The Contours of Legitimacy via Transnational Partisan Cooperation: explaining the absence of the PES in the EU enlargement policy-making

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Abstract:
The paper has two aims. First, it develops a conceptual framework to analyse not only that the European party federations (EPFs) have little influence, but also to study the absence of its impact on EU policy-making. Thus, the central theoretical argument of this paper is that the impact of the EPFs can be explained by a specific tripartite sequence of national party positions, outcome of the interpartisan bargaining and the then response of the EPFs.

Secondly, the paper will analyse the impact of the Party of European socialists (PES) on EU enlargement policy. Thus, it is argued that the chosen conceptual framework helps to describe and analyse the impact of the PES. Therefore, it studies its attempts from the 1990s until now to impact on the EU enlargement policy-making. It will argue that the interpartisan negotiation within the PES resulted in divergence and nominal consensus. Therefore, the PES has been an absent actor.

1. Introduction

This article has the aim to answer the following research question. To what extent did the PES attempt to impact on European Union (EU) enlargement policy-making? Why did it fail? The important number of social democratic parties in the European Council during the second half of the 1990s invites the political observer to describe and explain the attempts of the PES to influence EU enlargement policy-making. Therefore, the time period taken into consideration starts from 1996 until now. In order to answer to this research question, the paper proceeds by presenting the organisational evolution of the PES.

Therefore, it is relevant to note that the PES was created to constitute a forum for Labour, Socialist and Social-Democrat parties in the European Union which could deliver new ideas and propose new actions (Delwit 1995: 282-3; see also Lazar 1996: 44). Indeed, the former President of the PES, Willy Claes, decided that the parties-in-government and the parties-in-opposition should be represented in the Party Leaders' Meeting (PLM). The aim was not only to reach coherence amongst all the leaders but also to project on to the EU political process. Thus, the PLM that took place prior to the Birmingham European Council summit in 1992 opened the avenue for regular meetings of top Socialist...
leaders, Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Commissioners prior to each European Council. Following the French presidency of the EU (the first semester of 1995), the new president of the PES, Rudolf Scharping, decided that at some point during the leaders’ meeting, the leaders of parties-in-opposition should leave the table for the leaders of parties-in-government to allow them to have a genuine and in depth discussion ... it was a sort of arena for «social-democrat intergovernmentalism». This is known in PES's jargon as the European Council Participants' Meeting (ECPM). In 2001, the Berlin Congress of the PES decided that there will be each year one leader’s meeting which will bring together all the social-democrat leaders of Europe.

The PES gave also tremendous importance to its own enlargement. In general, its enlargement anticipated EU enlargement. After the 1989, the PES gave a constant and increasing interest to the «brother» political parties of Eastern and Central Europe. However, the PES waited until its Barcelona Congress to open up, formally, to these parties. In 1995, the congressists welcomed for the first time the new observer parties from Eastern and Central Europe. Nowadays, there are 12 associate parties (PES, 2001, 13) form 9 Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs):

- the Ceská strana sociálne demokratická (Czech Republic),
- the Magyar Szocialista Párt (Hungary),
- the Strana Demokratickej Lavice (Slovak Republic),
- the Socialnodemokratička Strana Slovenska (Slovak Republic),
- the Združena Lista Socialnih Demokratov (Slovenia),
- the Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej (Poland),
- the Unia Pracy (Poland),
- the Latvijas Socialdemokratiska Stradnieku Partija (Latvia),
- the Lietuvos Socialdemokratu Partija (Lithuania),
- the Möödukad (Estonia),
- the Partidul Democrat (Romania) and
- the Partidul Social Democrat Român (Romania).

This openness was closely linked to the changing approach of the Socialist International (SI). Jean-Michel De Waele and Pascal Delwit observed that the SI changed its approach towards «social-democratising» ex-communist parties because the historical social-democrat parties failed to emerge in terms of electoral performance. Indeed, it appeared very soon that that the ex-communist parties have been the more successful left political parties in terms of electoral success (De Waele and Delwit, 1998, 19-22).

The present paper will be more focussed on analysing the impact of the PES on EU enlargement policy-making. Thus, I will proceed by presenting the conceptual framework. Then, I will briefly elaborate on the development of EU enlargement policy. Finally, I will present the empirical data as a case of the
impact of EPFs on EU policy-making. In doing so, the paper will conclude by answering on whether the empirical findings support or refute the theoretical hypotheses.

II. The conceptual framework

As for the different epistemological trends, three schools of thought are distinguished: the positivist, the critical realist and the relativist. Bearing in mind this classification, the present epistemological position is critical realism: «The role of the political observer is to explain events with reference to the actions of individuals and organisations in a structural context. The observer of this political world can claim a particularly insightful vantage point from which to offer an explanation" (Stoker, 14).

Following this line of reasoning, the present paper presents the problems in dialectical terms between, on the one hand, the gap in the problem-solving capacity of the EU institutional modes (Scharpf, 2001) and, on the other hand, the contribution of EPFs in bridging the gap.

Thus, it appears relevant to construct an appropriate framework (Delwit et al., 2000). In choosing the conceptual framework, the present paper refers to Stoker’s definition which proves to be of great interest: «Conceptual frameworks or perspectives provide a broad language and a form of reference in which reality can be examined. They go further than a model in providing interpretations of relationship between variables. Conceptual frameworks achieve a greater depth and breadth in their attempts to explain reality" (Stoker, 17-8). In doing so, the paper will follow the 5 rules of constructing causal theories according to King, Keohane and Verba (1994 : 99-114). Regarding the rule on building theories that are internally consistent, this paper is vigilant in its determination to avoid internal contradiction.

The second rule is about selecting dependent variables carefully. In that respect, the paper aims to explain why the response of EPFs is never of a policy-maker or a policy-influencer type, why it is rarely a consensus-builder, and why it is often an absent actor.

Maximizing concreteness is the third rule. In the paper, there is a systematic effort to be as precise and concrete as possible about the main concepts structuring the different phenomena and the different explanatory proposals.

Fourthly, King et al. suggest it is best to state theories in as encompassing a way as is possible. Although the analysis undertaken in this article is mainly based on the scanty contribution of the literature and the author’s previous case-studies of the Party of European Socialists, the conceptual framework has been stated to encompass also other EPFs.

Last but not least, one has to construct falsifiable theories. In other words, one must stretch the applicable limits of the given conceptual framework. The limits
of the present conceptual framework depend on the policy phase that one consider\(^1\). Taking into account the EU policy decision, one can expect that neo-functionalism, liberal intergovernmentalism and neo-institutionalism are more relevant to analyse most of the EU history-making and policy-setting decisions (Bomberg and Peterson, 1999 : 1-30). On the other hand, the present conceptual framework also constitutes a challenge – a small one – to these theories. The following classification of EPFs in terms of problem-solving capacity can reasonably be proposed.

In that respect, the paper will attempt to develop a conceptual framework not only to explore the lack of influence of EPFs, but also to understand and to explain the absence of its impact and influence. Thus, the central argument of this paper is that the impact of EPFs on EU policy-making can be explained by a specific tripartite sequence of national party positions, outcome of interpartisan bargaining and the related response of EPFs within EU policy-making\(^2\). This section will proceed by developing the theoretical assumptions in each of these three analytical sequences.

1. The party positions : explaining the preferences

In this section, the paper will proceed, first, by classifying the party positions and, secondly, by developing assumptions explaining these positions.

1.1. Classifying the positions

It is argued that the classification of party positions should be done according to two broad approximations: the type of debates emerging from the Europeanization of party policies and the legitimacy deficit in EU policy-making; and the degree of support or opposition of the political parties. The paper will now elaborate these two approximations.

