



Organising for EU Enlargement

A challenge for member states and candidate countries

MANAGING EUROPE FROM HOME

The Europeanisation of the Estonian Core Executive

OEUE PHASE I

Occasional Paper 2.1 – 09.03

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FIFTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME



Dublin European Institute
A Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence



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ORGANISING FOR EU ENLARGEMENT:

Challenge for the Member States and the Candidate Countries

The Dublin European Institute, University College Dublin,¹ was awarded, in 2001, a research contract under the EU's Fifth Framework Programme² to carry out a comparative study of the impact of the EU on the structures and processes of public policy in six small countries: **Ireland, Greece, Finland, Estonia, Hungary** and **Slovenia**. The Project's partnership, under the direction of Professor Brigid Laffan, Dublin European Institute, University College Dublin³, includes: Professor Dr. Wolfgang Drechsler, University of Tartu; Professor Teija Tiilkainen, University of Helsinki; Professor Calliope Spanou, University of Athens; Professor Attila Ágh, Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration; and Professor Danica Fink-Hafner, University of Ljubljana.

The aim of the research project was to deepen our understanding of the processes of Europeanisation in a number of the existing member states and some of the candidate states.

The research project encompassed the following three objectives:

- The conduct of research which offers immediate policy relevance to key stakeholders in the enlarging Union;
- The conduct comparative, theoretical and empirical research on the management of EU public policy making in three existing member states – Ireland, Greece and Finland – and three candidate states – Estonia, Hungary and Slovenia;
- The shedding light on the capacity of smaller states to adjust and to adapt to the increasing demands of Europeanisation on their systems of public policy-making and thus to identify the barriers to effective, efficient and accountable management of EU business.

Research Strategy

The research design consisted of two phases and within each phase, two levels of analysis. **Phase I** analysed the management of EU business at the macro level of the core executive and was complemented by a micro case study of a recent policy negotiation using decision analysis. **Phase II** of the research broadened the analytical focus to encompass other levels of government – the EU and sub-state – through multi-levelled governance. Here attention was centred upon the emergence of policy networks and the interaction between public actors and the wider civil society in specific, discrete policy sectors.

¹ National University of Ireland, Dublin (University College Dublin).

² European Commission, Community Research Fifth Framework Programme (Socio-Economic Research).

³ This project forms part of the Governance Research Programme, Institute for the Study of Social Change, University College Dublin, www.ucd.ie/issc/ and www.ucd.ie/govern/intex.htm.

Methodology

The study employed two specific methodologies: historical institutionalism and rational institutionalism in a new and innovative fashion. The use of combined perspectives provided a theoretically innovative and new approach to the study of the Europeanisation process. Both approaches could be used as they were applied to different elements of the empirical research.

Academic and Policy Implications

This study's findings provide insight into the manner in which diverse state traditions, institutions and political and administrative cultures influence national adaptation to EU governance and how the interface between national policy processes and the Brussels arena is managed. It is expected that these findings will assist those making and managing policy, thus facilitating adjustments to the changing European Union while also contributing to the growing academic debate on Europeanisation.

At various stages during the course of this project the research findings and analysis were presented to a range of stakeholders and academics to facilitate feedback and enhance the analytical process. Further details about the Organising for EU Enlargement (OEUE) project are available on the project web site www.oeue.net, along with i) the Project Report, ii) the OEUE Occasional Papers and iii) a selection of papers by the research partners which draw on various aspects their project research.

AUTHORS

Professor Wolfgang Drechsler

Professor Wolfgang Drechsler has held the Chair of Public Administration and Government, University of Tartu since 1996. The theory and history of public administration along with the epistemology of economics and local government feature among his research interests. Professor Drechsler's publications include, 'Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe: Considerations from the 'State Science' Approach', in Castro/Burlamaqui/Chang, eds., *Institutions and the Role of the State* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2000), and 'On the Viability of the Concept of *Staatswissenschaften*', *European Journal of Law and Economics* (Vol. 12, no. 2 (September 2001)). Professor Drechsler has held positions in the German Wissenschaftsrat, the United States Congress and the Office of the Estonian President.

Rainer Kattel

Professor Rainer Kattel holds the Chair of Public Administration and European Studies, Tallinn Technical University. Industry, innovation and state theory feature among his research interests. Reflecting these interests Professor Kattel's publications, in a wide range of academic journals and edited volumes, address economics, society and public administration in Europe.

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Merike Kompus-van der Hoeven is a research fellow with the Department of Public Administration, University of Tartu where she has recently joined the PhD Programme. As head of the Industry Department in Estonia's Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications she has participated in the EU accession negotiations. Her research interests include state involvement in industrial policy and economic development, and EU enlargement. Aspects of these subjects are addressed in her professional publications on Estonian product conformity and freedom of movement in respect to the implementation of EU principles.

Leno Saarniit

Leno Saarniit is a research fellow with the Department of Public Administration, University of Tartu. Her publications address the application and use of public service codes of ethics with particular reference to Estonia. Leno Saarniit's research interests include public ethics and environmental policy.

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Kadri Kallas is a doctoral student and research fellow with the Department of Public Administration, University of Tartu. Her MA thesis addressed Technological Change and Institutional Development of Social Policy after World War II. Comparative political economy, public policy and state philosophy are among Kadri Kallas' research interests.

ABSTRACT

The rise of a national core executive in Estonia

Estonia's integration into the EU has been largely based on institutional and administrative structures created in the process of accession negotiations. This article analyses the core characteristics of these structures. It argues that the main features of the co-ordination and management structures in Estonia are decentralized, with individual ministries responsible for specific issues, and a floating centre of co-ordination between the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, the former gaining in importance in 2002 and 2003. While this system has entailed a rise of administrative capacity in the ministries and introduced a stronger co-ordination culture, it reinforces the power of high officials in the ministries, thereby making horizontal policy co-ordination as well as widespread political discussion more difficult.

