

Final Report
NATO Fellowships Programme 1996-1998
From Democratization to Modernization in Hungary:
The Political Preconditions for the Full Membership in the European
Union

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Introduction - Summary of the Research in 1996-

In my research work concerning the structural adjustment of Hungary to the EU requirements, I have elaborated three hypotheses:

1. Political harmonization as the structural accommodation of the Hungarian polity to the EU criteria is central to the whole EU integration process, and the other - economic and legal - forms of transformation depend on the political harmonization to a great extent.

2. Within the political harmonization we have reached a turning point, since we have by and large accomplished the democratic institution building process, therefore the political modernization has come to the fore, i.e. the efficiency in the workings of the political system.

3. This political modernization is both part and consequence of the Europeanization process, that is, the political modernization is both the precondition of the full EU membership and the result of the ongoing structural adjustment to the EU, therefore, it can be studied, and has to be described, in the context of Europeanization.

My research work has resulted in two dozens of publications in English, in major international periodicals (see Annex I) which have proven these

hypotheses. I have attended many conferences presenting these papers and networking in these Europeanization issues (see Annex II). As a result of my networking and organizing activity, I have been invited to be the convenor of the session "The Eastern enlargement of the European Union" at the Vienna conference of the European Consortium of Political Research in September 1998.

I have analysed the political harmonization and modernization in five major dimensions:

1. Modernization of governmental structures

I have provided a complete description of the Hungarian governmental system as far as the central government is concerned in its relationship to the president and the parliament. I have begun to study the effectiveness and efficiency of the Hungarian government - and the entire polity - and the possibilities how we can improve them. I have initiated a series of public hearings of ministers who have given account about the workings of their ministries and they have also prepared a booklet on this "poli-technical" side about each ministry. The ministers in these public hearings have to face a representative of the opposition parties who is a well-known expert of that given policy field. These public events have covered ten ministries.

As a summary of my research I have written a paper about the special character of the Hungarian prime-ministerial government, compared to the German and Spanish cases. I have argued in this paper that the prime-ministerial government as a special constitutional device has been one of the most important reasons for the stability and efficiency of the Hungarian development which has been so unique in the East Central European region.

2. The Europeanization of parliament

My Institute, the Hungarian Centre for Democracy Studies has published three volumes in English about the Central European Parliaments and we have dealt especially with the Hungarian Parliament. By now this research has reached a turning point, since the pre-accession process has brought a new role and task for the Hungarian Parliament. The Europeanization of parliament has two meanings or aspects. In the first aspect, it is about the reorganization of the Hungarian parliament in order to work according to the principles of the European democracies. It is a great achievement what I have described in my former studies. But the second aspect has become more timely and important: the establishment of the regular contact of the Hungarian Parliament with the European Parliament, and with the other EU organizations.

This regular contact has been maintained so far first of all through the Joint Parliamentary Committee which acts within the Hungarian Parliament as the standing parliamentary committee for the European integration. It is evident, however, that the Europeanization process has to penetrate not just this committee but the entire Hungarian Parliament. I have described the parliamentarization stage of the accession process, as a political modernization, in my research in detail, and I have designed a Grand Committee to deal with the European affairs, following the Austrian and Finnish models.

3. The Euro-contacts of interest organizations

The most neglected part of the democratic institution-building process is the establishment of the political meso-structure, that is, the sphere of interest

organizations, therefore, it needs political modernization to a great extent. Obviously, the business interest organizations (BIAs) have been mostly lagging behind, since they emerged very late, in their proper forms only in the early nineties. Thus, I have focussed in my research efforts on the emergence of the Hungarian BIAs and on their Euro-contacts, and I have compared them to the ECE partners, i.e. to the development of the BIAs in the other ECE countries. I have studied especially the Chambers as new policy actors which re-emerged fully only in the mid-nineties.

Obviously, the interest organizations have to develop more intensive contacts with the organs of parliament and government to channel their interests into these public institutions in the interest aggregation process during the accession stage and the standing committees of the parliament are the best intermediaries. At the same time, the organized interests have to build up their independent contacts in Brussels as well, i.e. they have to have their own integration process with the proper EU institutions. Consequently, I have described the political modernization of the interest organization as a preparation for the full membership from two sides: first, as an integration to the parliamentary decision-making structures through the parliamentary standing committees and, second, as an institutionalization of their direct contacts with their sister organizations in Brussels, i.e. as their own European integration.

4. The development of local and regional self-governments

The whole democratic institution building presupposes the effective workings of the local and regional self-governments as well. I have followed and analysed the latest municipal elections and the current legislation concerning

these bodies. In addition, I have participated in an all-European research project organized by the Institute for Comparative Politics and Public Policy (Berlin) to study the reform of the public sector in the European countries, with special regard to the reform of the public administration in the local and regional self-governments.

As a result of this research, I have become a member of the team dealing with global changes of public sector and/or public administration, and with the conscious reform steps of modern democracies. I have described the public sector - public administration reforms in East Central Europe in two papers which have clearly demonstrated that the political modernization has reached very great results in East Central Europe, first of all in Hungary, by the radical transformation of the public sector, i.e. by the drastic reduction its field and by a significant improvement of its efficiency. It has also been directly connected with the Europeanization, since the principle of subsidiarity in general and the regions in particular are gaining momentum in the EU more and more.

5. The Euro-Atlantic integration as the international precondition for the political modernization and democratization

Hungary has to meet the challenge of the twofold integration process, both the NATO and the EU integration in the late nineties. Hungary has been invited to be a member of NATO, and afterwards we have to make the necessary political, institutional and administrative transformations. I have contributed to the elaboration of the new Hungarian security doctrine with my lecture at the National Defence Academy and with my subsequent publications upon this topic. Otherwise, I have described the entire process of the Euro-Atlantic integration of East Central Europe in a recent book of mine in great detail.

In 1996-98, my Institute, the Hungarian Centre for Democracy Studies has also concentrated its activities on the Euro-Atlantic integration. In 1996 we have edited a book in an international cooperation with West and Central European authors, with the title Parliaments and Organized Interests in Central Europe: The Second Steps. My Institute has recently prepared a new project on "The Role of the CEFTA Parliaments in the European Integration" and has organized so far two international conferences in this topic. We have continued editing the Political Yearbook of Hungary in 1997 and in 1998 (this was the tenth volume) with full data and analyses about the Hungarian political system with special regard to the Europeanization processes and public opinion surveys. We want to develop the Europeanization chapter of our Political Yearbook into a separate EU Yearbook. In addition, I am the editor of our working paper series, the Budapest Papers on Democratic Transition with more than two hundred entries so far, mostly dealing with the European integration.

After this general summary of my research results, I will specify the detailed research results in the case of Europeanization of macro-political institutions in Hungary in the following two chapters as a general framework, as well as a major field, for the entire political harmonization and modernization. Parallel with this final report I will also send a book-size volume of my most important papers in all these five above described dimensions. This volume covers all the aspects of the Europeanization process in a great detail.

In the following, I present my research results in two steps, first at a more concrete level and second at a more theoretical level which prepares the Conclusion.

I. The establishment of the Euro-institutions: The General Framework for the Hungarian Political Modernization

The accession of small states to the EU

The accession of small states to the EU has always been a special problem. The small states' research was very active in the seventies and eighties, first of all in the field of their foreign and security policy. The research interest in small states seems to return in the nineties as a second wave of small states' research. This time it focuses on their accession process to the EU, including the transformation of their public policy. There is a large body of research dealing with the "adjusting to Europe" also in public policy, within which this current small states' research facilitates for us to identify the common features of small states' accession in the terms of their public policy transformation.

The former small states' research indicated that there was some correlation between the foreign and home policies of small states. They looked for a special active role for themselves through international organizations and neutral orientations, at the same time, they were much more consensus-seeking than the bigger states also in their internal democratic structures. This particular behaviour has gone through the entire history of small states within the EU as well. In this group of small states, however, there is still a big difference in their EU policy adjustment according to the period when they joined the EU, since there has been a threefold process of "integration of public policy" in the EU as the extension of public policy, transfer of the competences and building new EU institutions. It has been recognized that irrespective of size, the impact of EU membership will depend on the point in time, with regard to the stage or degree of integration, at which a country becomes a member.

The Europeanization has had a major impact on policy processes, policy actors and institutions of these small countries at both national and sub-national levels. The EU requirements and procedures have become internalized and they have resulted in a reorientation of the organizational logic of national policy-making. This impact has always been bigger upon the small states than the larger ones, and bigger upon the late-comers than the early comers. The original EU members had participated in the design and developments of the rules of the game, the latecomers, however, joined an ongoing game and have had the only task to get adjusted to it. Both effects cumulate in the case of the East Central European (ECE) states which are both small and late-comers, so the only role left for them is adaptive and not innovative. In addition, they try to join the EU when the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) - and also the Treaty of Amsterdam - has extended the EU policy-making to new policy areas, hence, the latest and weakest members, from the very moment of their entry, actually will have to cope with an extended policy universe.

