187.
14. See <http://www.chancen-erweitern.gv.at/default.pxml?lang = de&kap = 186>; accessed 20 Aug. 2004.
15. See H. Tewes, *Polen vor dem Referendum* (Bonn: KAS, 2003), available at <http://www.kas.de/publikationen/2003/1925_dokument.html>; accessed 15 July 2003.
16. See W. Cimoszewicz, 'Future of the Common Foreign and Security Policy', lecture by the minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Poland Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation Berlin, 12 March 2003, available at <http://www.msz.gov.pl/start.php>; accessed 3 July 2003.

17. See W. Cimoszewicz, presentation at the 16th Session of the Sejm on 14 March 2002; available at <http://ww.polandembassy.org/Policy/p4-1.htm>; accessed 16 July 2003.
18. Ibid.
19. See J.M. Aznar, J.-M.D. Barroso, S. Berlusconi, T. Blair, P. Medgyessy, L. Miller and A.F. Rasmussen, 'Europe and America must stand united', statement of 30 Jan. 2003, available at <http://www.kprm.gov.pl/english/1433_5777.htm>; accessed 16 July 2003.
20. Foreign Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz interviewed by *Warsaw Voice*, May 2003, available on <http://www.msz.gov.pl/start.php>; accessed 3 July 2003.
21. See Center for International Relations, 'The Future of Europe in the Opinion of Polish Politicians', transcript of a debate, *Reports & Analyses*, No.1 (2002).
22. See C. Franck and D. Pyszna-Nigge (eds.), *Positions of 10 Central and Eastern European Countries on EU Institutional Reforms: Analytical Survey in the Framework of the CEEC-DEBATE Project* (Louvain-la-Neuve and Brussels: Université Catholique de Louvain, 2003), at <http://europa.eu.int/futurum/documents/other/oth010603_3_en.pdf>, p.70; accessed 20 Aug. 2004.
23. Ibid., p.80.
24. See 'Schweik zieht in die Welt hinaus', *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 16 June 2003, available at <http://www.fr-aktuell.de/ressorts/nachrichten_und_politik/international/?cnt = 231869>; accessed 20 June 2003.
25. See K. Larischová, *Zum Ausgang des EU-Referendums in der Tschechischen Republik* (Prague: Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 18 June 2003), p.3.
26. See *Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia: Political Programme*, available at <http://www.kscm.cz/news_detail.asp?menu = 1&necId2 = 321&necId = 321&newId = 492>; accessed 18 June 2003.
27. See D. Hough and V. Handl, 'The (Post-)Communist Left and the European Union: The Czech KSCM and the German PDS', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol.37, No.3 (2004), pp.319–39.
28. See *Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia: Political Programme.*
29. See V. Handl, *Die Tschechische Kommunistische Partei: Orthodoxes Fossil oder erfolgreiche neo-kommunistische Protestpartei?*, Analysen der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Politikinformation Osteuropa, No.105, Oct. 2002 (Bonn: FES, 2002), p.12.
30. See Lang, 'Polens Demokratische Linksallianz', p.29.
31. From the report of the Central Committee of the KSCM on party activities since the 4th party congress, cited in V. Handl, *Die Tschechische Kommunistische Partei*, p.12.
32. See *Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia: Political Programme.*
33. Ibid.
34. See Lang, 'Polens Demokratische Linksallianz', p.29.
35. See Larischová, *Zum Ausgang des EU-Referendums in der Tschechischen Republik*, p.3.
36. M. Grebenícek, cited in 'Czech Voters Say "Yes" to EU', *International Herald Tribune*, available at <http://www.iht.com/cgi-bin/generic.cgi?template = articleprint.tmplh&ArticleId = 99560>; accessed 16 June 2003.
37. See G. Schubert, 'Das kommunistische "Nein" zur EU und die Haltung der Partei nach dem Referendum', available at <http://www.radio.cz/de/artikel/42176>; accessed 16 July 2004.
38. See <http://www.eureferendum.sk>; accessed 28 July 2003.
39. See C. Thanei, *Wahlen zum slowakischen Parlament: Regierungsmehrheit für die Mitte-Rechts-Parteien*, KAS-Auslandsinformation, No.10 (Bonn: KAS, 2002), p.99.
40. See V. Bilčík, 'Slovakia's Future of Europe Debate', *Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs*, Vol.3, No.1 (2002), pp.14–31.
41. Ibid., synoptic table, p.26.
42. See <http://www.sdl.sk/euromanifest.htm>; accessed 24 Aug. 2004.
43. See D. Hough, 'The Programmatic Development of the Eastern German PDS: Learning What from Whom and Under What Conditions?', in the present collection, pp.144–164, for further information on how the PDS has interacted with these organizations.
44. See also ibid.

45. See PDS, *Alternativen sind machbar: Für ein soziales, demokratisches und friedliches Europa! PDS-Wahlprogramm für die Wahlen zum Europäischen Parlament am 13. Juni 2004*, available at <http://www.pds-pirmasens.de/PDS_Europa-Politik/pds_europa-politik.html>; accessed 16 July 2004.
46. See PDS, *Europa mit Programm*, available at <http://www.sozialisten.de/wahlen2004/wahlprogramm/langfassung/index.htm>; accessed 24 Aug. 2004.
47. S. Hix and U. Lesse, *Shaping a Vision: A History of the Party of European Socialists, 1957–2002* (Brussels: Party of European Socialists, 2002).
48. M. Dauderstädt, *Conflicting Distributive Interests in a Deepening and Widening Europe: A Challenge to the Emerging Europolity* (Bonn: FES, Reihe Europäische Politik, 2004).