INTRODUCTION

The accession negotiations between Estonia and the European Union (EU)⁴, which lasted four years, eight months and thirteen days, were concluded in Copenhagen on 13 December 2002. The Accession Treaty was signed in Athens on 13 April 2003. In the referendum held on 14 September 2003, on the questions of EU accession and the amendment of the Estonian Constitution there was a 66.8 per cent vote in favour of Estonia joining the EU⁵ (see Ojula 2003). For more than a decade, Estonia pursued EU membership, together with membership of NATO, perhaps more than any other political goal.⁶ In political rhetoric, however, just as much emphasis was placed on the issue of sovereignty (Kuus 2002: 394). Even if it can be argued that Estonians' Euroscepticism – which is one of the strongest in candidate countries⁷ – is “just one of several manifestations of the ‘rebellion of underachievers’” or “transition losers”,⁸ this very scepticism highlights tensions between international belonging (EU membership) and managing one's own domestic affairs (sovereignty).⁹ After regaining independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Estonia's aspirations seemed clear: “although the expectations towards EU membership can be grouped under three main labels – economic development and prosperity, security and restoring Estonia's place among the European states – in the first years of independence, security was the principal issue for Estonia” (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003¹⁰; see Drechsler 1995: 114-115).

In practice, negotiations and accession processes to achieve EU membership turned out to be much more down-to-earth, and indeed mainly about institution-building (Dimitrova 2002: 171-172). Admittedly, candidate countries had little basis to negotiate from, as enlargement was about joining the club and not creating a new one. Thus, negotiations as a member of the European Union will be considerably different (Dimitrova 2002: 175; Grzymała-Busse and Innes 2003: 64). Yet, accession management created institutions, which will be carried into membership. In addition, “the scope of the accession agenda goes well beyond the influence of the EU in the governance of current member states, where the EU has no say over issues such as the quality or organization of their political institutions or civil services” (Grabbe 2001: 10-15). High levels of conditionality were attached to this round of enlargement by the Union.

⁴In 1987, the European Economic Community (EEC) became known as the European Community (EC). Following the ratification of the Treaty on European Union, the EC was renamed the European Union (EU). For the sake of consistency the term EU will be used throughout this study to refer to the EEC, EC and EU.

⁵ 64.1 per cent of eligible voters took part in the referendum of which 66.8 per cent voted in favour of joining the EU and 33.2 per cent voted against (see Estonian Ministry for Foreign Affairs: www.vm.ee/eng/kat_453/3984.html consulted 24 September 2003).

⁶ See Fierke and Wiener 1999, and Stefanova 2002 for an attempt to understand these two enlargement processes together.

⁷ See, e.g., the Candidate Countries Eurobarometer for 2002:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/cceb/2002/cceb_2002_highlights_en.pdf.

⁸ Ehin 2002/2003, and Drechsler and Madise 2002, 236 respectively; see also Raik 2002, 143.

⁹ For the ethnopolitical discussion, see Pettai and Hallik 2002, and Feldman 2001; for the Constitutional development since the regaining of the independence, see Drechsler and Annus 2002.

¹⁰ Forthcoming Viks, Külli and Randma-Liiv, Tiina (manuscript 2003), 'Facing the Challenges of EU Accession: Developments of Co-ordination Structures in Estonia', *International Journal of Public Administration* (forthcoming 2004).

The European Union decided in Copenhagen in 1993 that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe could join the EU if they fulfilled a number of criteria (the so-called Copenhagen Criteria).¹¹ In the process of specification of these criteria via a white paper by the Commission (European Commission 1995) and at the Madrid Council meeting on December 16, 1995, administrative capacity emerged as one of the strongest criteria (European Council 1995). As the EU itself did not have and thus could not provide a specific mode of public administration, i.e. could not provide criteria which could measure fulfilment of the requirement, the negotiations resulted in each case in a highly specific and contained structure of institutions, which in turn managed the negotiations, that is, determined the specific positions of a candidate country on a specific issue (Grabbe 2001: 1016-1018; Lippert et al. 2001: 983-984). Estonia, as the other candidate countries, will join the EU with an administrative institutional structure created in the process of negotiations. There certainly will be path dependency.¹² The question is, what are the characteristics of this path dependency? This article analyses the characteristics of Estonia's engagement with the Union after negotiations and before actual membership.¹³

ESTONIA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION: AN OVERVIEW

Estonia's integration into the EU started immediately after the regaining of independence in 1991. In that year, 10 September, Estonia was accepted as a member of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and on 17 September, it became a member of the United Nations. Estonia gained observer status in the West European Union (WEU) on 30 November 1994 and was adopted as a full member of the WEU association in May 1994. In December 1993, a working group was established by the Estonian government to study the political, economic, social, legal, financial and other issues relating to Estonia's possible accession to the EU. The working group consisted of Members of Parliament, government officials and representatives of academic circles. During the two years of its activities, the group established a conceptual foundation for the formulation of Estonia's aims with respect to policies and areas of activity relating to the EU (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003).

Immediately after signing the Free Trade Agreement, concluded between Estonia and the EU on July 18, 1994, preparations were made to initiate the so-called Europe Agreement or Association Agreement which was signed on 12 June 1995, ratified unanimously by the

¹¹ "Membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and, protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. Membership presupposes the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union" (European Council 1993).

¹² On institutions, path dependencies and habits, see Hodgson 2003; on the accession process as path dependent, see further Lippert et al. 2001, 1000; Brinar and Svetlicic 1999, 815-817, on Slovenia; Harmsen 1999 on existing member states; and on The Future of Europe debates and path dependency, Holzinger and Knill 2002.

¹³ The article draws on 11 in-depth semi-structured interviews with high-ranking Estonian politicians, policy makers and bureaucrats, all of whom were intimately involved in the negotiation process. The interviews were conducted during May and June 2002.

Parliament in August 1995 and by the European Parliament on November 15, 1995.¹⁴ Estonia applied for EU membership in November 1995. In December 1995, Estonia was the first post-communist country to become an associate member of the EU without any transition period. In the beginning of the same year, a specific EU-unit, then called the Group of the European Union, was established at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the position of Minister of European Affairs (without portfolio) created (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). However, the position was abolished after just two years in 1997, before the accession process formally started. It was abolished due to 'the growing pressure on legal harmonization and problems in the functioning of the co-ordination structure' (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). Subsequently, the Prime Minister took the lead in managing the accession process.