Some analysts state that the small member states had no conscious entry or accession strategies as systematic, centrally directed adjustments to the demands of Europeanization, since they produced only a series of incremental reactions. Yet, most of them indicate that the modifications introduced by the TEU have required the smaller member-states to adopt a more strategic approach to EU membership. Some other analysts, however, point out clearly that the latest entrants developed some kind of a coordinated national accession strategy, since in these three countries some major organizational adjustments were carefully planned and directed by both governmental and parliamentary actors for the transformation of the whole polity. In my view, these well elaborated accession strategies can be a point of departure for the

ECE states in preparing their own pre-accession and accession strategies, including the transformation of the public policy.

There are special advantages of the EU membership for the small states, since they can exert more influence and achieve more what they seek than if they were forced to compete on their own in the 'international political market' with the larger powers. Although these advantages presuppose the necessity of the elaboration of a strategic orientation for small states because do not have the ability to control the policy-making process in the EU, still have a long way to go in developing a capacity to approach the overall development of European integration in terms of the role of the smaller states in general and the appropriate strategy for their own countries in particular.

No doubt that the strategic approach is very important for the small states because it compensates to some extent for their weakness and by joining their forces they could achieve more in the EU. The same approach may be equally, or even more important for the ECE states in their accession process. Within the EU, it is a part of common wisdom that concerning the Eastern enlargement the major problem is the lack of the proper "EU-capacity" of the ECE states. The other usual argument against the enlargement is that the institutional structure of the EU has reached its limits and without a further deepening as an institutional reform no further enlargement is possible. I have argued, however, several times that between these two problems the weak or missing "extension capacity" of the EU may be the bigger one. The insufficient extension capacity of the EU, or the lack of political will, has been fairly described by some analysts as the original reluctance of the EU authorities in the early nineties to establish a clear link in the Europe Agreements between the association and the future membership of the ECE states. The lack of a proper "epistemic community" in the West in general or in the EU in particular

to deal with the ECE issues has also been indicated by many Western observers. Seemingly, both political and policy obstacles to Eastern enlargement were removed by the Copenhagen Summit in June 1993 with a set of criteria for the entry, although most of reservations of the EU members have been stubbornly kept even afterwards. Some Western analysts are rather critical about the EU willingness and "capacity to absorb" the new ECE members by pointing out the dominance of short-termism over the long term strategy on the EU side.

The transition of the EU from an elite to a participatory democracy in the nineties can also be responsible for the increasing influence of short-termism. Most probably, it is the more intensive participation of organized interests in the decision-making process on enlargement, or at least their pressure upon, that creates nowadays the greatest obstacle to further enlargement. To put it simply, the governments are more for the Eastern enlargement, the organized interests are more against. Actually, in the EU there has been above all a fight against the "democratic deficit" as an "enlargement" of the participation by various interest groups.

The Europeanization paradox in the small ECE states

I call this phenomenon the Europeanization paradox in the EU. The governmental, party and business - top elites are much more interested in the European integration than the masses with their particular short term interests. Consequently, the more the masses as an articulated society through their interest organizations are involved in the decision-making concerning the integration process, the more this process slows down or even comes to a temporary halt. The "participatory revolution" in the EU is, of course, a positive

development in itself, but it has also some negative consequences for the EU decision-making process in general and for the ECE states with the dominance of "short-termism" in particular. The Europeanization paradox can also be observed in the ECE states, although the organized interests have acted less vehemently so far than those in the West, and even their activity has been less intensive than it would have been needed and expected.

The participatory revolution may come soon in the ECE countries as well, though at present the lack of the proper activity of social actors is more harmful for the accession than their possible resistance to it. The historical experience shows that the association and accession of the latest entrants proceeded in three stages and, in general, the national parliaments played an important role in the whole process, following the Danish model. The accession process began, as usual, with the governmental stage when the governments initiated the Europeanization process, negotiated with the EU and built up an institutional structure to administer the Euro-matters. The process was continued in the second stage when parliaments took over the direction and control of the EU accession. The parliaments also created their own proper organs to deal with the accession process, namely some kind of "Grand Committee" which played a coordinating role between the EU and the national governments. Finally, an articulated society in the societal stage managed to channel its interests into the negotiation process, through both the above mentioned institutions of macro-politics and its own institutions of meso-politics. This third stage culminated in the referenda about the EU membership of the countries concerned. These stages, of course, overlapped to a great extent, but the direction of changes was clear, namely with the increasing role of national parliaments in macro-politics and with the intensive activity of the organized interests and the population at large in the latest stage.

Nowadays, the ECE states are still in the governmental stage within which they have already created the proper state institutions. There is, however, in these countries a big delay in the transition to the parliamentary and society-centred stages. Thus, these countries have produced a prolonged governmental dominance in the EU integration process, and the participation of both parliament and population in this process has remained very weak. This governmental dominance in all ECE member-candidates is due to the following reasons: (1) there is a power concentration in the executive during democratic transition in order to maintain stability and to direct the economic crisis management, (2) these countries still have only a small team of Euro-experts and they are concentrated in the governmental structures, so they are missing in the parliaments and at meso-level, (3) the populations have suffered from a "Eurofatigue", i.e. people are rather tired of the vicissitudes and false promises in the process, they do not get enough information on one side and the not-yet-articulated interests among the population do not need the proper information either. The ECE states have elaborated different solutions to the same challenge. I deal here only with the Hungarian case.

The specificity of the Hungarian accession to the EU

The specific Hungarian approach can be analyzed from the side of institutional developments as well as from the side of public opinion changes.

A. Institutional transformations

The Europe Agreements have prescribed a system of institution for the countries concerned to manage the association process. In Hungary in 1992, during the First Parliament (1990-94) these "contact institutions" (Association Council, Association Committee and Joint Parliamentary Committee) were established at both governmental and parliamentary levels. By 1996 this institutional structure was significantly extended and a whole set of governmental institutions came to being:

(i) in February 1996 the European Integration Cabinet was established within the government, headed by the prime minister and with the participation of five ministers (of foreign affairs, interior, justice, economy and finance) as the major decision-making body;

(ii) in May 1996 an Integration State Secretariat emerged within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to administer and coordinate the Europeanization process as the central administrative body in integration matters, its head as state secretary is meant to serve also as the head of the Hungarian delegation for negotiation about accession;

(iii) an Interministerial Committee for European Integration embraces all ministries, collecting their Heads of European Integration Departments, under the leadership of the minister of foreign affairs and served by the Integration State Secretariat, it is the widest coordinating body at the governmental level;

(iv) at the Prime Minister's Office a Strategic Task Force was organized as an advisory body to the European Integration Cabinet with eighteen working groups covering all integration issues from the legal harmonization to culture and communication;

(v) in all ministries European Integration Department were set up during 1996 and this ministerial structure was very productive in answering properly the "Brussels questionnaire", i.e. the questionnaire of the European Commission sent to all applicants.

This set of governmental institutions prepared the Hungarian Country Report by the mid-1996 rather successfully. It was able to articulate and to summarize the various interests realistically and made a rather optimal use of the available expert groups, policy institutes and "epistemic communities". But this set of institutions is in a clear contrast to that of the Hungarian Parliament. A Parliamentary Committee on European Integration was established in 1992, as the Hungarian side of the Joint Parliamentary Committee with the European Parliament which has regularly had two sessions a year. The European Integration Committee has been organized as a normal standing committee, but it has remained among the least influential ones in the Hungarian Parliament. Despite all the efforts of the Speaker and the President of the European Integration Committee, the Euro-issues have not become important enough for most of the MPs to deal with them intensively and to develop an expertise in these fields. The expert team of the Hungarian Parliament specialized in European affairs is still very small and the European subcommittees designed for all standing committees have not yet been established or have not yet worked properly. In this fact we see the results of all negative factors: (1) the missing interest, expertise and language capacity of the MPs, (2) the small expert team and administrative staff for the Euro-issues in

the Hungarian Parliament, (3) the lack of concentration of parliamentary parties on the Euro-issues because of many other difficulties and vicissitudes of democratic transition and economic crisis management.

