



## Foreign & Commonwealth Office

### **Meeting with Dr Andrew Glencross, University of Stirling, in London, June 2014**

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1. A Foreign Office official interviewed Dr Andrew Glencross, lecturer in International Politics at the University of Stirling, on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2014, for the UK Balance of Competences Review of EU Enlargement.
2. Responding to questions on his written evidence, Dr Glencross said that the Big Bang enlargement of 2004 had been a turning point for the EU: accession countries were NATO-friendly, and this enlargement wave coincided with significant reform within new member states as well as within the EU itself (the Constitutional Treaty followed by the Lisbon Treaty). Where there were limited results in terms of reforms achieved before accession e.g. the justice system in Bulgaria and Romania, the explanation lies in the EU's belief that blocking accession would actually undo legal reform already achieved.
3. For future eastward enlargement, in light of the events in Ukraine, the issue of whether an Eastern European country was a member of NATO would probably be a suitable barometer for whether it could accede to the EU without antagonising Russia. Indeed, the precedent for what happened in Ukraine can be seen in the case of Armenia. Its government had a last minute change of heart – at Russia's behest – to reject an EU Association Agreement, an outcome no policy makers had expected.
4. The European Parliament (EP) had the potential to hold up accession progress, by launching its own reports on compliance procedures. In doing so, the EP could politicise enlargement, with enlargement questions spilling over into national politics, especially if instrumentalized by the kind of anti-EU populist parties that did well in the 2014 EP elections. At the same time, the EU has more tools at its disposal now to facilitate enlargement negotiations, namely the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security, assisted by the External Action Service. For instance, it is to be expected that these will have a telling role to play in resolving the Macedonia name issue, which is a precondition for enlargement in this area of the Balkans.

5. It is hard to inject momentum into Turkey's accession aspirations, given its refusal to stick to the terms of the Customs Union and continued discriminatory treatment of imports from Cyprus. Having frozen negotiations on a number of "chapters" and with Turkey already a Customs Union member, the EU has few threats left to prompt compliance. Hence in this context there is a risk Turkey would re-orient its foreign policy objectives eastwards. Moreover, there is a potential obstacle to Turkish accession in the form of possible national referendums on this enlargement. In France, notably, a 3/5<sup>th</sup> majority in both the Senate and the National Assembly is required to avoid a referendum on new accession countries: a threshold that it might be impossible to reach given the prevalence of populist sentiment in France and the increasing success of the National Front in domestic politics. Associate rather than full membership might thus be a better option for Turkey.