I STRUCTURES

General structure of the negotiations

The Accession Conference between Estonia and the EU opened under the UK Presidency in Brussels on March 31, 1998. The Estonian Negotiations Delegation was approved by the Government on January 27, 1998. The delegation, consisting of 47 persons in total, was broad-based and included representatives from each ministry (except the Ministry of Defence), the Office for European Integration (OEI) of the State Chancellery (Prime Ministers Office), and the Estonian Mission to the EU in Brussels. The Negotiations Delegation was composed of two main levels: the main delegation or 'core group', and the heads of the working groups.¹⁵

The main delegation consisted of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as the head of the delegation; senior civil servants from all ministries; the Head of the Office for European Integration; and the Head of the Estonian Mission to the European Union. The members of the main delegation conducted and co-ordinated the activities of the respective working groups within their administrative field. Furthermore, the main delegation was responsible for the preparation and completion of final positions. The second level of the Negotiations Delegation was formed by the heads of the working groups. Altogether thirty-three negotiation working groups, headed by ministerial officials, were formed.¹⁶ The working groups were set up by the ministries responsible for respective negotiation chapters, and the heads of the working groups belonged to the Main Delegation of accession negotiations (Streimann 2002: 13-14). The main delegation, as well as the whole negotiating process, relied on the activities of the working groups in terms of substance, form, and time frames. These groups conducted a thorough examination of the *acquis* and a comparative analysis of Estonian legislation. This analysis allowed for the elaboration of proposals for the shaping of negotiating positions of the main

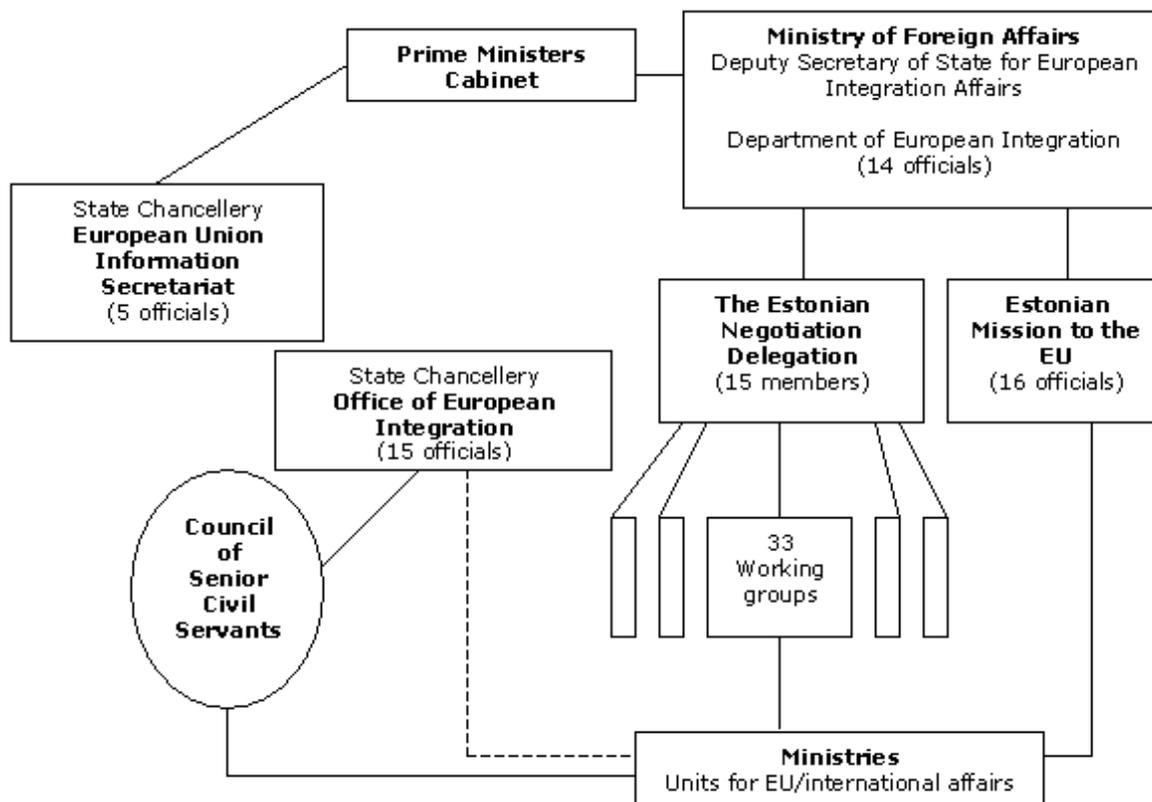
¹⁴ For a discussion of these treaties from the EU perspective as at least initially stalling enlargement, see Friis 1998 and Smith 2000, 813-814.

¹⁵ There was also a Consultative Committee, convened by the Minister of Foreign Affairs; the members of the Committee included representatives of Estonian non-governmental organizations, academic and business circles, as well as well-known generic public figures.

¹⁶ The working groups generally correspond to the chapters of negotiations. The negotiation positions were prepared in the working groups established on the ministerial level. The working groups were usually headed by the heads of ministerial departments or bureaus.

delegation. The Negotiations Task Force served as the principal co-ordinating institution for the Working Groups as well as for the whole delegation; the task force was also responsible for the organisation of the negotiation process with the EU (see Figure 1 for an overview of the general structure; and Lippert et al 2001: 990-1000).

Figure 1. The Structure of the EU negotiations



Source: Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003.

On the basis of the analyses prepared by a working group, the delegation compiled a proposal for the Estonian position on a specific chapter. The Minister of Foreign Affairs consulted, on the basis of these positions and any changes, with the Parliament prior to presenting them to the Government. The Government in turn gave a mandate to the Chief Negotiator who initiated negotiations with the representatives of the EU on the relevant chapter in order to achieve a preliminary agreement. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, acting as the Head of the Delegation, confirmed the agreement reached by the Chief Negotiator and concluded outstanding problems (Streimann 2002: 15).

The general domestic co-ordinating structures were established with the Order of the Government No 79-k of 30 January 1996, "Primary Measures in Integrating the Republic of Estonia with the European Union". The co-coordinating functions were divided between the State Chancellery (Office of European Integration, Council of Senior Civil Servants, European Union Information Secretariat) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Under-Secretary for

European Integration, Department of European Integration, Estonian Mission to the EU) (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). One of the key features of Estonian co-ordination – and of the entire negotiation process as such – was that the Bureau for Negotiations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was responsible for co-ordination of the work of the Delegation and the working groups; yet at the ministerial level, internal co-ordination of Estonian accession negotiations was the responsibility of Office of the European Integration (founded in 30 January 1996): ‘the Negotiation Delegation under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is supported by the OEI’ (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). This dual structure essentially defined the nature of Estonia’s core executive for managing European integration. It can be explained structurally as originating from the fact that the relations between Estonia and the EU started as international relations which eventually evolved into domestic relations of multi-level governance (see also Hafner 1999: 783-784). The second key feature of Estonian negotiation process was its extensive decentralization. The management of negotiations was based on strong ministries, “which were responsible for the harmonization of law, the implementation of accession agenda and advising the working group of the negotiations team dealing with matters falling within their administrative purview” (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003).