Consequently, Hungary has not yet entered the parliamentary stage which, in my view, would have already been necessary in the pre-accession period. The European Affairs have been, however, among those very few policy areas where the consensus among the parliamentary parties has been very high. The Second Parliament (1994-98) came to an end in late March 1998 and after the May elections the Third Parliament (1998-2002) has to face a major institutional reform, at least in the following five respects:

(i) Some kind of a powerful Grand Committee has to be established, according to the Austrian or Finnish model, to give a mandate to the Hungarian delegation for negotiations, to monitor its activity during the negotiation process and to communicate with the whole body of the Hungarian Parliament on the Euro-issues.

(ii) The European Integration Committee has to be strengthened from both political and policy sides, that is, it has to group influential politicians from all parliamentary parties, and the parties have to build up its own expert and administrative base and have to have their own line or profile in both politics and policy concerning the EU.

(iii) The Euro-subcommittees of, at least, the major standing groups have to be created, not only formally-legally but substantially as actually working bodies in order to formulate expert opinions in the given fields and to articulate the views of interest organizations and to channel them into the Hungarian Parliament for public deliberations.

(iv) The interest organizations, economic and professional chambers have already developed some Euro-contacts, but it is by far not enough for their

proper workings. In the domestic political system also the relationships of the interest organizations to the parliamentary committees need some further institutionalization.

(v) The Hungarian Parliament has to build up its own independent expert base in the Euro-affairs with a proper communication system for the MPs, first of all in the fields of political and legal harmonization, in order to have both intensive contacts of its own with Brussels (though a House Hungary in Brussels with permanent parliamentary representatives) and an increasing number of the MPs having EU expertise and experience.

B. Breakthrough in the public support for the EU

In all countries of Central and Eastern Europe there was a big euphoria in the early nineties, usually with the slogan of "Return to Europe" which promised a short and painless process. These naive ideas about the Europeanization as a panacea for all problems were soon dissipated by the dismaying facts of the deepening economic crisis and decreasing standard of living. The period of disappointment came very quickly, at least in the ECE states, since people understood that Europeanization would be long and painfull. It is not so necessarily in the Balkans where the economic situation is much worse than in the ECE, but this naive enthusiasm about Europeanization as a panacea is still looming large. In the early nineties the support for the EU membership also among the Hungarian population was very high. It stood in 1990 at 83 per cent with only about 4 per cent opposing the membership. In the mid-nineties, however, it declined to some 40 per cent, namely in 1996 47.2

per cent of the population was for the membership, 15.9 per cent against and 15.7 per cent undecided, with some dontknows. The Eurobarometer public opinion polls were extended to Central and Eastern Europe in 1991, since then we have had regular and comparative research in this field. The Eurobarometer figures show the same tendency of Eurofatigue in Hungary as well as in the most ECE states: there was a constant decline of the positive opinion about the EU between 1990 and 1996 from the 51 per cent to the 33 per cent. The percentages of the positive, neutral and negative views and dontknows were in these years decreased from the 45.2 - 22.5 - 4.3 - 28.0 per cents to the 33.6 - 31.7 - 11.0 - 23.7 per cents.

In 1997, however, a major change came in the public opinion about the EU which broke the above mentioned declining trend and brought a real breakthrough in the support for the EU membership and also in the interest in the EU matters. In late 1997 the public opinion poll institute, Modus-Sofres, which has regularly made the Eurobarometer surveys for Hungary, conducted a survey on a national sample about the Hungarian attitude towards the Euro-Atlantic integration, and I participated in the elaboration and evaluation of this project. It is clear from the survey that Hungarians responded to the question of the relationship to the EU much more favourable than before. Namely in late 1997 the positive, neutral, negative views and dontknows were 48.1 - 35.8 - 6.0 - 10.1 per cent respectively.

This turn can be explained, of course, by the fact that the membership became somewhat closer and the well publicized Report of the European Commission on Hungary in the series Agenda 2000 was so positive for Hungary, it may be considered even as the best evaluation among the applicants. However, the turning point in the domestic economic and political development might have played an even bigger role in this breakthrough and in

its cautious optimism because the results of the successful economic crisis management after March 1995 could be felt by 1997. Some benefits of the crisis management appeared already in 1996 and by 1997 sustainable economic growth clearly began with a 3.9 per cent growth and the same (4.1 per cent) can be expected for 1998. The economic growth produced, after some years of decline, an improving standard of living, the estimated increase of the real wages was 10 to 15 per cent in 1997.

The public opinion about the EU and full membership has not only been improved by 1997 but it has also been basically restructured. The image of Europe in Hungary or the Euro-image of the Hungarians until the mid-nineties was rather passive and traditionalist. It suggested that Europe is simply the continent where we live on, in its geographic and cultural context. Although even in 1997 this traditionalist approach still gave a majority among the population (57.1 per cent), yet the much more active, normative and development-centred approaches gained a bigger influence than in the previous years. Thus, Europe was identified more than before with a political unity and community of nations (13.1 per cent) or with an economic development-centre (10.7 per cent). Not surprisingly, these new Euro-images were advocated mostly by the young adults (aged between 18-29 years). When the Hungarian citizens were asked about their expectations concerning the EU membership, the most frequently given answer was this development-orientation (18.9 per cent), and security and peace came only as second (16.7 per cent), that is, among the priorities of the Hungarian population towards the EU the catching up effect is on the first place. Connected with this development expectation and with a more active Euro-image, the proportion of those who thought that the European integration depends also on us, Hungarians - i.e. on our activity and efforts -

and not only on the external factors, changed significantly from 1996 to 1997, since it was 33 per cent in 1996 and 53 per cent in 1997.

There is a close correlation between the interest in politics and the support for the EU membership. In 1997, according to this poll, those who have an interest in politics and have a definite choice among the parties (60.0 per cent of population), would support the membership. The remaining 40.0 per cent of the Hungarian population may be divided into three groups, 19.2 per cent was undecided concerning the EU membership and only 7.5 per cent was against, with 13.3 per cent of dontknows. These groups were, in turn, from among those who were also undecided in (party) politics, i.e. not having a favourite party and/or not intending to vote. These figures represent a big step ahead in the support of the EU compared to the previous decline. But as the November 1997 NATO referendum has shown, the major problem in the support of the Hungarian population for the Euro-Atlantic integration is not the percentage of the positive votes (it was 85.33 per cent) but that of the turnout (it was only 49.24 per cent). This low interest in participation is due to the longlasting effects of economic crisis, and the drastic crisis management, which has a clear regional dimension. Thus, the participation was much higher in the more developed and consolidated Western part of Hungary than in its crisis ridden and less developed Eastern part. Namely the turnout in November 1977 was only 39.92 per cent in the Easternmost county (Szabolcs) and 54.04 per cent in the Westernmost county (Gyôr), with Budapest reaching 57.15 per cent, but the support for the NATO membership was in all counties well above 80 per cent.

As the NATO referendum demonstrates, the regional differences matter a lot in Hungary and regional development is a very important issue for the accession process. The different regional approaches to the EU integration

appear obviously much more markedly than in the case of NATO membership, given the fact that those in Western Hungary benefit much more even now from the actual Western contacts than those in the Eastern counties of Hungary. Although 52 per cent of population thinks that Hungary has a good chance for catching up with the developed countries within the EU, at the same time 54 per cent has a fear that the full membership would even increase the lead of Budapest versus the other regions instead of assisting the regions to catch up within the country. Consequently, the message has not yet come through for "Eastern" people in Hungary that the EU assistance with joint efforts could also bring closer the solution of the regional divergences. In general, the Hungarian citizen do not feel yet the close connection between the EU membership of the country and their own fate. As the answers to these questions show, the overwhelming majority (68 against 13 per cent) sees the membership as beneficial for the country, but just about half of respondents (45 against 5 per cent) thinks it to be beneficial for the given region and even less, only one third (38 against 5 per cent) sees it as positive for himself/herself or for the family. It is also very characteristic that if we go with the questions from the country level to the regional or personal levels, the numbers of the undecided and dontknows respondents grow significantly (19, 50 and 57 per cents, respectively) which proves that people cannot see the consequences of the European integration for their region and/or individual life.

Still, Hungarian citizens are very well informed about the EU in general and about the Hungarian efforts in particular. Altogether, 92.1 per cent of the Hungarians know about the associated membership of Hungary and its request for the full membership, against 6.0 per cent, with the 1.9 per of no answer (for Poland and the Czech Republic the positive answers are 31.4 and 25.8 per cents, respectively). In general, the level of knowledge about the EU is rather

high in Hungary, one quarter of the population may be considered as very well informed and they represent the opinion leaders. This knowledge is connected always with some optimism, since 62 per cent of the population hopes that Hungary becomes more influential in foreign policy as a full member of the EU, and in the same optimistic spirit, 42 per cent expects that the membership will not be harmful in the relationships with the non-member neighbours.