To begin with, the paper will refer and refine the contribution of Richard Katz. From the lowest to the highest level of the Europeanization of political parties’ policies\(^3\), he distinguishes between 5 types of contested EU policies:

- EU membership,
• the nature of the EU and its institutions (intergovernmentalism versus democratic deficit),
• the power transfer of core prerogative statehood,
• European level policy (for instance, « not whether industrial pollution of rivers should be regulated nationally or by the EU, but whether the EU should reduce the allowable discharge of phosphates ») and
• the more crucial issue of « programmatic ethos » (Katz, 1999).

In addition, it is also important to analyse four types of issues specific to the EU policy-making deficit. Central to the structuring of this argument is the analytical distinction operated between input and output legitimacy (Scharpf, 1999). Considering the output side, the first problem is about the consequences of the development of one policy area on another policy area. For instance, the monetary policy has an important impact on employment, the labour market and social protection (Iversen, 1999 :166-176; Falkner, 2000).

Secondly, considering both the input and the output dimensions, different policy areas present different types of policy issues. For example, there are different types of environmental problems such as cross-border and global pollution, on the one hand, and local problems such as the working conditions of labour, on the other hand (Scharpf, 1999 : 107).

Thirdly, there are also problems between « input » and « output » legitimacy. In some instances, output policy needs an input policy as a prerequisite. This seems to be the case of fiscal policy: « Can the EU have a meaningful approach to taxation if it does not also have a meaningful approach to representation? While the strident language of two centuries ago - when both Europe and America knew the reality of slavery - is far removed from the comitology of Eurodiplomacy, the same issue arises » (Williams, 1998 : 6). In other instances, the accountability of the EU institutions is another matter of concern. For example, if the ECB takes monetary decisions, it will be the national governments which will be accountable in the eyes of the national electorates (Crouch, 2000).

Last but not least, the effect of a policy development on a certain category of citizens seems to be the most salient aspect of the EU policy-making deficit. This is a concern formulated by Fritz Scharpf: « Regardless of the agreement or disagreement between policy actors, however, the capacity of policy institutions to convey legitimacy needs to be defined in relation to the target population that is supposed to comply with, or suffer the consequences of, the policies thus chosen » (Scharpf, 2001 :4). In particular, the « EU’s role has clearly become an ambiguous one – the harbinger of new opportunities or the constraint on traditional policy solutions » in a context charaterized by the « few complacent about the prospects of overcoming widespread unemployment and of maintaining the full panoply of the welfare state » (Edwards and Pijpers, 1997, 342).
The second approximation necessary to consider: a set of questions that tap the degree of support or opposition across parties for the considered issue:

1 = strongly opposed
2 = opposed
3 = somewhat opposed
4 = neutral, no stance
5 = somewhat in favor
6 = in favor of
7 = strongly in favor (Hooghe, Marks and Wilson, 2001)

Moreover, these positions may be nuanced by the probability that some members may be in favour or opposed to a policy under certain conditions.

All in all, the six types of debates and the degree of support or opposition seem to be an appropriate perspective in order to describe analytically the political parties’ positions.

1.2. Explaining the positions

From this vantage point, it is possible to explain the positions of political parties by looking at their arguments. From a selective review of the literature, it is argued that the political party’s likely position to a new issue is a product of three broad factors: domestic conditions, external conditions and partisan factors. Although this section will deal briefly with the external conditions, its main concern is with the two other types of factors.

To begin with, there are a broad range of domestic factors which may potentially influence the positions of political parties. There are three types of motivation to take into consideration when studying governments in the EU intergovernmental arena. First, there are ideological motivations. Ideological conflicts may emerge from «fundamentally conflicting views regarding the proper role of public policy vis-à-vis market forces and regarding the role of European policy vis-à-vis the nation state» (Scharpf, 1999: 78). Secondly, there are economic self-interests. Conflicts of economic interests may arise «from differences in the levels of economic development» between Member States (Scharpf, 1999: 78). Thirdly, there are party positions closely motivated by domestic institutional conditions. Conflicts of this type imply that «differences among administrative practices, policy patterns, and institutions» induce institutional conflict (Scharpf, 1999: 78).

More broadly, the paper explores Fritz Scharpf’s ideas. He argues that non-negotiable conflicts may and do have their sources in three types of conflicts: ideological preferences, divergent economic interests and institutional conditions. Thus, he may imply that there are correspondingly three types of motivations.
All in all, it is important to analyse the relevance of these three types of motivation for a party in government. Indeed, party position might be also the product of endogenous constraints such as public opinion, the political system, etc… (Delwit, 1995; Blondel and Cotta, 1996).

To continue, the position of political parties may be also influenced by external conditions such as the economic situation, the geo-political situation; financial and trade globalization (Delwit, 1995; Garrett, 1995).

In conclusion, party orientation may be determined by specific partisan factors. The paper distinguishes between endogenous and exogenous factors. Considering the exogenous factors, there is the clivage theory of party response to European Integration. It has been argued that «the social cleavages that have historically shaped political parties and competition among them influence the policy positions of parties on each of these dimensions of European integration» (Marks and Wilson, 1999). Secondly, there are ideological motivations structured around the left-right and the sovereignty-integration-international divides (Pridham and Pridham, 1981; Hix and Lord, 1997: 50; Delwit, 1995; Hooghe and Marks on the divide between neo-liberal and regulated capitalism, 1999—; De Waele on the clivage in Eastern Europe, 1999, 317-323; Telo, 2000; Aust, 2001:2). Thirdly, the paper recommends testing other factors such as the distinction between parties in government and parties in opposition; the structure of power in the political party; political alliances; the divergences within the party, at the domestic level and within a given party family; the party system etc… (Pridham and Pridham, 1981; Delwit, 1995; Cotta and Blondel, 1996; De Waele, 1999, 327-331).

In conclusion, these are the three broad range of factors—domestic, external and partisan— which seem appropriate to explore in order to explain the position of political parties within EPFs.

2. The interpartisan negotiation: explaining the outcomes

Having examined the broad range of factors explaining party positions, the first stage of the conceptual framework, the paper turns now to the second stage: interpartisan bargaining. This bargain is embedded in three dimensions of EPFs. These dimensions are the members, the structure and the functions (Ladrech, 1998).

Nevertheless, the paper diverges from Ladrech in two ways. On the one hand, it is argued that the dialectical relationships between these three dimensions have to be considered, in the sense that change could be explained through the interaction between the specific dimensions of the EPF: the impacts of actors, of structures
and of functions. On the other hand, interpartisan negotiation constitutes one of the different functions performed by EPFs.

The present paper will now elaborate on the interpartisan negotiation. First, it will be argued that interpartisan negotiation is reflecting one of the most important collective action problems in the EPFs. Secondly, the paper will be concrete on measuring the outcomes of interpartisan negotiation. Thirdly, it will investigate the «black-box» of the EPF by presenting the main explanatory variables of these outcomes.

2.1. Collective action problems

Collective action problems seem to be the main issue caused within the EPFs high number of members, loose structure and weak policy functions. These problems have been elaborated by Stefano Bartolini in the case of electoral competition at the national and European level. He distinguishes between three types of such problems which are useful to mention, refine and integrate into our conceptual framework. First, there is the problem of «horizontal inter-family cooperation». It is the idea that parties «and party families (...) disagree about the extent to which supranational parties should play a more prominent role, and cooperation to strengthen the grip of the European level party system is missing at crucial moments» (Bartolini, 1999: 34). However, it has to be noted that slight progress has emerged in trying to promote the statute and the financing of the EPFs (Kulahci, forthcoming).