The National Core Executive on Europe

The structures were characterised by dual co-ordination and a high level of decentralisation. From here, the core of Estonia’s macro-management of EU business emerges and is formed by three institutions:

1. the Prime Minister of the Republic of Estonia and his Office which is closely related to
2. the Office of European Integration (structurally in the same unit, the State Chancellery); and
3. the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the Negotiating Team of the Republic of Estonia.

The Estonian Prime Minister leads, directs and co-ordinates the work and is responsible for the functioning of the whole government. Therefore, he is also responsible for the Republic of Estonia’s accession to the EU. He is in charge of co-ordination at the highest level. Yet, at the same time the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is crucial as well, as it still remains to a large extent the national decision-making unit on EC/EU policy negotiations. However, as has been mentioned above, the co-ordinating role had been formally given to the Office of the European Integration.

The negotiation logic (harmonization of laws, etc.) naturally brought forth the branches of the executive dealing with these issues already; thus as part of the Estonian core executive, one can identify the three following ministries:

- the Ministry of Economic Affairs;
- the Ministry of Finance; and
- the Ministry of Justice (see also Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003).

Neither at the outset nor during the negotiations themselves did their role necessarily reflect their domestic power structure. The negotiations were dominated by legal and financial matters, and to a lesser extent by economic issues (though largely regulation rather than policy). Thus, these ministries were involved in key decisions, and their respective representatives were members of almost all working groups (see Figure 2). After the negotiations, the Ministry of Finance gained more prominence as the preparation of the single programming document for structural funds was the responsibility of this ministry.

Figure 2. Estonian Core Executive on EU business



Furthermore, line ministries were responsible for performing the EU integration related tasks within their respective competencies. Because the *acquis communautaire* covers the responsibilities of all ministries, the whole *acquis* was divided between the ministries according to their statutes and areas of activity. All sectoral ministries (except the Ministry of Defence) were involved in EU negotiations. It could be said that almost all civil servants in every central government institution (ministries, agencies, boards, inspectorates, etc.) were somehow related to the EU matters (Ratso 2002). Of course, the extent of involvement of particular departments in EU business is not the same for all, but it is determined by the degree of Europeanisation found in its respective policy domain. The tackling of problems, both technical and substantial, was left to the ministries (Ratso 2002) and to the working groups created for working through the 31 chapters of negotiations. The working groups were responsible, together with the negotiating team, and if necessary, external experts and independent institutions, for preparing negotiation positions and other platforms for negotiations in a particular chapter. The head of a working group was usually a higher official of a ministry or other government institution that was responsible for the chapter in question.

The Political and Administrative Dimensions of National Core Executive

Mart Laar, the holder of the Prime Minister's Office from October 1992 to November 1994 and again from March 1999 to January 2002, defined the accession process to the EU as a source of positive change: in terms of the outcome as well as regarding the process as such. According to Laar, the adopting of the *acquis communautaire* was a source of clearly defined and measurable goals for the development of domestic legislation. The accession to the EU accelerates the passing of laws and elaboration of norms that have been deemed necessary to adopt sooner or later for the sake of the overall development of the country (Laar 2002; see for "adaptation-by-anticipation" Lippert et al. 2001: 981; Grabbe 2001: 1014).

The advantages accruing from the accession process itself are mainly seen in terms of the improvements in the domestic structures and processes of public administration (Hololei 2002; Laar 2002). Much has actually depended upon the role of the Prime Minister and the attitude of the office holder towards the EU (Hololei 2002). For example, the Government headed by Mart Siiman (March 1997 – March 1999) was a government of experts, according to its own self-definition, where the Prime Minister's experience in international relations was modest and thus the Minister of Foreign Affairs played a more substantial role. In the Government headed by Mart Laar (March 1999 – January 2002), however, the Prime Minister had to balance his role and that of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as they were members of different parties. Due to these aspirations for balance, the Prime Minister had fewer opportunities to dominate EU matters. From January 2002, the holder of the Prime Minister Office, Siim Kallas (also previously Minister of Finance in Mart Laar's Cabinet) and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kristiina Ojuland, belonged to the same party (until Spring 2003), and hence the Prime Minister became very clearly the dominant figure in EU discussions. The role and the intervention of the Prime Minister has been increasing throughout the years in the process of joining the EU, reaching its peak in 2002 with the premiership of Kallas (Hololei 2002). Viks and Randma-Liiv

argue that “it is difficult to classify the Estonian model of co-ordination either as Prime Minister centered or Foreign Ministry centered, as the co-ordination functions are divided between the two” (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003 forthcoming; Grabbe 2001: 1018). It seems, however, that under the Kallas government of 2002, there was a clear shift towards a Prime Minister centered co-ordination model. Following the government reform of March 1, 2003, both the decentralized system of individual ministries and the Prime Minister as the centre of co-ordination would characterise Estonia’s co-ordination system in the post-negotiation period under the new government headed by Juhan Parts (Office of European Integration 2003). Yet, there is no certainty in the advent of a new government or even a new person in one of the key ministries that the reform will continue.

Ministerial Commission (the Cabinet)

The Prime Minister chaired the Ministerial Commission, established in 1996, which consisted of different ministers and the State Secretary, who directs the State Chancellery. The Ministerial Commission formulated the pre-accession strategy and made political decisions in the preparatory process. The Cabinet discussed the EU matters once a week.¹⁷ Typically, the head of OEI together with the Minister of Foreign Affairs gave an overview of the situation regarding negotiations and the harmonisation of the Estonian legislation to the *acquis communautaire* and other line ministers presented their positions in various matters that need more intensive discussion. In these informal Cabinet meetings, the problems and issues were discussed substantially until a solution was found which then needed to be confirmed by the Government. In the Government meetings as such, no substantial discussions took place (Hololei 2002; Laar 2002). However, ‘as the questions relating to EU accession became part and parcel of daily politics and administration, the decision-making was taken over by the Cabinet. By 2002, the Committee of Ministers can be said to exist only formally’ (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003).