C. The Euro-capacity or maturity of Hungary

After the considerable achievements of political modernization in Hungary and its favourable subjective consequences in public opinion, we can conclude as follows concerning the general picture about the Hungarian approach to the EU accession:

Among the ECE states Hungary may be one of the most advanced countries concerning the Europeanization process, first of all, in the field of economic transformation by curbing the net international debt drastically and by recasting the enterprise or micro-economic level. The same can be argued about the political-administrative structure, since Hungary is the only country where this administrative restructuration as political modernization has embraced the entire polity, i.e. has penetrated not only the macro-political level, but also both the meso- and micro-levels. Both the regional and local self-governments have been newly designed constitutionally and built up after the free municipal elections. The reorganization of the public administration as a whole, has been going on hand in hand with the reform of public sector in other

fields, and also with the legal harmonization or approximation with the EU legal system. In general, the democratic institution building in Hungary has taken the form of the Europeanization process as well, rather closely following the *acquis communautaire*. Last but not least, there was a turning point in the Hungarian public opinion around 1997, with a big increase in interest and information about the EU. The Hungarian public opinion may be characterized now by a cautious optimism and intensive activism concerning the EU accession process.

There is, of course, also a shadowy side of the preparations for the accession in Hungary as missing features of political modernization which may be summarized in the following:

(1) The public sector transformations have begun but have been so far unfinished, above all in the fields of health care and education where a radical change is still ahead.

(2) There are miserable salaries for the public employees as a price for the drastic economic crisis management which leads to a mass exodus of experts from the public sector to the private one.

(3) The legacy of the "missing middle" in the institutional structure still remains, that is, the weakest part of the institutional system is the county which is, in addition, smaller than the EU norms for a region, and therefore, it needs reorganization during the accession process.

(4) The biggest bottleneck in the accession process is the missing expertise and the language barrier, there is only a small elite of top negotiators and the "large army" is still missing for running the "comitology", which is dominant for the EU policy-making.

(5) It is particularly true for Hungary that numerous interests are better represented in Brussels than in the national capitals, first of all in the field of environment protection.

(6) There are still many non-articulated interests with their unpredictable behaviour in the accession process, which would increase the fight between winners and losers.

The particular Hungarian paradox is that although Hungary is rather well prepared for the accession, we cannot yet properly present and represent our national interests at the negotiations, since a too small elite team negotiates, not having enough preparation for a large group of experts. Unlike in the case of the latest entrants, where a large negotiating team was well prepared for the accession process, in the case of Hungary, the country is much more prepared for the accession than its political and business elite. Given the huge dominance of the EU at the negotiations anyway, it may cause a series of problems for Hungary at the "comitology" level.

II. Political Harmonization and Modernization: The achievements and difficulties of the Euro-Atlantic integratio

From "elite democracy" to "participatory democracy" in the E

The EU was organized originally in the spirit of "elite democracy", and in general terms, the further European integration was a result of the activity of the national political elites. Till the early nineties, the national executives were prominent in promoting this process, and even the national parliaments played a very secondary role in managing and designing the integration process. Initially, federalists and functionalists believed that the people would back European integration but there was no empirical evidence for large public support of the further integration process. National political and business elites fought their battles without regard for popular opinion. Genuine public involvement developed only in the new member states where some parts of the political elite were opposed to the EU membership. The entire integration process may be basically characterized as "popular indifference" and "elite actions" until the eighties. Hence, European integration was not a story of mass movements and legislatures but that of the changing bargains of political elites. The European project became a matter of party and group politics, an issue for "political entrepreneurship", including the further integration in the nineties, since 1992 has so far been a project of elites.

The political asymmetry of the "EU-building" process in favour of the executive power versus the legislative power was even more explicit because of the weak popular participation in the decisions about the deepening (Single European Act, 1986 and Maastricht Treaty, 1991). For the first time referenda

were held in some countries (Denmark, Ireland and France) concerning the Maastricht Treaty, otherwise the populations of the member states had never been consulted about the Treaty of Rome and afterwards. Consequently, before Maastricht there had only been an elite managed integration process leading to an "intergovernmental" elite democracy in Brussels, very remotely influenced by the populations of the countries concerned. The emerging European polity in this respect became so different from the national polities of member states. In the member countries there was a representative democracy, but in the EU there was some kind of "delegative" democracy (the term has been introduced for Latin America by O'Donnell), that is, a democracy with all rights and competences transferred to the Brussels institutions. Not surprisingly, the phenomenon called "democratic deficit" (or, better to say, democracy deficit) has come to the surface again and again with increasing popular dissatisfaction against the Brussels jungle or the Eurocrats. This issue has currently risen among the three new entrants and it has been already discussed several times concerning the "Eastern extension" as well, what we mention here as "ECE or CEFTA extension".

The "participatory revolution" from the seventies in particular, and the ensuing change in the character of West European democracy in general, has generated a growing contradiction with the increasing elitist character of the EU, that is, with the overconcentration of power in the hands of the Euro-bureaucracy (or the "Mega-Bureaucracy of Brussels"). This contradiction has led to an intensive reaction to the EU decisions by the national parliaments, and to an increasing claim for scrutiny over these decisions instead of their earlier permissive and submissive attitude. This development reached a critical point with the Maastricht Treaty and with the post-Maastricht developments. Although some forms of popular participation and control have appeared

(referenda in some former member states and in the three new member states before their entry) on one side, but in fact the gap between democratic control and the power concentration in Brussels has grown in the nineties on the other side. Most of the "Euro-literature" has discussed these issues in the terms of the democracy-efficiency paradox.

The issue of the ECE extension has emerged for the EU at the time of its deepest political crisis along the lines of a democracy deficit problem. It has also been formulated from the functional side, as the impossibility of the normal workings of the EU already within the existing institutions and decision-making structures, that is, even without further extension. This functional, "poli-technical" dimension aggravates the problem of democracy deficit, at the same time this approach hides it, by presenting itself as the only problem. Most of those who advocate structural institutional reforms in the EU would argue for more efficiency by simply transferring more power to Brussels but without increasing the "checks and balances" by other power centres (the European Parliament or the Regions), thus this approach could even enhance the problem of democracy deficit instead of solving it. All in all, the countries seek full membership in the EU at a time when the EU has reached a cumulated crisis of both democracy deficit and functional capacity, and these two sides of crisis mostly reinforce each other.

As we have seen, the lack of democracy was highly functional for the earlier course of "purely" economic integration. However, the new deepening after Maastricht and the new enlargement with the three latest entrants, and even more the possibility of the next enlargement with the ECE states, have made the democracy deficit a major hindrance to the next step of European integration. Most analysts argue that for the further deepening of the EU the democracy deficit has to be diminished, but it has, in fact, increased with the

series of enlargements. Therefore, "an efficiency-democracy dilemma" has emerged, and will be even aggravated, with every single new member state. Hence, we can conclude from this argument that these current political developments in the EU are very important concerning the possible inclusion of the ECE states. The present situation in, as well as the new structure of, the EU polity is not a neutral, but a vital issue for the ECE countries in view of their full integration and it should be discussed carefully.

Euro-fatigue and limitations of the elite politics in ECE

As a Europeanization paradox of representative democracy, in all EU member countries the elites are much more committed to European integration than the populations, therefore, the involvement of the latter in the political integration process can derail both the deepening and extension of the EU because of divergent national and sectoral, regional and professional interests. The same goes for the populations of the ECE countries. They are less and less happy with the elite-led integration process and after some years they may not be ready to accept its results through referenda. Thus, there is a need for a "new deal" or social contract with the populations concerned in ECE, since their involvement in European integration through their active participation in the decision-making processes is inevitable on both theoretical-normative and pragmatic-political grounds. The "efficiency-democracy dilemma" appears in ECE much more urgently than in the West. In the first half of nineties the elite-led integration process seemed to be the most efficient - actually, the only - way to negotiate with the EU. But in the second half of the decade it has become clear that, in the last analysis, it may not be effective at all. The reduction of the management of integration process to the national executives already proves to

be counterproductive to a great extent. Finally, an exclusively elite-led accession process can produce, in an extreme case, a negative vote in a EU referendum.

In addition, the parliamentary parties and, even more, the interest organizations are rather weak. They do not have yet, or only in a very limited way, their own Euro-policies, expert staffs and mobilization capacity on Euro-issues. Therefore, the governments still try to control the entire Europeanization process and they are not ready to give a greater role to the parliaments. The parliaments, in turn, are neither prepared for, nor willing to undertake the role of managing Europeanization. As a result, the self-centred activity of the executives, the delay of parliamentarization of the Europeanization process and the insufficient level of the organized popular participation are the major reasons for the declining interest of ECE publics in European integration.