The «vertical co-ordination within party and families» constitutes the second problem. It «concerns the contestation of the arena in which substantive issues have to be resolved: regional, national, European, international; but also autonomous regulatory bodies versus political arenas; international agreements versus direct democracy, etc» (Bartolini, 1999 : 35). In this regard, it has been shown that national political parties have been unwilling to withdraw from the European electoral arena although it may be in their «best» interest (Andeweg, 1995).

Finally, there is the «horizontal within family cooperation» problem. Accordingly, the main divide concerns the party-in-government. Bartolini wrote that within «each Euro-party family, national party delegations with a privileged access to national governments have an option between exercising their influence through the intergovernmental institutions and circuits versus engaging in strengthening the role and cooperation in the supranational Euro-parties and parliament» (Bartolini, 1999 : 34). This paper will address the following remarks regarding the members and the structure of the EPFs.

As to members, parties in government and parties in opposition are among the main actors within the EPFs. They may consider or not to use the EPFs: it depends of their strategy. When they do consider the EPFs, they may and do try to exercise their influence within the EPF platforms. In particular, parties in
government have three basic options: exercising their influence through the EU institutional modes; engaging in strengthening the cooperation within the EPFs; or intending to influence each other, probably, by referring to their party positions. Moreover, one must bear in mind that representatives of the political group in the EP and of the European Commission do constitute significant actors within the EPFs. Moreover, the different people working within the EPF secretariat are far from being politically «neutral» because they are also member of national political parties. So, there are allegiance phenomena of the European level members to their national parties.

Considering the structure, it is important to take into consideration the fact that outcomes rely on consensus - although some statutes may formally express the possibility of using qualified majority voting as it is the case in the PES. Thus, consensus (and not qualified majority voting) has a decisive impact on interpartisan negotiation between every member has a veto power. So, consensus is the rule in the EPF structure which is designed to bring together party representatives of first rank (leaders and/or ministers), second rank (international secretariat and/or leader’s representatives) and/or third rank (young representatives in the summer universities, etc...).

Having formulated these remarks, the following section turns now to the measurement of the outcome of the interpartisan negotiation.

### 2.2. Measuring the outcome of the interpartisan negotiation

In this conceptual framework, the outcome of the interpartisan negotiation has both the statutes of an independent and dependant variables. As an independent variable, the policy outcome has tremendous implication on EPFs response. Accordingly, three types of outcome may be distinguished: divergences, nominal consensus and «genuine consensus».

First, there are *divergences* which could be easily detected. Reference can be made to the divergence between member parties (Kulahci and Van De Walle, 2002), in particular, between member parties in government on supporting or not a given policy proposal (Kulahci 2002).

Secondly, there is the *nominal consensus*. It is much more about the policy declaration, the manifestos and the working group’s reports. In principle, they indicate that EPFs may play a role of «policy-maker» or «policy-influencer». In practice, they are not really taken into consideration by the powerful policy-makers within a given EPF. However, they may use this type of arena to have information on each other’s position (Kulahci, 2001)

The *genuine consensus* might be distinguished as the third type of outcome. It can be described as an informal agreement which does not result from a vote (Hermet *et al.*, 1998: 63). The level of consensus may differ according to the institutional mode. In that respect, one can distinguish between «unanimous
**consensus** and an «**institutional consensus**». The former is required to influence intergovernmental mode (Johansson, 1999; Kulahci, 2001). The latter is required to influence joint-decision mode where, for instance, QMV is the voting method. Therefore, one can imagine that if a given EPF has a potential qualified majority voting or a potential minority blocking vote for environmental policy or social policy, it could also make use of it.

There may also be a dialectical relationship between «genuine consensus» and an EPF’s response. First, the policy outcome is the most important **sine qua non** condition of an efficient EPF response. Secondly, one can reasonably expect that the potential power of EPFs encourages some actors to try to reach a particular type of interpartisan negotiation outcome.

All in all, the paper refers to three types of policy outcomes. Moreover, it is assumed that the horizontal within-family cooperation results often in divergence, sometimes in nominal consensus (manifesto, policy declaration, etc…) and rarely in genuine consensus. It is to the explanation of these phenomena that the present paper turns now.

### 2.3. Explaining the outcome of interpartisan negotiation

The outcome of the EPFs is also an important process to explain. It is about investigating the black-box. Thus it is also considered as an explanandum. In that respect, the paper will focus on the «transnational contribution» of the political parties at all different elite levels. On the one hand, it could be indicated by its representatives presence or absence in the common meetings. On the other hand, its contribution to the debate in terms of produced document or oral presentation could be also considered as indicator of transnational contribution. Furthermore, it is easier to refer to the documents because the oral presentations are generally «off the record».

These transnational contributions are good indicators for depicting strategies, coalitions and tactics. They could also be useful in observing the policy entrepreneurs and the policy sponsors in interpartisan negotiation. The paper will proceed by being precise and concrete about these concepts.

**A. Strategies, advocacy coalitions and tactics**

The paper takes into consideration the actors’ strategies and tactics. Dyson and Featherstone wrote that «Strategy is about using negotiations for political purposes; tactics is about the how of deploying specific people and arguments in the immediate vision of other negotiators (...)» (Dyson and Featherstone, 1999: 34). Regarding strategy, the paper will add a further analytical distinction operated between forerunner and pusher strategies.

The forerunner strategies are «primarily based on the domestic politics of the member states (...) and may range from simply defending existing national
arrangements, by actively presenting them as ‘examples’ to others, to implementing unilateral measures as a way to provoke the EU » (Andersen and Liefferink, 1997 : 14).

The second strategy «can be referred to as constructive ‘pusher’ strategies. This may involve, for example, putting issues on the agenda of the Council or lobbying the European Parliament (...) An important aspect of the ‘pusher’ role is the extent to which member states seek to build alliances with each other, something that the procedure for qualified majority voting seems to encourage » (Andersen and Liefferink, 1997 : 14).

This may lead to building « advocacy coalitions » because these « coalitions frame issues in different ways and contend in an adversarial way for control of policy » (Dyson and Featherstone, 1999 : 29).

As far as tactics are concerned, it is necessary to investigate these following aspects:

- Some actors may be interested in organizing a series of visits to party headquarters or EC capitals to sell their plan,
- There might be « pre-meetings » between some actors before the informal EPF meetings to decide not only who is going to put forward particular proposals, but also the timing and the working modalities,
- There might be briefing of some leaders by officials before they meet in the leader’s meeting,
- There might be some arrangement of the negotiating table,
- The role of coffee breaks, lunches, or dinners might be important as well,
- The old classic Machiavelian tactic of divide and rule. It might be used to weaken (strong) opponents (Dyson and Featherstone, 1999 : 34-35).

In addition to this, the paper takes also into consideration the working methods. There may be three types of working methods. First, the president can decide that each participant works on a precise theme. Then, the president might combine all these contributions in order to present a cumulative summary of the documents.

Secondly, the president can also decide to promote his/her preferences. Therefore, even if common meetings do occur, the final document will depend on the president’s political options.

Thirdly, the president invites every participant to express his/her point of view. On that basis, the president may try to formulate a project of compromise with the ‘lowest’ or the ‘highest’ common denominator.

These distinctions suggest the need to investigate the actors’ strategies and tactics. In particular, it seems that the ‘forerunner’ strategy is more often used than the ‘pusher’ strategy. Moreover, the following proposal can be stated. The
more the actors within an EPF use the ‘forerunner’ strategy, the less likely an EPF will come to a consensus. The more the ‘pusher’ strategies are used, the more likely an EPF will come to a consensus.