The European Affairs Committee of the Parliament

The European Affairs Committee of the Parliament, the *Riigikogu*, was established in January 1997. Before “the establishment of the Committee there were limited contacts between the government-led ‘Euro-structures’ and the *Riigikogu*. The role of the *Riigikogu* was mostly limited to acceptance and rubberstamping of the accession policy of the government” (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). Formally, the duty of the Committee was to contribute and assist at the parliamentary level to the achievement of the objectives of the association established on the basis of the Europe Agreement; to co-operate regularly with the Government of the Republic in order to achieve the association objectives; to maintain contacts with the European Parliament and represent the *Riigikogu* in the Joint Parliamentary Committee created under the Europe Agreement; to maintain contacts with other institutions of the European Union; to inform the *Riigikogu* of its activities in the Joint Parliamentary Committee and issues brought forward therein. The Committee has 12 members from all political parties, as well as from almost all standing committees. Thus it is rather broad-based, and although this secures “considerable

¹⁷ The cabinet gathers twice a week: for a formal and for an informal meeting. EU-related matters are usually discussed during informal meetings before formalization in the form of a Government decision.

legitimacy, such a composition is at the same time fraught with certain rigidity, as the MPs may be engaged in the activities of their standing committees and unable react flexibly enough to the need to discuss some EU issues with little notification in advance" (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). In the negotiations process, it was the Chief Negotiator who presented the positions to the parliamentary European Affairs Committee. In the Parliament, the Rural Affairs Committee and the Finance Committee exerted most influence on the possible opinion expressed by the European Affairs Committee (Rannu 2002). After being informed about the negotiation position of the Parliament, the Government decided on the confirmation of the national position (Rannu 2002).

The Council of Senior Civil Servants (CSCS)

Established in 1996, CSCS consists of the representatives of the Bank of Estonia and eleven ministries. The Head of the Office of European Integration chairs it and it functions as a forum for intermediation and exchange of information between the ministries (see also Office of European Integration 2003). The CSCS also prepares and approves the materials presented to the Cabinet meeting. The CSCS is the main forum where those EU integration matters which involve several ministries (i.e., horizontal issues) are discussed. The CSCS acts as a co-ordinating body where solutions for more complex issues are found. It consists of the senior civil servants (chancellors, vice chancellors¹⁸ or the heads or directors of the EU integration departments) who in their field are responsible for the EU- integration. Effective March 1, 2003, the Council was renamed Interministerial Co-ordination Council; the functions remain essentially the same (Office of European Integration 2003).

Office of the European Integration (OEI)

The OEI is a structural unit of the State Chancellery and is in substantial issues directly subordinate to the Prime Minister. It is thus the primary advisory unit to the Prime Minister in EU matters. The OEI co-ordinated internal national preparations for joining the EU, with the focus on co-operation and a balanced approach between line ministries. For that reason, the holders of the Prime Minister's Office have emphasised the importance of providing the Head of the OEI with direct access to the Prime Minister and of creating a respectful attitude of ministries towards the OEI (Laar 2002).

The Ministerial Commission, the Office of the European Integration and the Council of Senior Civil Servants were established by the Order of the Government No 79-k of 30 January 1996. Since that time, the order has been amended twice (on 26 May, 1997 and in 6 January, 1998) because of a shift in the political responsibility for the European integration process and the changing members of the CSCS (Office of the European Integration 2003). The primary task of the OEI was to serve as a secretariat for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Ministerial Commission and the Council of Senior Civil Servants. The Office, in its early days employing

¹⁸ The Chancellor is the administrative head of a ministry, theoretically a career civil service appointment; under which there are Vice Chancellors. The official translation of these positions is Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General, respectively.

only a couple of people, has evolved into a structure with four divisions (since 1 April, 2001) and 15 civil servants (Office of the European Integration 2003). Considering its tasks, the main responsibility of the OEI is to mediate information and materials relevant to the EU integration to the Prime Minister, the Government and line ministries. At least two weekly overviews of the current stand of the European Union matters are prepared for the Prime Minister and the Government by the OEI.

Ministries

The main work related to EU integration is done by the line ministries; the distribution of tasks has been fairly decentralised. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was responsible for the accession negotiations and managing the relations under the Europe Agreement. The Ministry of Justice monitored the compatibility of the draft legislation with the *acquis*, and approved the annual legislative drafting plans of all other ministries (Office of the European Integration 2003; Sigma 1997: 105-128). It has been argued that the ministries are rather independent in searching for and finding solutions to the EU integration problems (Uusküla 2002). This also applied to the preparation of national negotiations' positions, which, however, had to be confirmed by the Chief Negotiator, approved by the Parliament and confirmed by the Government. However, it has been assessed that the intervention of the Government and especially of the Prime Minister was of utmost importance when a solution could not be found due to conflicting interests at the ministerial level (Ratso 2002). The main problems concerned the distribution of responsibilities in the areas where domestic responsibility was unclear (Hololei 2002; Pärna 2002). In these cases, the role of the Prime Minister as an arbiter was significant, and in the end, the political solutions were found at the Prime Minister's level where conflicts between line ministers occurred (Hololei 2002).

The Bureau for Negotiations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was responsible for the co-ordination of the work of the Delegation and the working groups. However, internal co-ordination of Estonian accession negotiations was the responsibility of the OEI (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2002). The dual structures for internal preparations for joining the EU and for direct negotiations occasionally created difficulties in the general co-ordination of the EU integration processes (Naestema and Moppel 2002). Although it cannot be said that there was direct rivalry (differently Hololei 2002), problems occurred in the exchange of information, and ministerial officials voiced complaints about the need for double reporting (Suik 2002, Uusküla 2002). In general, however, the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of the OEI, the Government and the Parliament characterise the co-operation between these two centres as rather good (Kelam 2002; Laar 2002; Rannu 2002). Typically for a small state, the relations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and OEI depend on the people heading the respective institutions (Hololei 2002; Randma 2001a).

In order to intensify the efficiency of the EU co-ordination, the Government issued an order (No 79-k of 30 January, 1996) by which all the ministries were obliged to establish special units or indicate a special person who would be responsible for the European business. As a result, some

ministries established new 'EU Units', while others just added some additional duties to units already existing within the department. These 'EU Units' differed essentially by status, name, size and responsibilities; there was "no uniform arrangement concerning the shape and size of the EU-units since their establishment and size has been completely up to the individual ministries" (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003 forthcoming). Often these units were multi-functional, dealing with international affairs (e.g. foreign aid programmes) in addition to EU matters. While some had merely technical or co-ordination functions, others had quite substantive roles. Some thus had the status of a full and completely independent directorate, whereas others had just some small divisions or even only one employed official for co-ordinating EU matters.