The "post-revolutionary hangover" or Euro-fatigue of the ECE populations, of course, has had both internal and external reasons. However, we have to distinguish carefully between two periods. In the first period, the overheated expectations in the early nineties, including the unfounded promises and the repeated empty rhetoric of Western leaders about the early ECE accession, also caused widespread disappointment. In the early nineties the EU could have taken a major political decision to integrate the most developed ECE countries and/or to give them substantial assistance for the acceleration of their socio-economic structural adjustments. But the EU missed that opportunity because of its own internal difficulties, although at the time of the great transformation, i.e. right after the collapse of state socialist system, the populations of the EU member states might have accepted this ECE enlargement. Later on, a sober and short sighted view prevailed which regarded the ECE states less and less as new democracies to be assisted by, but simply

as economically less developed countries which can only be a burden for the EU deepening process. The political and moral commitment to the ECE extension increasingly appeared in the form of pure rhetoric. From the early nineties on, there have always been promises by the EU or by its individual member states about full membership of the ECE states within the next three-five years. As the time has passed by, these promises have constantly been both renewed and postponed again, in the same way, that is, for the next three-five years. Initially, the ECE political elites took these promises for too seriously themselves, and exaggerated them even more for their own interests, i.e. for both electoral and legitimation purposes. By the mid-nineties, that is in the second period, the ECE political elites have already taken this EU rhetoric more cautiously, although they have never ceased to overvalue it. Actually, the public has constantly been bombarded with positive information and high expectations from both home and abroad - all the time but nothing serious has happened.

Thus, the situation of the public mood in ECE concerning European integration deserves special attention and study. The public mood in the nineties has been basically determined by the cycles of mobilization - demobilization - remobilization which have followed one another in ECE. First, the public was mobilized in a form of social movements against the state socialist system, then these social movements were drastically demobilized by the newly emerging parties, but the populations have been remobilized by the parties from time to time for the elections. Actually, because of the initial demobilization by the newly emerging parties, the public has perceived so far the entire process of democratic transition as mostly an elite-led process. The Europeanization issue has been for the public just a part of this elite-led politics. Meanwhile, however, an alienation from "high" politics has grown tremendously and, as a result, Europeanization has appeared for many people

as a mere "elite issue" they are not concerned with. This relative lack of interest, or the diminishing interest, in Europeanization later on contrasts with a high level of public interest in it right after the collapse of state socialism. This public concern has been eroded not only by fake promises at home and abroad but also by the commonplaces of "Return to Europe" and the inability of parties to form their Euro-policies and to present them in everyday terms. The intellectual and political level of the European discourse has been so low for many years that this empty sloganeering has already produced an irritation by the public. The national governments and parties have also lacked a proper communication strategy. Just in the mid-nineties the claim for popular communication on Euro-issues has seriously appeared as a need of talking about Europe "in European", that is, adequately and substantially.

Political harmonization of the ECE countries with the E

Europeanization is a broad process embracing all the three major areas of political-legal structures, economy and civil society. It is an old story that the socio-economic features have mostly been overemphasized and the political-legal ones have been almost completely forgotten, neglected or at least minimised in the description of both Europeanization and the criteria for full EU membership. In the second half of the nineties, however, the political harmonization, that is the structural adjustment of the ECE polities to the EU standards has come more and more to the forefront and it has become more important than the economic and/or legal adjustment. In the case of four CEFTA countries (except for Slovakia which has been often criticized by the EU authorities), the democratization process has come by and large to an end and the democratic order as one of the preconditions of the full membership has

been taken for granted. Meanwhile, however, more and more problems have appeared on the surface with the "working" of the political system or with the criteria of an "effective" democracy. The Euro-capacity or Euro-conformity of the ECE polities has been increasingly questioned from this angle. Simply stated, the new democratic structures, the newly (re-)organized or established institutions have still only a rather low capacity to transfer home and apply to Euro-policies. In general terms, the actual political performance of new democratic institutions is very insufficient, that is, their effectiveness, efficiency and efficacy do not yet meet the EU requirements.

Consequently, political harmonization cannot be limited to the transfer and "domestication" of Western constitutional models and major institutions, including those of the EU. Beyond this, as a second phase, political harmonization increasingly demands both political and administrative modernization to raise the "poli-technical" capacity of the ECE political systems in order to cope with the Euro-issues effectively and efficiently, and to implement them with high efficacy as a real "working" democracy. One of the major reasons for a low Euro-capacity of the ECE polities has been the state or government overload in general and in the management of the EU affairs in particular.

The management of accession to the EU in ECE has been a typical case of state or government overload, therefore, it has been not only politically counterproductive (i.e. creating a democracy deficit by alienating the population) but also "functionally" inefficient and, finally, ineffective as well, that is, not producing the desirable results. As to the constitutional structures of democratic institutions, the ECE polities are already more or less structurally homogeneous with the EU and its member states, but the ECE countries have still to enhance their political capacity to apply EU decisions and basic policies

efficiently. They have to break out from the narrow horizon of a government's activities and to broaden it to a multi-actor approach, represented and mediated mostly by the ECE national parliaments.

The ECE parliaments, of course, have to "Europeanize" themselves, too. They are the classical case of the "institutional" Europeanization on one hand, and the "functional" lack of Euro-capacity on the other. The Europeanization of the ECE parliaments has been one of the main political accommodation or adjustment processes. The ECE parliaments have been aware of the latest developments of the Western parliamentary system and they have tried to adjust to its present stage, borrowing its institutions, including committee systems in a mature form. This institution-building process inside the parliament has been at the same time an important part of the ECE political modernization process in general, since the parliaments have been the mother and model institutions, so the other institutions and actors have followed suit, e.g. through the parliamentarization of parties.

However, the ECE parliaments have also been overburdened with legislative tasks (hence, I have described them as legislative factories) and they have also failed to perform well in their other functions, first of all in their control or oversight function over executive power. It is relatively easy to point out the major features of the "diseconomies" in the ECE parliaments, e.g. as the gap between the legislative agenda and the actual legislation, or the very high percentage of the poorly prepared acts still passed by these parliaments which have had to be amended afterwards. I mention here these deficiencies deliberately in order to conclude that the tasks of the Europeanization has even more overburdened the ECE parliaments. This overload has appeared both in their general handling of Euro-issues and in the workings of the EU integration committees. In discussing, processing and implementing Euro-issues as a

complex "policy universe", these parliaments have tried to overcome the institutional deficit by creating their proper organs, above all EU committees. But the activities of these committees have proven that it has been much more difficult to overcome a "cultural" than an "institutional" deficit, i.e. the lack of professionalism and expertise in the European policy universe. Thus, the contrast between their formal-legal and actual-political powers is very large. The EU committees have not been able to use their institutional potentials, including their control capacity over the negotiations of the national executives with the EU authorities. The ECE national parliaments are only in the initial phase of meeting the challenge of the European integration process, concerning the "European" legislation or legislating about the European policy universe. Above all their EU committees have been very much lagging behind the needs and all the functional weaknesses of the early democratic parliaments in ECE have been concentrated in their EU committees in some ways.

The basic paradox of Europeanization is that - at the moment when parliaments would have to take a leading role in the European integration process from the governments - the parliaments are not only weak in their performance in general, but they are especially weak concerning the handling of the European policy universe in particular. The weakest parts in the ECE national parliaments are the EU committees, which have usually been among the least important committees. They show a shocking contrast to the strong "Grand Committees" of the latest entrants. Nowadays, the ECE parliaments are obviously not able to meet the challenge of the Europeanization, but this challenge would provide institutional pressure for them to perform their own internal Europeanization and political modernization.

The same goes for the main political and social actors, parties and organized interests. Again, paradoxically, the serious treatment of Euro-issues

in the ECE parliaments has been hindered not so much by the "anti-European" parties but by a too vague commitment of the parliamentary parties to Europeanization, since they have had no definitely outlined Europeanization policies, programmes or profiles of their own. Just some marginal parties have produced anti-European ideas and sentiments, even the markedly populist parties in the ECE parliaments have usually avoided a direct confrontation with Europeanization. These populist parties have found some indirect forms and ways for their resistance against European integration, in most cases by reinterpreting "Europe" according to their own taste. There has been so far a vague and nebulous consent about Europeanization which has not allowed, directly and publicly, for the articulation of anti-European ideas and interests.