B. The policy entrepreneurs and the policy sponsors
It is also important to study the role of «policy entrepreneurs» and «policy sponsors». Regarding policy entrepreneurs, the «dynamics of agenda-setting are only fully captured once one takes on broad role of individuals as energizers of policy change and advocates of idea. The negotiation (...) revealed the key role of policy entrepreneurs –whether ministers or officials – in bringing new ideas to bear on the development of policy (Kingdon 1984; Goldstein 1993; Ikenberry 1993). Policy entrepreneurs are not usually or necessarily policy experts who originate policy ideas (...) [they] emerged at various times and locations in the (...) negotiating process, being sometimes successful and often failing » (Dyson and Featherstone, 1999 : 59).

Complementary to the policy entrepreneurs are the policy sponsors. «If Genscher was the entrepreneur for an ECB, Kohl took on the role of sponsor. Entrepreneurship does not get far without sponsorship » (Dyson and Featherstone, 1999 : 60). Thus, it is advocated that a policy entrepreneur team up with policy sponsors.

In conclusion, there are a broad range of factors which seem appropriate to explore in order to explain the outcome of the interpartisan negotiation in EPFs.

3. The EPFs’reponses: explaining the types of actor
The paper now turns to the third analytical stage of the conceptual framework: the EPFs’reponses. The two following sections will conceptualise the response of EPFs and the main explanatory proposals.

3.1. Typifying EPFs’ responses
In order to typify the response of EPFs, it would seem relevant to distinguish between the different conceptions of Scully and then refine them. In conceptualising the response of EPFs, the source of inspiration is Roger Scully’s theoretical contribution, which is mainly based on Philip Norton, Michael Mezey and Jean Blondel (Scully, 2000 : 236). He presents the following typology of the impact of the European Parliament on the policy process:

- **policy-making** « which implied, he (Norton) suggested, the ability of the legislature not only to ‘modify or reject government measures’, but also to ‘formulate and substitute a policy for that proposed by the government’ (1984 : 178) »
policy-influencing « which may involve the rejection or amendment of government measures, but not the promotion by the legislature of its own agenda », and

He also considers important the « ability and/or willingness to use that power » (Scully, 2000 : 236).

As stated before, the present paper will refine Scully’s work by adding two components : the consensus builder and the absence of influence. The absence of influence can easily be understood. It could be due to the absence of potential power, the inability and/or unwillingness to use power.

The paper will describe a « weak consensus-builder ». In case of « genuine consensus », it is necessary to analyse two additional aspects. First, the implementation of such an agreement. Secondly, the effect at the level of EU policy-making. Accordingly, it is important to depict the key chronological moments of the relationship between formal and informal policy processes. This can observed by two indicators. On the one hand, the party leader’s meeting might contribute to transform a disagreement discussed in an ex alto institution (Council of ministers) to an agreement in an ex post institution (European Council). On the other hand, EPFs could reconcile diverging positions of the member parties in-between the different EU formal meetings and contribute to transform the previous disagreement on an agreement in a given institution (Council of ministers).

After having presented this refinement, the paper will present the typology to which it refers to measure EPFs’ responses :

- a policy-maker: EPFs have the ability not only to modify or reject EU measures, but also to formulate and substitute a policy for that proposed by the EU,

- a policy-influencer: EPFs may only reject or amend the EU measures, but may make a substitution of its formulation and

- a weak consensus-builder: as mentioned, this can be indicated in a twofold manner. On the one hand, the party leader’s meeting might contribute to transform a previous disagreement discussed in an ex alto institution (Council of ministers) to an agreement in an ex post institution (European Council). On the other hand, EPFs could reconcile diverging positions of the member parties under its auspice, and

- an absent EPF: it may be due to the absence of potential power, the inability and/or unwillingness to use its potential power – if it has any.

3.2. Explaining the responses of EPFs

Bearing in mind the typology proposed for measuring the EPFs’ responses, it is argued in the present paper that the EPF has never been a policy-maker or a
policy-influencer. At best, it can be a « weak consensus-builder » and, in general, an absent EPF. In order to portray why the EPFs are characterised by this weak or even absent reaction, there are three plausible explanatory proposals. They are necessary and complementary. The first is to specify the extent to which the institutional venues of an EPF have to be considered in any explanation. The second is to note the importance of EPFs’ presence in the EU institutional modes. The third is the « dialectical relationship » between EPFs and EU policy-making.

A. The institutional venues
To what extent do EPFs’ institutional venues explain this process? Since EPFs need to express and manifest themselves in the European institutional setting, they have adopted their structures to this multilevel European polity. Therefore, they all possess the same organs: the congress, the bureau, the secretariat, the leaders’ meetings (the exception is the regionalists), the working groups (Dietz, 2000; Delwit et al., 2001).

In particular, the institutional venues of EPFs may adapt to the EU institutional modes in order to bring together its different members who do have power in the EU policy-making process. They might discuss the EU agenda or problems of their own in order to influence the policy process.

At best, the EPF adapts to three institutional modes: the intergovernmental mode, the joint-decision mode and the open method of coordination; and not the supranational/hierarchichal mode. One given organ might deal with two or three institutional modes. It is the case in the PES. The leader’s meeting is an organ which de facto adapts to the Intergovernmental Conferences, the joint decision mode and the open method of coordination.

Moreover, it is important to notice that some EPFs create institutional venues for different types of leadership as regards the leaders’ meeting. In that respect, it can be useful to use the distinction between governmental leadership, party leadership and combined governmental and party leadership (Blondel and Cotta, 1996: 15-16). For example, the PES has created a common organ for these three groups. It has also created special organs for governmental leadership and combined governmental and party leadership.

All in all, it is important to explore EPFs’ role as an informal part of the policy-making of the EU institutional modes by focussing on its institutional adaptatio

B. The presence
As it is already implied by the consideration of EPFs’ institutional venues, the presence of EPFs within the different institutional modes constitutes another sine
qua non condition of their responses. The more members it has in key policy-making organs of the institutional modes, the more potential power it will have.

However, there is an exception to this adaptation: the hierarchichal/supranational mode. Indeed, it might be more appropriate to influence the intergovernmental mode than the ECB or the ECJ because the monetary policy is treaty based and the ECJ case law has quasi-constitutional value. This is not the case with the other institutional modes. Having considered this, the next step is to look at the other institutional modes.

The more representatives an EPF has in the IGC or in the European Council, the more likely it will have power to influence the outcomes. It would be the case in particular if it has representatives in strong positions in the ‘three usual suspects’: France, Germany and the UK.

Regarding the joint-decision mode, the more representatives EPFs has in the joint-decision mode, the more power it has. If it intends to influence this mode, it is important to analyse whether EPFs take into consideration institutional variables such as (1) QMV or a blocking minority, (2) the participation of the political groups of the EP, (3) the Commission’s right of initiative ...

Last but not least, the more representatives the EPF has in the open method of coordination (European Commission, Peer Review, Council of Ministers, European Council), the more it will be able to push for new and precise guidelines.

C. The dialectical relationship between EPFs and the EU policy-making process

According to the present conceptual framework, it is also important to take into consideration the external environment. Among many external factors, the paper argues that it is important to consider the ‘dialetical relationship’ (Marsh and Smith, 2000) between the EPF and the different stages of the EU policy process (agenda-setting, policy formulations and policy decisions) in a considered institutional mode. One has to identify if EPFs have, or could have, played a role in each of these stages. Moreover, it is also important to note to what extent the EU policy process influences EPFs (Kulahci, 2002). One may expect a greater impact of the EU policy process such as the influence of the future public financing and statute of EPFs and the enlargement of the EU.