According to some interviewees, only recently (that is in 2001 and 2002) has it been recognised at ministerial level that the EU issues are a part of the everyday work of most of the ministerial officials (Pärna 2002; Rannu 2002). It was realised that knowledge of EU matters should not be concentrated into a certain structural unit, although the units are necessary for co-ordination of inter-ministerial activities and for communicating with other co-ordinating authorities, such as the OEI or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Rannu 2002; Ratso 2002). Thus, the institutional framework (discrete units dealing with EU matters) created for managing the negotiations initially favoured integration on the inter-ministerial level. This, apparently, ensured a fast process *towards* the EU, but disjointed negotiators as well as the issues negotiated from other ministerial processes and, most importantly, from domestic developments (see Grabbe 2001: 1025; and Pridham 2000: 51-52 on the Europeanisation of domestic issues). In addition, it could be argued that 'the decentralized approach has also helped to avoid a potential problem noted in the Central and East European context – the emergence of islands of excellence dealing with the EU, privileged in terms of staff and resources, leaving the rest of the administration still struggling with their weak expertise and capacity' (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). However, a key element affecting the management of European issues in Estonia was the absence of strategic planning at the ministerial level; current planning is essentially on a yearly basis (Sigma 2003).

The Estonian Mission to the European Union

The Estonian Mission to the EU was appointed to contribute and facilitate the joining of the EU. The Mission was opened in November 1996. The main task of the Mission is the exchange of information between the Union and the national Government. The Estonian Mission to the European Union has 20 members and does not have a strict hierarchical structure (Kolbre 2002). Yet, the Mission is divided into a number of sections, first, a section for politics and security policy, reflecting the competencies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Second, the section addressing the economy, culture and education comprises representatives from both the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education. Third, the press spokesperson and technical personnel are in the section responsible for administration (Kolbre 2002). In 2002, the Mission had a central role in the accession process as a strategic body exchanging information between the EU and the Ministries: "all Estonian ministries (except for the Ministry of Defence) have their attachés in Brussels in order to benefit from more effective communications with EU institutions. ... Under a decentralized system, the attachés' time of starting work in Brussels varies widely

depending on every ministry finding the resources and perceiving the need for a representative in Brussels" (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). Thus, the division of the work between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the line ministries is functional. The Ambassador, who is responsible for the negotiations, co-ordinates the activities of the members of the Mission. However, respective national ministries give direct tasks to the officials in the Mission. Administratively, as well as regarding the fulfilment of the substantial tasks, the officials of the Mission are subordinated to the Ambassador (Kolbre 2002). The Mission complements the domestic co-ordination of the EU integration. Thus, the information concerns, first, the negotiations with the EU and the accession requirements (domestic co-ordination is the task of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and line-ministries); second, the fulfilment of accession requirements (national co-ordination is the task of the OEI) (Kolbre 2002). The Mission's relations with domestic interest groups appear to be rather reactive. The Mission seems to concentrate more on Brussels business, and current domestic concerns enter the discussions only when they become pressing.¹⁹

II PROCESSES

Information Pathways: Codes, Rules and Guidelines

The processes and movement of information provided for dealing with the EU matters are rather general and flexible. The main provisions for the internal procedures, as well as the structures, are from the Order of the Government No 79-k of 30 January 1996. It states that the CSCS has the right to receive relevant information and to have access to the acts of the state and municipal agencies. The OEI equally has the right to receive the information, which is necessary for fulfilment of its tasks from the ministries, their related structural units and persons. Thus, it can be said that the right to organise work on EU matters has been delegated to the established structures and institutions (Hololei 2002).

The CSCS has to make proposals to the Government in the field of the EU integration. There are no formal rules for handling EU matters at the ministerial level. Often issues are handled according to the regular order and through usual hierarchies as established in ministries (Pärna 2002; Naestema and Moppel 2002). However, problems are more likely to occur when a ministry has to co-ordinate the activity of four or five other ministries while its own substantial role is rather narrow. Consequently, the flow of information across the hierarchies gets slower, and the respective ministry in charge of co-ordination may not be able to supervise continuously the entire problem (Naestema and Moppel 2002). Despite some difficulties, it has been assessed that the processes for handling EU matters have functioned quite well and that there is no need for further formalisation of the procedures (Hololei 2002; Rannu 2002).

Informing the OEI and Ministry of Foreign Affairs takes place through the structural units created in the ministries for the EU matters (Ratso 2002). However, personal relations and

¹⁹ However, the Mission attempts to initiate more pro-active relations, and there is the positive example of the Estonian Association of Fishing, which annually negotiates the requirements for market accession.

direct contacts with the partners have been very important and have been widely used. Informal e-mails are broadly used for exchanging and harmonising information (Rannu 2002; Ratso 2002; Ribulis 2002; Uusküla 2002).²⁰ Personalization of roles and information pathways is a generic feature to Estonian public administration; however, whether this is a specific feature of a small state rather than of a developing state (i.e., lack of rules and traditions emphasize persons), or both, is yet unclear (Randma 2001a; Randma 2001b). However, it has been said that the domestic exchange and movement of information functions better in EU integration matters than in the rest of administrative processes (Rannu 2002; Uusküla 2002). This confirms that the EU integration has been recognized as a national priority (Naestema and Moppel 2002).

As far as informing the public is concerned, the issue seems to have one very important characteristic, namely that in many cases (e.g. national positions until closing of a negotiation chapter) the public is not informed. In the beginning of the integration process, it was rather unclear who should inform the public and the press at all regarding the official negotiation positions of Estonia (Pärna 2002). However, in 2002 it was decided that only the Chief Negotiator and the heads of the working groups were allowed to communicate with the press (Uusküla 2002). Official information regarding the national position was confidential until the closing of the negotiation chapter. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs supervised this rule (Ratso 2002).²¹ Concerning contact between domestic institutions and EU structures, the official exchange of information took place via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Pärna 2002; Rannu 2002; Ratso 2002; Uusküla 2002). At the beginning of the integration process, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs made attempts to channel all contacts through its official structures.²² Thus, in the mid-1990s, direct contacts between line ministries and the EU were rather weak. However, Foreign Ministry "channelling" was complicated and eventually deemed to be unnecessary (Pärna 2002).

Co-ordination Processes and Procedures

The decentralized system of co-ordination and reliance on individual ministries in preparing the accession "enables to assign clear responsibility for specific issues and for accumulation of competence" (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). This system also "forces ministries to expand their competence in their field, thus contributing to the development of administrative capacity in general" (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). On the other hand, "a decentralized system creates the risk that institutions might deal only with matters that clearly fall within their allotted area of

²⁰ It has also been claimed that the movement of information has significantly improved during the last years, since about mid-2000 (Hololei 2002). The mailing lists of CSCS and the negotiation's delegation have been started to use more intensively (Hololei 2002). However, instead of waiting for the distribution of the information, the OEI as well as the ministerial level prefers to be proactive.