This vague and fragile ideological and political consent seems to fade away in the second half of the nineties and a period of more careful and professional treatment of the European policy universe, with a closer policy scrutiny in detail, has begun. This has also been connected with the fact that the perspective of a rapid and painless integration has disappeared. In the spirit of a remote and painful integration and under pressure of the ongoing partial integration process in the associated member states of ECE, the domestic actors have simply been forced to deal with the Euro-issues more closely and more professionally, which has dissipated the former ideology of "Return to Europe". The arguments for and against have become much clearer, the conflicting interests, for instance in the agriculture, have come more to the fore in public debates and different approaches have been more directly supported by the conflicting parties.

Europeanization "has arrived" at the party politics and at the public debates of organized interests. Europeanization becomes a serious political and policy issue for the ECE countries if and when an influential and legitimate

opposition emerges against it, enabling the articulation of views and interests for and against the Europeanization. This public debate reflects already more and more the real conflict of interests, and it could create and institutionalize an articulated and structured social support for Europeanization. We are now at this turning point, but the creation of widespread and articulated public support for Europeanization may be more difficult in the next stage than the establishment of a system of basic democratic institutions in the former stage of democratic transition.

Representation in crisis: "East" and West

The representation crisis appears much more markedly in the "East", than in the West, although it has been well known and has been analysed in depth also in the West. In the ECE it can be briefly described as follows:

(i) The "missing middle" as the traditional weakness of meso-politics with its intermediary organizations and social actors, which was reinforced by state socialism, is still one of the most important characteristics of the ECE democratization.

(ii) The demobilisation of masses and social movements by the new power elites in the party formation process and later on the lack of political organization for the meaningful participation has caused a further shock in participatory behaviour.

(iii) The "overparticipation", that is, the quasi monopolisation of the political scene by the parties, which has created an alienation from politics and low trust in the new democratic institutions, has kept its long standing effects.

Consequently, when we note the sharp contrast of the ECE young democracies to the Western developments with a participatory revolution, we

have to note also that there has been a drastic decline of social and political participation in ECE, right after the early mobilisation phase of systemic change. This contrast between "East" and West, and the rise and decline of participation in ECE needs a special discussion and explanation, since it gives the key for the understanding of the weaknesses of political representation in ECE.

The representation *problematique* cannot be based on a fully deterministic approach according to which representation is given anyway, and it always works properly. On the contrary, the analysis of political representation has to contain also that of the performance of democracy in the terms of effectiveness, efficiency and efficacy of representative democracy. The participation approach presupposes this joint analysis, i.e. whether the population feels represented in various forms of political structures and institutions. Actually, however, the whole *problematique* of representation is based on the simple empirical fact of the tensions between societal and political factors in modern representative democracies, i.e. that people are often unhappy with the transformation of their social demands into political alternatives. The performance of representative democracy is even a more acute problem in ECE with its new democratic institutions still in the "running in" period.

Thus, we have to discern (1) the well functioning adequate representation from (2) the representation deficit as a partial failure and from (3) the representation crisis as a complete failure. These are not only the problems of the countries in democratic transition, although they come to the surface in these countries in a more acute way, but they have been often mentioned in the consolidated democracies as well, most often concerning the EU and its institutions. The above distinction is, of course, even more important for the new ECE democracies where the adequate representation is the exception and

the deficit or the crisis in representation is the rule, of necessity, since the whole system of representation is still in the making. Certainly, the distortions in representation rose much more markedly in ECE in the first phase of democratic transition what I call the original organizational chaos in political representation with its creative crisis in public policy in ECE. Though this first period is over, still the newly emerged democratic polities are under a big stress both to meet the domestic claims for political representation and to apply the EU standards effectively and efficiently. Seemingly, the terms of "effective representation" and "political efficacy" are very difficult to define and to measure, but these concepts are rather clear in the discussions about representative democracy and their definitions can be good starting points also for their empirical measurement.

The whole creative crisis of political representation becomes clearer in ECE if we analyse the problems of effective democracy, political efficiency and efficacy, and trust in public institutions first in general then in regional terms. Namely, the representation in crisis contains three more dimensions often analysed in political science literature. The first one is from the input side - the "unequal participation" as a major obstacle to the effective representation - and the second one is from the output side - the "politics matters" issue as a major result of the effective representation - which give a general frame to the process of policy-making. The third problem is political efficacy ("participation matters") or the trust in public institutions which is, in fact, a synthesis of both aspects of effective representation.

On the "input side politics" the theory political representation presupposes not only free and fair elections for all adult citizens as equal participation but also an actual, not only potential, quasi full - or high level - participation. This issue of unequal participation has become the democracy's

unresolved dilemma, since unequal participation spells unequal influence, the inequality of representation and influence are not randomly distributed but systematically biased in favor of more privileged citizens - those with higher incomes, greater wealth, and better education - and against less advantaged citizens. This systemic class bias in electoral participation is the biggest problem of political representation. It manifests itself also from the "output side", that is, in the form of the biased control and accountability of the government because the democratic responsiveness of elected officials depends on the quasi full and equal citizen participation.

Here we are. This unequal participation can be one of the major problems of political representation in ECE even more than in the West. As we know, whereas in the first free elections in the early nineties the turnout was very high - first of all in the countries with abrupt changes like in Czecho-Slovakia where the participation at the June 1990 election was 96.8 per cent and in the November 1996 Senate election only 34.6 per cent -, later on it declined very quickly, reaching its deepest point for parliamentary elections (Sejm - the Lower House) in Poland in October 1991 with 43.2 per cent. We have to note in this regard that "voter fatigue" has also been responsible for the low turnout in the ECE countries. The unequal participation with "class bias" has appeared in ECE in all participatory forms, other than parliamentary or municipal elections, so we can conclude that in ECE the constituency or citizenry itself is not "representative". In the West those who engage in the more intensive forms of participation like both conventional - electoral campaigns, contacting elected officials and politicians, contributing money to parties, and organizing informally the (local and/or basic) communities, etc. - and unconventional - demonstrations, boycotts, rent and tax strikes, and blocking traffic, etc. - participatory activities are also the more advantaged or privileged citizens.

Consequently, the current participatory revolution has just made this contrast or "class bias" of unequal participation bigger by mobilising the "active partial publics". In these latter fields the contrast in "class" or strata participation is even bigger between "East" (ECE) and West. There is a danger that nothing remains in ECE (and much more in the Balkans) for a rather large segment of population but to join extreme right-wing populist or anti-political parties. But the bottom line of these common reaction is that the percentage of those completely "silent" has been around forty per cent as an ECE regional average. It is an open question to what extent these silent people correspond to those "dontknows" in the public opinion surveys in general or to those refusing to select a party in particular. However, their behaviour may be decisive in the ECE countries at a referendum about the EU, as it was at the Hungarian referendum about the NATO membership in November 1997 where the participation was only 49.24 per cent, although the overwhelming majority voted for (above 80 per cent).

The old slogan "if you do not vote, you do not count" remains profoundly true. Nonetheless, this essential "linkage" exists between constituencies and policies, since, first, the decline of class voting does not mean the lack of "issue voting" by the particular strata concerned, and, second, as we shall discuss it later, "politics matters", that is, the policies of governments are significantly different according to their party compositions or political "colours". Still the paradox is given: the popular participation is very unequal in the elections, albeit everybody would consider the institutionalisation or legalisation of the actual unequal voting participation patterns - that is, giving special voting rights for more wealthy and better educated people - as highly undemocratic, yet this is a fact in the advanced democracies and even more in the ECE young democracies. Briefly said, we have good reasons even to presuppose that the

weakness of this representative linkage in advanced democracies may deepen into a "misrepresentation" in ECE, that is, into a domination or overweight of representation in the elections (on the "input side") by some very strong interest groups or by some large and well organized strata of population. It is a result of both electoral and non-electoral (conventional and unconventional) conscious participatory activities turning the government's policies to their favour against the underrepresented groups.

The theory of consensual democracy is not simply about "justice" for minorities in abstract terms, it is also about political performance of democracies in pragmatic terms. The crucial issue is which democratic system - majoritarian or consensual - better in coping with social, economic and political problems. There is no big difference between the two kinds of democracies as to macro-economic policy outcomes and law-and-order issues but there is a big difference on other, "softer" issues like voter participation, income equality, etc., i.e. in the cases of ratings of "democratic quality" consensus democracy performs better. Obviously, this problem leads us already to the issues of the "output side", though first of all this theory originally was about the "input regulation" of representative democracies, i.e. asking about how to involve various minorities in the political process as both electoral participation and joint decision-making by their elected representatives. It is true, however, that this theory has moved closer to the output side, i.e. asking more and more about "the operation of democracy" or "how well democracy works".