In sum, the institutional venues of EPFs, its « presence » within the institutional modes and the dialectical relationships constitute the main explanatory proposals that should be explored in any explanation of the various types of EPFs’ responses.

The paper will now proceed by applying the conceptual framework. Therefore, it will present, firts, the context; and secondly, the activities of the PES within this context.
III. The context: the development of EU enlargement policy

The enlargement process is not a new one for the EU. In 1973, the EU enlarged to Ireland, United Kingdom and Denmark. In 1981, Greece joined the EU. In 1986, it was the turn of Spain and Portugal. Last but not least, the EU enlarged to Austria, Finland and Sweden in 1995. Since the collapse of the Berlin wall, the EU is facing a new enlargement challenge which is impressive in terms of the number of applicants.

1. The Enlargement of the EU to the CEECs

Faced with the kind of request for enlargement, the EU tried to respond to this challenge. In 1993, the Copenhagen European Council defined the economic and political criteria. In 1994, the Essen European Council adopted the strategy for enlargement. Moreover, it invited the European Commission to elaborate a White Paper. The Commission reacted to this invitation from the European Council, by drafting this document whose most important aspect was the PHARE program.

In December 1997, the Luxembourg European Council has adopted the proposal of the European Commission. This decision was characterised by a division between the first wave and the second wave of enlargement of the EU to the CEECs. The Helsinki European Council tried to put an end to this division … without success … it seems. The Treaty of Nice set up the institutional design for the EU enlargement. It has not been ratified so far by all the EU countries. This leaves the door open to the prospect that it may not be ratified. Indeed, the 2004 IGC may well be the genuine institutional « response » of the EU to the challenge of enlargement. In that respect, the Laeken European Council decided to create the Convention on the future of the European Union. The task of this Convention is to prepare “as broadly and openly as possible” the works of the next intergovernmental conference (European Council, 2001).

2. The European Convention

Indeed, the Convention has been established in order to constitute an arena from which new solutions could be conceived in the perspective of the 2004 Intergovernmental Conference. The Laeken Declaration raised four main issues that the Convention should address: distributing and defining the competences in the EU; simplifying EU’s instruments; much more democracy, transparency and efficiency in the EU; a constitution for European citizens (European Council, 2001).

The convention is composed of the following representatives: national governments, the European Commission, Member of Parliaments (MPs) and Members of the European parliaments (MEPs). Secondly, the representatives of
the candidate countries do participate the debates. However, they do not have power. Thirdly, the Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the European Ombudsman have an observer status. Fourthly, the representatives of the « civil society » can send their proposals and amendments to a « Forum » (Dobre, 2002).

Moreover, the Convention has two bodies: the Presidium and the Secretariat. The Presidium is composed of the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, two EP representatives, two Commission representatives, two representatives of national parliaments and the representatives of the Spanish, Danish and Greek Governments (Dobre, 2002).

Three stages would characterise the Convention’s one-year mandate: expressing the different positions, comparing different positions and drafting the final document. The Convention Chairman will have to present the progress to the European Council.

IV. The PES and EU enlargement

The paper will now proceed by analyzing the impact of the PES on EU enlargement. It will argue that the PES has been an absent actor. Firstly, the diverging positions of the member parties impeded on the interpartisan negotiation. These positions were underlined by the different factors. Secondly, interpartisan negotiations under the auspices of the PES resulted in nominal consensus and divergence. The forerunner strategies prevailed although some policy entrepreneurs tried to make the difference. In order to illustrate these empirical assumptions, the paper will now analyse the successive initiatives of the PES to impact on EU enlargement policy-making. These initiatives are reactions to the evolving EU enlargement agenda.

1. The 1996-7 Intergovernmental Conference and the enlargement of the European Union

In 1996, the PES elaborated a text (Wiersma, 1996) which is quite curious in many respects (Wiersma, 1996). First, it starts by arguing in favour of the EU enlargement. The authors presented two reasons. On the one hand, it was a historical opportunity to integrate the CEECs. On the other hand, every European state should benefit from the EU.

It went on by stressing many issues: budgetary questions, the enlargement calendar, political conditions, financial assistance, the debates with the citizens of the Member States and the applicant states, etc … However, the document focussed mainly on democracy, the socio-economic context, security in Europe, the institutions, financing enlargement, the Common agricultural policy (CAP)
and flexible enlargement. It presented its different positions on these issues. However, it has to be said that some positions were not clear in terms of ideas and motivations.

First, it started with the importance of democracy and human rights. Therefore, the EU should not isolate the countries which do not realise the EU criteria. The EU should help actively these countries.

Secondly, it stressed the importance of the socio-economic dimension. Thus, the EU should evaluate the applicant countries on the basis of three criteria. First, the level of Gross Domestic Products (GDP) as the EU cannot afford to enlarge to so many CEECs with low level of GDP. Thus, the EU should be imaginative and find out solutions to overcome the differences of economic levels. Secondly, it insisted on the importance of social and environmental criteria. The fear of the PES could be resumed to the following line. If the candidate states wanted to compete at the global level, they would need cheap labour force or less constraining regulations. Therefore, the PES will probably oppose to integrate this « type » of economic structure to the EU. Consequently, the EU should help the CEECs to progress and achieve a « minimal » level of regulation.

Thirdly, the PES stressed the importance of security in Europe. In particular, it welcomed the demand of the CEECs to be part of NATO. The PES invited to analyse the new internal risks in the CEECs. Moreover, it was in favour of cooperating with the CEECs on matters such as the justice and home affairs.

Fourthly, the document focussed on the implication of the enlargement for the institutional design of the EU. In the opinion of the PES, there is not only a need for « a larger union but also a better union ». Concretely, two tracks were suggested. On the one hand, it was necessary to bridge the gap between the citizens and Brussels by making the EU more transparent, democratic and efficient. On the other hand, this reform would be useful in the perspective of implementing the EU policies.

Fifthly, the PES presented different aspects of the financial issue: the net contributors’ wish to reduce their contributions; the financial and economic austerity, and the candidate states’ request for much more support. Therefore, it was necessary to reform the EU financial system and to prepare the Member States to make an additional contribution.

Sixthly, the CAP needed to be reformed. The PES was not really clear on « what should be reformed »?

Seventhly, the PES was of the opinion that the prospect of « a multi-speed Europe » and « a Europe with transitional periods » cannot be avoided.

All in all, the authors of this document were in favour of economic, socio-economic and political criteria. Moreover, they expressed the view that the EU should be reformed in these following policy-area: the institutional design, the budget and the CAP. Therefore, this leaves two broad obstacles to the EU enlargement: the criteria for the candidate states’ accession and the EU reform. In
the view of the PES, this will inexorably lead to « multi-transitional periods » and « multi-speed EU ».

2. An illustration of the interaction of the leaders under the auspices of the PES

Following the publication of this text, the PES leaders met. It has to be remembered that they have been meeting since 1992. So, the paper will illustrate one of these meeting because it has information in that respect. It will focus on the Portugal meeting because the leaders of the PES and the leaders of the CEECs’ parties met for the first time in March 1996 under the auspices of the PES leaders’ meeting.

Several issues were raised: the EU enlargement and the Slovenian case. Regarding the EU enlargement, one of the main issue was the calendar of negotiation. Three problems were raised. One delegation pointed out the issue of a clear calendar. The Polish leader, Oleksy, stressed that the lack of an official EU timetable complicates the Polish adjustment program. A second delegation made a proposal. Indeed, the leader of the Hungarian Party, Szekeres, suggested to start the negotiations six months after concluding the IGC. A third delegation pointed out two main problems. It was Karel Van Miert, the representative of the European Commission, who added that it was the Council which would decide with who to start the negociation. He highlighted two specific problems for the CEECs: the low average GDP of the candidate countries (30% of EU GDP) and the high average of working people in agriculture (27%).