²¹ The State Chancellery has also another EU-related unit, the European Union Information Secretariat, established in 1998, "the main governmental body for stimulating public discussion and diffusing information on the accession" (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003).

²² Even so (or because of it), exchange of information with other candidate states while elaborating negotiation positions was generally rather modest. There was no formal co-operation between the candidate states, except for the agreement from 1998 of the "Luxembourg group" (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia) to meet regularly on the level of the foreign ministries, chief negotiators and specialists (Hololei 2002; Rannu 2002). The meetings, however, have been rather rare and have taken place on the specialists' level (Naestema and Moppel 2002). Instead of clear positions, usually general principles were discussed or experiences shared. It has been clearly said that negotiations with the EU are an individual process between two parties (Hololei 2002; Rannu 2002).

responsibility and try to avoid issues that could be dealt with by someone else. ... Here a decentralized system requires very effective co-ordination." (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). The co-ordination system of the Estonian EU integration has been assessed to be rather successful although it was not without problems and tensions (Hololei 2002; Laar 2002; Kelam 2002; Ratso 2002). Particularly in the beginning of the negotiations, the exchange of information between the two centres of co-ordination – OEI and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – was slightly off-track according to the Head of the OEI.²³ The accession process, however, has 'undoubtedly helped to introduce more co-ordination culture into the Estonian civil service' (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003) and, atypically for Estonia, 'the positions of key personnel within the EU-related co-ordination structures have been surprisingly stable' (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). The stability of personnel again confirms the priority accorded to EU accession.

The success factors of the OEI in internal co-ordination of EU integration were its flexibility, smallness of size, openness and rapidity of decision-making (Kolbre 2002). The fact that new institutions and new structures were created within a rather inexperienced administrative structure was a prerequisite of success. There were no old structures or procedures that might have impeded the adoption of new systems (Pärna 2002). In addition, the institutions and structures had to be established rather quickly (Rannu 2002). The fact that special resources were allocated for financing integration in the state budget contributed to the establishment of structures. It avoided finance-related conflicts between ministries and sluggish actions by the ministries (Rannu 2002).

Prioritisation of EU matters within the core executive was not matched by the widespread engagement of non-governmental organisations and interest groups in the formalisation of Estonia's integration strategy. In 1999, more co-operation with partners from the non-governmental sector was seen to be necessary (Ratso 2002). This led to the establishment of a Foreign Minister's Consultative Committee in November 1999:

However, after six meetings with different topics on the agenda (e.g. abolishment of tax-free trade, introduction of an EU subject into secondary school curricula, the role of non-governmental organizations in EU accession, etc.), its activity seems to have hit a low (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003).

Concerning the relations of the wider public and especially interest groups and citizens' organisations, their access to, and participation in, the preparations for the EU integration varied. First, their possibilities to participate largely depend upon their level of organisation. For example, the organisation of the producers of agricultural products was rather good and the Chamber of Agriculture and Trade has already sent an independent representative to Brussels

²³ It has been argued that there is no collective responsibility in the Main Negotiations' Delegation (Hololei 2002). The Main Delegation does not actually meet (Hololei 2002; Pärna 2002; Ratso) and the responsibility for the negotiations' positions does not diffuse throughout the delegation but remains only with the one person responsible for a concrete negotiations' chapter (Hololei 2002). Thus, formally, there is no inclusion (Hololei 2002).

(Kelam 2002; Kolbre 2002). In addition, the seamen, metalworkers and transport workers recognised their interests and the possibility of influence (Naestema and Moppel 2002). Other interest groups and the wider public were disengaged. Indeed, one of the complaints most frequently heard was the need for more domestic discussion during the negotiations period (Raik 2002: 146-148). Clearly, taking into account abovementioned policy on (not) informing the public, as well as rather disjointed nature of EU negotiating from 'usual' domestic problems, it seems that these two features of Estonian management might have actually contributed to the very efficient and lean co-ordination system (see also Lippert et al 2001: 982). Post-membership this cannot be sustained because successful engagement with the EU relies not only on core-executive management but also on the ability of domestic economies and societies to live with the EU following membership.

Having effectively managed accession negotiations, the Estonian core executive also faces challenges in the post-membership environment. The main challenge for the future is related to the fact that there is not yet an understanding of how to prepare negotiation positions in order to shape the formation of the future *acquis communautaire*. In the accession negotiation process, Estonia was a "policy taker" rather than "policy maker" (see also Lippert et al 2001: 984; and Ágh 1999: 839-841 on the EU and small states; and Cameron 2003 on challenges after accession). The questions related to harmonisation of the EU legislation have not been whether to harmonise something or not, but how to harmonise. However following the conclusions of accession negotiations, the European Commission will no longer forward the *acquis* to the candidate countries, and therefore, it will be up to themselves to keep track of the evolving *acquis* and to react when problems emerge.

The move to membership demands changes in Estonian internal procedure for the EU negotiations. As has been mentioned above, it appears that Estonia is adopting, since March 2003 and the take-over of the Parts administration, a system of strongly decentralized ministries with the Prime Minister as the centre of co-ordination. However, Estonia seems to have developed a rather floating co-ordination system, which on the one hand allows the system in chameleon-like fashion to acquire the features of political coalitions that may rule; on the other hand, this floating system requires very high administrative capacity in the ministries and strong hierarchies within them, which could work against attempts at horizontal coordination. The system effective March 2003 thus also emphasised very strongly the role of the individual ministries, leaving the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a mediating role between permanent mission to Brussels and the ministries; and OEI with a conflict solving and a technical role domestically (Office of European Integration 2003).

This corresponds to the general decentralization of the Estonian civil service (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). In addition, "the central co-ordination of civil service management is divided between several institutions (the State Chancellery and the Ministries of Finance, Justice, and Interior) and there is currently no centre of competence for the civil service which would have the capacity for disseminating know-how and developing the general rules and guidelines

needed in a decentralized system" (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). Accordingly, the European Commission and OECD have referred to this lack of co-ordination as the main problem of Estonian civil service (European Commission 2000; European Commission 2001; Sigma 2003). This effectively means that higher officials in respective ministries have very powerful positions to determine actual policies and influence decision-making process; at the same time, these officials are not formally political. In sum, the governance structures seem to have strongly weakened in the process of negotiations, and not made stronger by the institution-building, as it ideally and in theory should have happened (for a generally similar critique see Peters and Pierre 1998; Considine and Lewis 2003; Börzel and Risse 2000; Ágh 1999; Grabbe 2001).