From the output side, the major question of representative democracy is, indeed, whether the interests and opinions of population have been really represented in the policies pursued by the elected government or by any other elected body or it is distorted into a misrepresentation by some dominant groups. Initially, in the first period of policy sciences the "convergence theory"

became a conventional wisdom (advocated e.g. by H. Wilensky), according to which the policies pursued by different advanced countries necessarily converge because of the common nature of (post-)industrial societies. This technocratic view was swept away by the realities of diverging public policies of different advanced states and continents, but it returned with a vengeance in the eighties with the so called decline of welfare state and/or globalisation of world economy and the likes. It can be summarised in such a way that politics does not matter, since the measures taken by the governments of different political colours point to the same direction and with the globalisation of world economy, at least, the macro-economic decisions are not taken any longer by the national governments. The representatives of "politics matter" argument turn against this old-new orthodoxy, namely by arguing that politics is not "an epiphenomenon of economic modernization" and policy-making is not "the descriptive domain of public administration" with policy outcomes accounted for only by economists and sociologists but also by political scientists in order to demonstrate the continued relevance of politics.

The input and output sides of representative democracy have proven to be unseparated and interlinked during our analysis, and finally, they meet and reinforce each other in the questions of political efficacy or trust in political institutions. Political efficacy, in fact, is a question of "does participation matter", i.e. has it any meaningful consequences concerning the desired outcome? In the final analysis, if it is so, people trust in public institutions in particular and representative democracy in general, if not, a serious crisis of representation follows. People usually couple the issue of political efficacy or "participation matters" with the political effectiveness and efficiency, or with the general performance of political system, "how democracy works". Satisfaction

with democracy involves both aspects, that is, the public trust in the institutions on one hand, and appreciating the high efficiency of their workings.

Satisfaction with representative democracy, as we know, has two aspects: the satisfaction with the democratic character of institutions (formal-procedural side) and satisfaction with the performance of democracy or the democratic governance (efficiency-policy side). These two sides can also be separated in the West, the formal criteria have lost and the efficiency criteria have gained significance for the general public. The general concept of "interest in politics" relates more and more to the dimensions of performance of democracy and political efficacy.

In ECE, the satisfaction with the representative democracy is very low, it is better to term it as dissatisfaction and frustration. The satisfaction is according to the 1996 Eurobarometer data only 38 per cent as an average in the ten EU associated countries, and it is just 21 per cent in Hungary. This dissatisfaction appears concerning both the low level of political efficacy and trust in public institutions, obviously with a close correlation between the two. It is typical "infantile disease" of new democracies which is usually conceptualised as a weakness of civil society and its associations in their both demand and control, input and output, functions versus representative democracy. The social capital for the effective and efficient workings of representative democracy is still largely missing, therefore, after the legal-formal "constitutional consolidation" the ECE countries have not yet reached the "representative consolidation" through the intermediary organizations and the social "integrative consolidation" through the elimination of the anti-systemic movements. However, with all these negative features, the positive side is the dominant one for me, it is quite remarkable that within a very short period of time the ECE countries have gone through the socio-economic and

political crisis. After a short period, they have overcome the vicious circle of mutually reinforcing crisis phenomena and they have reached the virtuous circle of mutually reinforcing socio-economic and political recovery as a positive feedback of stabilisation processes.

The Europeanization Paradox and the public support of the ECE accession

Europeanization paradox, as mentioned above, is that the elites are more keen on promoting the European integration than the masses, that is, the move from the elite democracy to the participatory democracy slows down the deepening, and even more the extension process. Hence, the often discussed democratic deficit is very important as a gap between the powers transferred to the EU level and the control of an elected parliament over them. This gap has been filled on one hand by an international bureaucracy (the Eurocrats), by the civil servants operating in Brussels as European experts, and on the other hand by organized lobbies mainly representing business. The European Commission as a policy initiator cannot adequately be controlled either by elected bodies or by the European Council. In this respect, the debate is expected to revolve around the question of how the Community's structure must be reformed in order to make possible an enlargement to Central European countries without compromising the efficiency of the institutional machinery.

The Europeanization paradox in the West returns here mostly as a factor damaging the ECE interest for a successful EU integration in the near future. First, the ECE enlargement can amount even to a victimisation by the EU or by some of its member states, with the argument that the ECE states have caused or aggravated some EU problems, although these problems have pre-existed and have remained unsolved for a long period. In this respect, however, the real

difficulty is that this enlargement takes place when there has been an increasing politicization of Europeanization in the West. Most probably, this politicization - as the activation of different parts of population and of various interest groups by representing their immediate or short-term interests - will hinder the long-term thinking in general and the further extension in particular. Second, the macro-political actors, parties and governments, seem to support much more the further extension than the meso-level actors in the EU. Consequently, a "participatory revolution" in this respect postpones and aggravates the European integration of ECE, and the lukewarm support of the EU governments and parties has been countered by the very active resistance of particular interest groups. The missing "integration" of the political will or the "crisis of representative democracy" at the EU level may be a serious negative factor for the ECE enlargement.

I do not want to draw up a negative scenario at all, but one has to indicate that a similar mechanism of eroding representation have also been working in the ECE. The Europeanization paradox has been much more marked in this region, since the thrust in public institution has been much lower, so the populations and organized interest accept much less the opinion and guidance of their governments and parties. In the first phase, when governments direct the Europeanization process, the parties and the relevant organized interests are rather silent in the Europeanization "policy universe". But, by entering the second phase, these parties and organized interests become much more assertive and loud in formulating their will which may clash both with each other and with the general direction of Europeanization. This phase, described as a parliamentarisation of Europeanization, contains positive as well as negative moments. We can cope with the increasing Europeanization paradox only by really "socialising" the Europeanization first

through the ECE parliaments and their committees, since no unity can be created in this issue by any government pressure or by any state centralisation of Europeanization. The ECE parliaments are still weak to meet this challenge but they can be strengthened by carrying this burden and meeting this challenge step by step. Finally, we have to enter soon the third phase, that of the "structured dialogue" with the population at large, in order to prepare the EU referendum and the general acceptance of the EU membership. As the Hungarian relative success story shows, with the sustainable economic grows also the public support for the Euro-Atlantic integration appears, it has clearly been demonstrated by the breakthrough in the Hungarian public opinion in 1997-98.

III. Conclusion: Early consolidation and pre-accession in Hungary

My studies have proven that most of the ECE states in the late nineties have entered the stage of early consolidation domestically and the pre-accession stage internationally and these two processes have been running parallel and deeply interwoven.

The early consolidation after democratic transition may be characterized by the following features:

(i) The sustainable economic growth has been reached at the level of four-five per cent growth in Hungary, the Western capital investment have increased (almost US 20 billion foreign direct investment), the Hungarian export has been stabilized at a high level.

(ii) The social transformations have passed a point of no return from the former outdated industrial society to a new postindustrial, service and information society, the unemployment has decreased in the last years and it is now at nine per cent, well below the EU average.

(iii) The democratic institution-building process has mostly been completed, thus the transition from the democratization to the political modernization has begun in all fields and the first signs of success can already be seen. The Hungarian party system has also been consolidated, we have already had the third free and fair elections in May 1998. Unlike in the other ECE countries, in Hungary the governments and parliaments have served the four year terms completely in each case, that is, they have always served the full term, they have been elected for.

The pre-accession process has shown the following features:

(i) The Report of the European Commission in July 1997 qualified Hungary as ready for the negotiations, in fact, Hungary received the best

qualification. Most of legal and political harmonization has been completed and the competitiveness of the Hungarian economy has grown considerably.

(ii) The actual negotiations began on 31 March 1998, and in April they proceeded to the bilateral and concrete forms of negotiations between the EU and Hungary. According to the Hungarian expectations, the negotiations about the accession may come to an end by 2000.

(iii) Hungary - with Poland and Czech Republic - was invited to the NATO at the Madrid summit and will be a NATO member by 4 April 1999. It is a great success that 85 per cent of the Hungarian population has approved the NATO membership at the referendum. Many parliaments of the NATO member countries, including the US Senate, have already passed the ratification process about the Eastern enlargement of the NATO.

The project "From Democratization to Modernization in Hungary: The Political Preconditions for the Full Membership in the European Union", in my view, has been successful and it has contributed to the understanding of the specific ECE, and Hungarian, developments in the international political science community and in the wide circles of the Hungarian population and political elite.

Budapest, 5 June 1998

Prof. Attila Ágh

Annex I

Publications in 1996 and 1997

1996:

The Emergence of Democratic Parliamentarism in Hungary, in: Béla Király (ed), Lawful Revolution in Hungary, 1989-94, New York: Columbia U. P. (Atlantic Research and Publications, Inc.), pp. 177-194.