On the Slovenian issue, the representative of the Slovenian party, Kocijancic, asked for the support of the PES in order for Slovenia to have an association agreement with the EU. The Hungarian representative supported the Slovenian demand. In turn, Fischer (SPÖ) reacted by suggesting that it was not really the right time as there would be soon Italian elections. He added that the Slovenian government had not been very tactfull in external relations. Having criticised Slovenia, he added, however, that the PES should make a contribution to support the Slovenian case.

3. The autumn Budapest declaration

After the Lisbon PES leaders meeting, the Social-Democrat leaders met for the first time in Budapest, and for the first time in a CEEC. Following this meeting, they made a common declaration. They stressed that the enlargement is « a political necessity and a historic opportunity for Europe ». They stated that the « enlargement negotiations should begin with all applicant countries six months after the conclusion of the IGC ». They said that they will adopt a « country by country approach ». To conclude, the document stressed that it is important « to ensure that our Europe is a Europe of employment and growth, economic and
social cohesion, environmental protection and of peace and security for all its citizens» (PES, 1996). However, this document should not be misleading since at Luxembourg, the European Council supported a two-wave approach.

4. The EU enlargement and the agenda 2000

Having presented the main PES initiatives as regards the enlargement process, it seemed pertinent to continue by presenting the PES position and the topic. In this section, I will first present the position of the PES. Secondly, I will analyse the French PS and the Greek PASOK positions because the present author gathered two documents informing the precise proposals of these parties. Finally, I will show that the PES position is not a genuine consensus.

4.1. The position of the PES

The PES has also tried to react to the European Commission Agenda 2000 proposals by proposing five main points (PES, 1997).

First, it was the issue of the number of the candidate countries with which the EU should start negotiations. The PES wrote that: «we agree that the negotiation and accession process should start with all candidate countries at the same time. The negotiation and accession process should be global; all candidate countries should be involved in a general framework for negotiations. The negotiation and accession process should be flexible and evolutionnary. In the framework of this process concret bilateral negotiations with some candidates countries should start as soon as possible. The order of starting these concrete bilateral negotiations does not predict the order of accession. In our view this is the only way to avoid new dividing-lines in Europe. One should not underestimate the symbolic value of the start of the process. The start of the negotiation and accession process should be considered as the occasion, marking the efforts made by the governments and the populations of these countries to reform their economies and their institutions» (1-2). So, the memorandum was in favour of opening the negotiation to all the candidate countries at the same time.

Secondly, the PES developed different ideas and paragraphs for the topics of the European Conference. It «should be a place where the fifteen, the Central and Eastern European countries, Cyprus and Turkey can discuss topics that are of common intere, and are at the heart of European ambitions:

- Europe of peace; the European architecture of security, the relationship with Russia etc.
- Europe of democracy; promotion of institutional reforms and the affirmation of the constitutional state.
- Europe of security; the fight against drugs traffic, serious crime etc.
• Europe of growth; nuclear safety and trans-European networks for example» (2).

Thirdly, the PES debated on the pre-accession partnership. It was of the opinion that the PHARE program, the Structural and Agricultural Funds, and the foreign investments should be the main component of this partnership.

Fourthly, they asked for necessary institutional changes in the perspective of enlargement. They equally referred to the joint Belgian, French and Italian declarations.

Last but not least, the PES agreed with the Commission’s proposal regarding the financial framework, which included a contribution of 1.27% of the EU GDP.

To sum up, the PES took precise position on issues such as the number of candidate countries to negotiate with and the European conference.

4.2. The French PS and the Greek PASOK positions

After this short presentation of the PES position regarding the strategy towards enlargement, the paper proceeds with describing the French PS and the Greek PASOK positions. This step allow the author to illustrate a lack of genuine consensus within the PES since its members displayed different attitudes towards the enlargement process.

Therefore, there were different positions expressed by member parties within PES as regards the number of condition countries with whom to start negotiations.

The French and the Greek position negotiations did contrast. The French PS suggested to follow the position of the European Commission (Nallet, 1997). In other words, it was in favour of the division of two groups of candidate states. In contrast, the PASOK was in favour of starting the accession negotiations with the 10 CEECs and Cyprus. It seemed to be against the creation of two groups for external reasons: « differentiation in respect of the date of the beginning of the accession negotiations will have a negative impact on the efforts of these countries to accomplish their political and economic reforms (inner dimension) and may as well send a wrong message to the international financial institutes and to the international investors (external dimension) » (Kranodiotis, 1997).

However, it seems that the PES position on the European Conference has been inspired by the French proposal. Indeed, the French PS proposed to discuss the « Europe of peace », the « Europe of democracy », the « Europe of security » and the « Europe of growth ». On the other hand, the PASOK was against the creation of a European Conference because it was in favour of the simultaneous start of the negotiations. In the same time, if the European conference had to be created, the PASOK, made clear that it was against the participation of Turkey.

It looked also that in terms of the EU institutional adaptation, the common document has been influenced by the French proposal. In particular, the French member proposed to refer to the joint Belgian, Italian and French declarations
which can be resumed to the following idea «no enlargement without deepening ».

As far as the financing were concerned, the French PS suggested a double financial program. The aim was to distinguish the EU budgetary program and the spending linked to enlargement. Moreover, it suggested also to spend maximum 1,27% of the GDP. In other words, it supported the proposal of the European Commission.

The analysis of the PES position compared with the French PS and the PASOK positions suggested that there is some incompatibilities between these two preferences. Therefore, it leaves us to conclude that the PES position was not approved by all the members.

5. The leaders meeting in Luxembourg

Following the discussion of the Agenad 2000 by a PES working group, the leaders of the PES met to discuss it just before the European Council of Luxembourg took place in December 1997. It seems that one of the main issue at stake was the Turkish candidacy. In addition, the leaders discussed different problems.

On the one hand, there was the issue of «including or excluding countries ». Two positions existed. The first position was in favour of including the different applicants. For instance, Antonio Guterres supported this position. He informed that he rejected demands from the Portuguese oposition to link a number of conditions to EU enlargement. Then, he argued that the basic reasoning behind enlargement was of a political nature. It followed that it was not logical to reject the candidate countries. Therefore, he proposed to open formal negotiations with the « 5+1 » and prepare negotiations with the others. Antonio Guterres was followed by the Swedish Prime Minister Goran Person. The Swedish representative was in favour of opening the enlargement process to the 11 Member States.

The second position was characterised by a less « enthousiastic » approach. For instance, Lionel Jospin, for the French delegation, argued that he cannot accept the Guterres proposal. Therefore, he argued that there is a need for a concrete assesment of the implications of enlargement on the CAP and on the EU institutions. Robin Cook, the British foreign minister, was also against starting negotiations with candidates countries which were not ready.

Notwithstanding these debates, the proposal of the European Commission was adopted by the Council. Therefore, the leaders demanded to Jean-François Vallin, the secretary general of the PES, to strengthen the transnational links with the «brother » parties. This was seen as a sort of «compensation » for the 2\textsuperscript{nd} group of countries. In other words, the PES wanted to reinforce the contacts with the 2\textsuperscript{nd} group of candidate States in order to avoid the feeling of rejection from the EU (Jean-François Vallin, Interview, 5\textsuperscript{th} March 2001).
6. The 1999 Working group on enlargement

Two years after the Agenda 2000, the EU enlargement agenda influenced again the PES. Indeed, the PES working group on enlargement was jointly organised by the federation and by the group. On 28-29 October 1999, they discussed six broad themes related to the proposal made by the Prodi Commission on 13th October, 1999. In Budapest, the working group was composed by representatives of trade-unions, governmental officials and party representatives.