III ACTORS

Relations between the Core Executive and Parliament

The high concentration in the executive branch has had one "side effect" in the weakening of the Parliament: "in the overall co-ordination process of Estonia's EU accession, the vertical co-ordination between the government and the *Riigikogu* is most likely the weakest part of the co-ordination chain, causing problems of accountability and loss of legitimacy in the long run" (Viks and Randma-Liiv 2003). The role of the Parliament in the EU matters was rather unspecified, although arguably this has changed in recent years as the Parliament has found its role (Hololei 2002; Kelam 2002). In detail, the Parliament and specifically its European Affairs Committee had to monitor the decisions made and measures applied by the executive authorities and make sure that these were in compliance with the laws, the political will and well established customs. It was argued by the former Vice-Speaker of the Parliament that parliamentary activities should not have hindered the effectiveness and flexibility of the negotiations' process (Kelam 2002). This argument becomes truly self-defeating if considered in the context of the problems mentioned above with Estonia's accession to EU being so far rather strongly concentrated into the executive and on issues EU- rather than domestic-centered (see also Raik 2002: 142-143).²⁴ Ágh has suggested four reasons for the weak role of Parliaments in Central and Eastern European accession negotiations:

1. transition concentrates power in the executive;
2. any small team of Euro-experts is restricted to in the governmental structures;
3. the social actors did not get enough information;
4. 'Euro-fatigue', "i.e. people are tired of the vicissitudes and false promises in the process" (Ágh 1999: 845).

In addition, this weak role of the Parliament in the negotiations process seems to reinforce the weakness of democratic processes originating from an almost inexistent tradition and the

²⁴ See Falkner et al. 1999 for similar developments in Austria during the course of Europeanisation; and on how relatively little influence European issues exert on political parties also in the member states, Mair 2000.

consequences of transition politics (Raik 2002, 150-151; and Grabbe 2001, 1028-1029 on exporting democratic deficit). An additional problem is caused by the overlapping membership in the parliamentary committees, and thus non-permanent committees may only convene when the permanent committees do not come together. Thus, even if there is arguably enough information from the EU as well as from domestic institutions, the ability to work with the information is rather restricted within Parliament

CONCLUSION

When Estonia becomes a member of the EU it will do so with macro-management structures created in the process of the accession negotiations. These institutions and structures have been uniform and stable over the duration of the integration process. The main features of the co-ordination and management structure are decentralized management with ministries responsible for specific issues, and a floating centre of co-ordination between the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, the former gaining in importance in 2002 and 2003.

Estonia has benefited from the limited size of its public administration system that enables flexible arrangements and fast agreements in case of problems, as well as from the decentralized nature of co-ordination processes within the negotiations. The arrangements and agreements are based heavily on informal and personal contacts between the top administration officials responsible for European integration. The most effective instrument for solving problems between the ministries was the Council of the Senior Civil Servants. The smoothness of the general co-ordination of the European integration process is dependent on the personal contacts at the apex of the core executive, such as the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Head of the OEI. Such a flexible communication system has both positive and negative consequences. Despite its flexibility, the system produces plenty of unrecorded information that is lost to the organisation in cases when the person responsible for a specific field leaves.

At the beginning of the European integration process, there was the tendency of all EU-related activities to be concentrated in the unit responsible for European integration. However, in 2000-2002, integration activities became inseparable from other activities and therefore the European integration units became more focused on co-ordination. This has improved the whole co-ordinating process of EU integration. On the other hand, it has reinforced the concentration of power in the ministries and has made horizontal co-operation more difficult. In addition, this has further weakened the already very weak role of the Parliament.

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INTERVIEWS

1. H. Hololei, Head of the Office of European Integration, Estonian State Chancellery.
2. T. Kelam, Member and Vice President of the Estonian Parliament, Head of the European Affairs Committee of the Parliament.
3. Ambassador P. Kolbre, Head of the Estonian Mission to the European Union.
4. M. Laar, Member of the Estonian Parliament, Prime Minister (March 1999-January 2002).
5. T. Naestema, Vice Chancellor, Ministry of Transport and Communications.
6. A. Moppel, Head of the Development and International Development and International Co-operation Department.
7. P. Pärma, Chancellor, Ministry of Justice.
8. K. Rannu, Director of the 2nd Bureau for the preparation of the EU accession negotiations (liitumisläbirääkimiste ettevalmistamine) of the Department for European Integration, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
9. Ratso, S. Political Officer, Political and Economic Section of the Delegation of the European Commission to Estonia.
10. M. Suik, Head of the Trade Department, Ministry of Economic Affairs.
11. M. Uusküla, Deputy Head of the Tax Policy Department, Ministry of Finance.

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Government of the Republic Act. 1995. 13 December, 1995 (RT I 1995, 94, 1628). The provisions related to the area of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been amended on 11 December, 1996 (RT I 1996, 88, 1560) and 18 September, 1997 (RT I 1997, 73, 1200). The provisions related to the area of the Ministry of Finance have been amended on 7 June, 2000 (RT I 2000, 51, 320). The provisions related to the area of the Ministry of Finance have been amended on 19 March, 1997 (RT I 1997, 29, 447), 19 November, 1997 (RT I 1997, 87, 1468) and on 15 December, 1999 (RT I 1999, 95, 845). The provisions related to the area of the Ministry of Economic Affairs have been amended on 16 June, 1996 (RT I 1996, 49, 953), 11 June, 1997 (RT I 1997, 52, 833), 23 October, 1997 (RT I 1997, 81, 1362), 8 December, 1999 (RT I 1999, 95, 843), 22 February, 1999 (RT I 1999, 29, 401), and 21 December, 2000 (RT I 2000, 102, 677). The provisions related to the area of the Ministry of Transport and Communications have been amended on 19 June, 2000 (RT I 2000, 58, 378) and 5 May, 1998 (RT I 1998, 40, 614).

Order of the Government No 79-k of 30 January, 1996 (RT I 1996, 8, 170) *Implementation of the Primary Measures Necessary for Integration of the Republic of Estonia to the European Union.* Amended on 26 May, 1997, and on 6 January, 1998.

Order of the Government No 56-k of 3 February 1998 (RT I 1998, 29, 395). *Establishing of Delegation.*