From Nomenclatura to Clientura: the emergence of new political elites in east-central Europe, in: Geoffrey Pridham and Paul G. Lewis (eds), Stabilising Fragile Democracies: Comparing New Party Systems in Southern and Eastern Europe, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 44-68.

Democratic Parliamentarism in Hungary: The First Parliament (1990-94) and the Entry of the Second Parliament, The Journal of Legislative Studies, vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 1996, pp. 16-39 and also in David Olson and Philip Norton (eds), The New Parliaments of Central and Eastern Europe, London: Frank Cass (1996), pp. 16-39.

The Strength of Hungary's Weak President, Transition, vol. 2, No. 25, 13 December 1996, pp. 24-27.

Political Culture and System Change in Hungary, in Fritz Plasser and Andreas Pribersky (eds), Political Culture in East Central Europe, Aldershot: Avebury, pp. 127-146.

The Young East Central European Democracies and the "Transition Fatigue", in Perspectives for Higher Education Reform, Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, Alliance of Universities for Democracy, pp. 17-28.

Europeanization of East Central European Parliaments, in Attila Ágh and Gabriella Ilonszki (eds), Parliaments and Organised Interests: The Second Steps (hereafter: The Second Steps), Budapest: Hungarian Centre for Democracy Studies, pp. 9-10.

The Europeanization of the ECE Business Interest Associations: The Models in Western Europe and the European Union, in The Second Steps, pp. 79-91.

Meso-politics in Central Europe: Fighting with the Infantile Disease in Europeanization and Democratization, in The Second Steps, pp. 241-252.

(with Sándor Kurtán) "Parliaments" and "organized interests" in civil society: Local government legislation and elections (1990-1995), in The Second Steps pp. 255-279.

1995 - Seeking Ways and Means, in Sándor Kurtán et al. (eds), Political Yearbook of Hungary 1996, Budapest: Hungarian Centre for Democracy Studies, pp. 17-31.

The Development of East Central European Party Systems: From 'Movements' to 'Cartels', in Máté Szabó (ed), The Challenge of the

Europeanization in the Region: East Central Europe, Budapest: Hungarian Political Science Association

The Young East Central European Democracies and the 'Transition Fatigue', Aula (Budapest), vol. XVIII, No. 1, pp. 7-34

1997:

Das politische System Ungarns (with Sándor Kurtán), in Peter Gerlich (ed.), Österreichs Nachbarstaaten: Innen- und aussenpolitische Perspektiven, Vienna: Signum Verlag, pp. 175-198.

The Year of Midterm Conflicts, in Sándor Kurtán et al. (eds), Political Yearbook of Hungary 1997, Budapest: Hungarian Centre for Democracy Studies, pp. 21-37

Regional Specificities of Political Transition in East Central Europe, in Vera Gáthy and Masanori Yamaji (eds), A New Dialogue Between Central Europe and Japan, Budapest and Kyoto: Hungarian Academy of Sciences and The International Research Center for Japanese Studies

Political Harmonization in East Central European Parliaments: Parliamentary Committees as Central Sites of Policy-Making, in L. Longley and A. Ágh (eds), The Changing Roles of Parliamentary Committees, Working Papers on Comparative Legislative Studies II, IPSA, Appleton, Wis.: Lawrence U.P., pp. 89-106

Europeanization and Democratization: Hungarian Parliamentary Committees as Central Sites of Policy-Making, in L. Longley and A. Ágh (eds), The Changing Roles of Parliamentary Committees, Working Papers on Comparative Legislative Studies II, IPSA, Appleton, Wis.: Lawrence U.P., pp.443-460

Defeat and success as promoters of party change: The Hungarian Socialist Party after Two Abrupt Changes, Party Politics, vol. 3, No. 3, special issue, edited by Bob Harmel and Lars Svasand, pp. 427-444

Parliaments as Policy-making Bodies in East Central Europe: The Case of Hungary, International Political Science Review, vol. 18, No. 4, October 1997, pp. 417-432

Hungary, in World Encyclopedia of Parliaments and Legislatures, Baldwin Place NY: Congressional Quarterly Publication, pp. 307-312

The East Central European Party Systems: Linkages between Parties and Society, in Lene Bøgh Sørensen and Leslie Eliason (eds), Forward to the Past? Continuity and Change in Political Development in Hungary, Austria, and the Czech and Slovak Republics, Aarhus and Oxford: Aarhus University Press, pp. 137-160

The East Central European Party Systems: Linkages between Parties and Society: in R. R. Sharma and Imre Lévai (eds), Economic Reforms, Liberalization

and Structural Change: India and Hungary, New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, pp. 199-226

Las nuevas instituciones políticas de Hungría: Las dificultades y los logros del proceso democratizador, in Carlos Flores Juberias (ed.), Las nuevas instituciones políticas de la Europa oriental, Madrid and Valencia: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, pp. 93-120

Business interest associations as policy actors: The case of Hungary, in S. Kopivnik, I. Luksic and D. Zajc (editors), Conflict and Consensus: Pluralism and Neocorporatism in New and Old Democracies at the Region, Ljubljana: Slovenian Political Science Association, pp. 253-285

The Actors of Systemic Change: The Political Context of Public Sector Reform in Central Europe, Berlin: European Centre for Comparative Government and Public Policy, Discussion Paper No. 19, pp. 79

1998

The Politics of Central Europe: Systemic Change in East Central Europe and the Balkans, London: Sage Publications

Emerging Democracies in East Central Europe and the Balkans, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar

The End of Beginning: The Partial Consolidation of East Central European Parties, in Paul Pennings and Jan-Erik Lane (eds), Comparing Party System Change, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 202-216

Forthcoming:

The Parliamentarization of the East Central European Parties: Party Discipline in the Hungarian Parliament, 1990-96, in S. Bowler, D. Farrell and R. Katz (eds), Party Cohesion, Party Discipline and the Organization of Parliaments, Ohio State U. P.

Hungary in the midst of systemic change in Bogdan Góralski and Wojciech Kosteci (eds), Systemic change in Central Europe, London: Macmillan

Hungarian approach to the EU accession, Journal of European Public Policy

Annex II

Conferences Attended with Paper in 1996-98

1. APSA Annual Meeting in San Francisco, 27-31 August 1997.
2. The 50th anniversary of Churchill speech in Zurich - a conference co-sponsored by the EU, the British and Swiss governments in Zurich on the future of the European integration.
3. The interest organizations in Central Europe, a conference organized by the Central European Political Science Associations in Ljubljana, Slovenia between 21-24 November 1996.
4. The European integration and political harmonisation, an international conference organized by the Hungarian Centre for Democracy Studies in Budapest, jointly with the Hungarian Parliament between 12 and 15 December 1996.
5. The modernization of public administration: global trends and regional varieties, a conference organized by the Institute for Comparative Politics and Public Policy in Berlin between 13-16 February 1997.
6. Spring conference of the European Consortium of Political Research (ECPR) in Bern, in the workshop "The role of small countries in Europe", between 27 February - 4 March 1997.
7. The modernization and democratization of public policy in Central Europe, a conference in Berlin between 6-8 March 1997.
8. Globalization and regionalization of political systems, a conference organized at the University of Birmingham between 14-16 March 1997.
9. Course and consultation in Florence at the European University about the Eastern enlargement of the EU between 2-6 April 1997.
10. The role of the CEFTA parliaments in the European integration, an international conference organized by the Hungarian Centre for Democracy Studies between 24-27 April 1997, jointly with the Hungarian Parliament.
11. The cooperation of the European Parliament with the Central and East European Parliaments, a conference organized by the International Institute for Democracy (Strasbourg) in Berlin between 29 May - 1 June 1997.
12. Conference on the Security and Democracy in Transition Societies, organized by Essex University between 12-15 June 1997.
13. Lecture on the Hungarian Euro-Atlantic integration at an interuniversity conference organized by the International Studies Center (Budapest) on 19 June 1997.
14. Order and Flexibility in the European Union, an international conference organized by the Cambridge University between 20-24 June 1997.
15. APSA Annual Meeting in Washington, 26-31 August 1997.
16. Lecture on the Europeanization of the East Central European Parliaments, Prague, 12-15 September 1997.
17. Lecture on the reform of public sector in East Central Europe, Berlin, 25-28 September 1997.

18. Lecture on the Europeanization and accession process in East Central Europe, Rijeka, Annual Meeting of Central European Political Science Associations, 9-12 January 1998.

19. Spring Conference of the European Consortium of Political Research (ECPR), in the workshop "Transformation of the Modern State", 23-29 March 1998.