First, there was the importance of the decision and its implications for applicant countries which were already in the negotiation process. The candidate countries of the first group did not want a slowing down of their accession process. For instance, «Hungary made very clear that it would oppose any idea of linking groups or even pairs of countries together, in order to facilitate the negotiation process». This would contradict the principle of «every country should be judged on its own merits».

The second topic was about the EU’s commitment to a successful and timely IGC. For instance, it was argued that any «commitment from the EU side to accept one or another country at a certain date decided upon before the end of negotiations, could damage the negotiation process and as such render it less serious».

Thirdly, the Commissionner’s Verheugen concept of parallelism was discussed as a precondition for the conclusion of negotiations. In that respect, the participants agreed on the following idea: «even though it is becoming increasingly clear that the implementation capacity of some applicant countries is lagging behind the adoption of the acquis, it is also clear, that only the implementation of the acquis brings the real effect».

Fourthly, the PES discussed the condition of the minority rights. One of the preliminary conclusions was «that in some of the countries the gap between legislation and implementation still prevails in this field».

Fifthly, the proposal of accession partnership for Turkey. There were diverging views on the Turkish candidacy. Thus, they decided to create a PES working party dealing exclusively with Turkey.

The last issue was about the «public awareness and the public opinion». For example, the PES working group outlined that «huge efforts are necessary to inform the public about the importance (political, internal and external security related and economic) of enlargement». 
7. The 2001 Berlin Congress: the implications of the enlargement on the social dimension

After the Budapest meeting, the PES organised a round table on the future of the enlarged EU during the 5th Congress in Berlin. This reveals the importance of the subject for the PES. Many issues have been discussed: the social dimension of enlargement, the institutional design, the political vision for the future… However, it seems that one the most salient issue was the implication of enlargement on the social dimension.

Regarding the social dimension, the participants debated different aspects. First, some focussed on the consequences for the citizens of the CEECS. Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, the Danish prime Minister, pointed out the social problems of the applicant countries. He argued that they «see transitional periods as being long and hard and we should help to mitigate any negative social effects of accession». This was confirmed by the contribution of Thoomas Ilves, Estonian Foreign Minister. He argued that «a crisis is developing in understanding the enlargement process in the candidate countries. The process is seen as a neo-liberal one and citizens cannot see the benefits for them. They see the negative effects of, for example, CAP subsidies and taxes on fuel». In turn, Rasmussen supported the idea that the «active welfare state» should constitute the basis of the EU.

Secondly, some leaders pointed out the consequences of enlargement for the EU citizens. The leader of the Belgian Socialist party Elio Di Rupo said «that enlargement must proceed quickly but without harsh social consequences. Party activists are now saying that we are failing to control the development of the EU and the global economy. The PES must respond to these concerns».

Thirdly, the consequences for all the citizens of Europe were outlined. In that respect, the Commissioner Gunther Verheugen argued for a «greater social dimension in the enlargement negotiations». However, he added that «the social ambitions of the Commission and the EP are not met in the detailed negotiations between officials. It is not acceptable that the social dimension should not feature in the process. Enlargement is just an end in itself – we want to achieve security, prosperity and justice for our citizens. We must strike a balance between the needs of the candidates and their need to fulfil the requirements of EU law».

8. The PES and the convention for enlargement

The PES previous initiatives, debates and declarations shows mainly its reaction to the evolution of the EU enlargement agenda. After the last Congress of the PES, the paper will proceed by analysing the PES’s contribution to the EU Convention for Enlargement. It will do so by presenting, first, the main features
of the PES organisation and, secondly, the Tallinn declaration because it is, in principle, the main document of reference to start the discussion within the PES.

8.1. The organisation of the PES

Within this context of constant reactions to the evolution of the EU enlargement agenda, the PES decided also to contribute to the debate on the Convention for enlargement (PES, 2002). There is an important number of PES members in the Convention. They are in the presidium (5), the member state parliaments (20), the Member State governments (7), the European parliament (10), the Committee of the Regions (4), the European Commission (1), the applicant country parliaments (10) and the applicant country governments (4).

This substantial presence in the Convention allowed the PES to coordinate its actions in order to deliver an appropriate contribution to the ongoing process. In this sense, on 27th February, the representatives of the PES members in the Convention met to establish links between them.

At the second meeting – 21st of March 2002, the members decided to discuss as a starting point the Tallinn (Estonia) declaration – a PES policy statement on the Future of Europe. They designed a coordination team of the PES Convention Members: Giuliano Amato (representative of the Council), Antonio Vitorino (European Commission), Klaus Hänsch (European parliament), Giorgis Katiforis (Member State) and Giseal Stuart (National parliaments). Jan Kavan (representative of the candidate countries) joined later the coordination team.

With the occasion of the third meeting, they decided to create 6 working groups on the following issues:

- justice and solidarity, tolerance and diversity,
- economic and social governance which respects sustainable development,
- freedom, security and justice,
- global responsibility,
- democracy, transparency and efficiency
- missions and institutions rooted in popular support.

Each working group is composed of 5 to 6 representatives. They will have to prepare draft texts and outline «Socialist position in each of the major theme of the Convention». They do meet just before or during the plenary sessions of the European Parliament.
8.2. The Tallinn Declaration on the Future of Europe: the PES «vision»

The Tallinn Declaration has been the PES working document on the basis of which the PES Convention working group started its work. The Tallinn Declaration on the Future of Europe (PES, 2001) has been written before the European Council of Laeken. The authors addressed the main problems trying to answer to the following question: «what is we want Europe to achieve?». It then proceeded by presenting the achievements, the challenges, the «central» issue of rebuilding popular support and the PES vision. Regarding the achievements, the PES pointed out the economic, welfare and peace benefits resulting from the European construction. Therefore, it presented the globalisation challenge: the «countries of Europe face new challenges of competition from the dramatic growth of global economic forces. Nations are now more inter-dependent and inter-connected than at any time in history». It insisted on the various aspects of the global problem: financial, trade, security, etc…

Then, the PES proposed its vision on what Europe should achieve. Seven points were developed. First, there was the idea of a Europe of future democracy and freedom. The PES stated that it was committed to the «principle of political equality which is the foundation of democracy and civil liberty». In addition, it was in favour of strengthening democracy in CEECs. Secondly, the PES submitted its view on the future of security. With the war in former Yugoslavia, it argued for constructing an appropriate military Europe. Thirdly, it mentioned the idea of social justice. This meant to end up the barriers within the state between the rich and the poor. In addition to this, the PES was in favour of full employment and jobs for women. Fourthly, the PES wanted to unite the EU and the CEECs. In the meantime, it presented itself as a bridge between these two parts of Europe. Fifthly, it was in favour of integrating the principles of sustainable development in the main EU policies. Moreover, the EU should implement the Kyoto Protocol. Sixthly, the PES asked for strengthening the solidarity in the EU project. Therefore, the structural policies should help the lagging regions and localities. Seventhly, the PES suggested that the EU should use its economic force to overcome poverty in less developed states.

Last but not least, it briefly mentioned the issue of the institutional balance of power between the EU institutions (European Commission, European parliament, Council of Ministers) and between the European and the national levels.

8.3. Will the PES impact on the Convention for Enlargement and the subsequent 2004 IGC?

In contrast with other unsuccessful initiatives, will the PES initiative on the Convention for Enlargement be efficient? It seems that the PES will not be able
to be a policy-maker because the main function of conceptualising is left to the Convention. It may be a consensus-builder, that means that it may help to find out solutions for some issues. More likely, it will be an absent actor. Why?

First, it has to manage the issue of divergence of preferences. In each of the PES working group, there may be division on the line of different national preferences related to these different thematics. If it comes to the social dimension, there may be different models which may compete (Bismarckian, anglo-saxon, latin rim, scandinavian, CEECs ‘model’). It will probably end up with divergences or nominal consensus.

However and perhaps, the PES may overcome some of the issues. Therefore and secondly, it has to deal with the collective action problems. However, the PES is dealing with too many thematics, which means that its capacity for finding solutions could be reduced.

Thirdly, it has to tackle the issue of « impacting » on the EU enlargement policy-making process. If the PES do not grasp properly the issues of the diverging positions and of collective action problems, it is unlikely that it will make the difference in the EU policy process. In addition to this and a posteriori, it seems that it will be important to observe the attitude of the different federations in between the Convention and the 2004 IGC as well as during the 2004 IGC. The following question emerge : which issues will emerge as the most problematic from the Convention and what will be the approach of the PES towards this set of issues? Moreover, the presence of the PES in the intergovernmental mode of decision is dramatically diminishing. Therefore, this suggest that the potential power of the PSE will diminish.

V. Conclusions

This article has demonstrated that the absence of the PES on EU enlargement policy-making can be described, explained and hopefully understood adequately when one pays attention to the tripartite analytical sequence : the party positions, the interpartisan bargaining and EPFs responses. Does the empirical findings support or refute the theoretical hypotheses? In answering to this question, the paper will proceed by considering each of the tripartite analytical sequence.

The party positions. First, the paper elaborated two approximations in order to analyse the party positions. On the one hand, it developed six different types of EU debates – EU membership, the nature of the EU and its institutions, the power transfer of core prerogative statehood, European level policy, specific issues related to EU policy-making and the issue of programmatic ethos. On the other hand, it payed attention to the degree of support or opposition across parties. From this vantage point, it developed three broad factors to explain these
positions: domestic conditions such as governmental motivations, external conditions as financial globalisation and partisan factors such as cleavage theory.

Does the empirical findings support or refute the theoretical hypotheses at stage one? The party positions were rarely expressed. Indeed, the transnational contribution of political parties were very weak. When expressed, the party positions often resulted on a variety of party positions in the different bodies of the PES.

In the PES’ leaders, the French Prime Minister had reserved attitudes towards enlargement beacause of its agricultural and institutional implications. This was not really the case of the Swedish Prime Minister probably beacause of its pro-intergovernmental stance and, to a lesser extent of the Portuguese Prime Minister.

This was also the case in the working group on enlargement. Henri Nallet’s position was consistent with the position of its leader Jospin. However, the PASOK opposed to the perspective of creating two waves of Candidate States because that may have a negative impact on the applicant states of the 2nd wave.

Divergences emerged also in terms of assessing the implications of enlargement on the social dimensions. It was the case in the 2001 PES Congress. First, the Danish and the Estonian representatives insisted on the implications for the citizens of the candidate states. Secondly, the Belgian representative pointed out the insecurity among the Belgian citizens. Thirdly, the German European Commissionner insisted on the impact that the absence of social dimension would have on all the citizens.

All in all, the positions seemed to be divergent on issues such as the agenda, the persons to invite, and specific issues. These divergencies were underlied by very strong ideological and economic motivations. At this stage, the other explanatory variables are refuted: some of the domestic factors, some of the external conditions and some of the partisan factors.

The interpartisan bargaining. The second stage is about describing and explaining the outcome of the interpartisan negotiation. Thus, three policy outcomes may be distinguished: divergence, nominal consensus and genuine consensus. It is assumed that interpartisan negotiations result often in divergences, sometimes in nominal consensus and rarely in genuine consensus. Therefore, the paper specified strategies, tactics and coalitions of political parties in order to explain this result. Moreover, it also refered to explanatory concepts such as policy entrepreneurs and policy sponsors.

Does the empirical findings support or refute the theoretical hypotheses at stage II? It has to be noted that the empricial data gave too little information the interpartisan negotiation. However, they suggest that the interpartisan bargaining reflected a major collective action problem. It seems that the main strategy that the PES’actors used was the ‘forerunner’ strategy. Moreover, there were few policy entrepreneurs and few policy sponsors.
In the PES leaders, the Slovenian representative had a forerunner strategy and was a policy entrepreneur. He asked for the support of the PES in order for Slovenia to get an association agreement with the EU. He was supported by his Hungarian colleague and the Austrian Vice-president of the PES.

In addition to this, Jan Marinus Wiersma was (co-)chairing most of the working group on enlargement. He may have had a forerunner strategy and an unefficient role in terms of polciy entrepreneur.

In addition to this, two factors should be highlighted. First, it was the function ascribed by the leaders to the PES in relation with the « brother » parties of the CEECs. On the one hand, the PES’function was conceivey by some leaders as to reinforce the link with « brother » parties of candidate states which may be frustrated by the EU enlargement policy. On the other hand, the PES was used as an arena from which representatives try to convince the parties of the CEECs to join their view point, for instance, on the social dimension of enlargement. For instance, Marco Piantini, an ex-policy advisor of the PES, declared that this was the main intention (Piantini).

A second important factor is related to the importance and strength of the Socialist group in the European Parliament vis-à-vis the PES federation. Having the main financial resources, it seems that the group has been in a position to organise much more activities with the representatives of the « brother » parties of CEECs.

Therefore, two outcomes emerged from this bargaining : divergences and nominal consensus. Why such an outcome ? First, the transnational contributions of member parties were weak. Secondly, the strategy of forerunner prevailed. Thirdly, the main policy entrepreneur was Jan Marinus Wiersma. However, it seems that he was not so much supported by some of his colleague. However, some ex-ante explanatory variables have not been observed such as tactics and coalitions. Moreover, the role of the political group in the EP as well as the other function ascribed to the federation played also an important role in explaining such an interpartisan negotiation outcome

The EPFs responses. The paper turns to the third analytical stage of the conceptual framework: EPFs’reponses. Four types of response are distinguished: the policy-maker, the policy-influencer, the weak consensus-builder and the absent actor. There are three plausible and complementary explanations for the response. These stress EPFs’institutional venues, the presence of its members in the EU institutional modes and the dialectical relationship between the different phases of EU policy-making and EPFs.

Does the empirical findings support or refute the theoretical hypotheses ? It appears that the PES has been an absent actor.

First, the PES seems to have adapted to the EU enlargement policy-making. Secondly, the presence counted in the different EU institutional modes. Thirdly and however, the PES did not have an impact on EU policy-making.
All in all, the PES was an absent actor although it adapted to a certain extent to the EU enlargement policy-making and it had an important presence in the EU institutional modes. However, the dynamic of EU enlargement policy-making seems to have affected strongly the PES and their national member parties.

In conclusions, the supranational interaction of Labour, Socialist, and Social-Democrat Parties under the auspices of the PES ended up with the absence of the federation. Indeed, party positions were often divergent. This had implications on the interpartisan negotiation. Therefore, the PES was an absent actor. In compensation to this, the PES was used as a bridge between its Western members and its associate members from CEECs … a bridge to exchange ideas and a bridge to influence each other … in one word, a bridge as a compensation to the tortuous way of the accession to the EU.

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