

UACES 42nd Annual Conference

Passau, 3-5 September 2012

Conference papers are works-in-progress - they should not be cited without the author's permission. The views and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author(s).

www.uaces.org

Influencing EU external policies in the post-Lisbon era: The Hungarian and Polish Council Presidencies and their influence on Eastern Partnership policies

Paper prepared for the UACES conference “Exchanging ideas on Europe 2012”
Panel “Inside the EU institutions (II): Conceptualising the Councils”
Passau, 3-5 September 2012

- work in progress, please do not quote without author’s permission -

Bruno Vandecasteele
Ghent University
E-mail: Bruno.Vandecasteele@UGent.be

Abstract

The Lisbon Treaty, which created the positions of Permanent President of the European Council and High Representative for Common and Security Policy, dramatically changed the role of the Council Presidency in external EU policies. Recent research indicates that the influence of the Presidency in this policy area has decreased, but also suggests that the chair now shapes external EU policies by using other channels more intensively. The paper assesses and compares the influence of the Hungarian and Polish Council Presidencies of 2011 in the EU’s policy towards the Eastern Partnership countries. Two research questions are explored throughout the paper: (1) the extent to which the Presidency can influence EU policies towards the Eastern Partnership, and (2) under which circumstances the Presidency can influence the EU’s external policies. I argue that (1) Presidencies can have an influence on decisions in areas where they have a strong interest, (2) by engaging in inter-institutional negotiations, intervening in preparatory bodies of the Council, and influencing decision-making in other Council configurations than the Foreign Affairs Council.

Introduction

The only formal task of the rotating Council Presidency (hereafter: Presidency) is to convene and manage the meetings of the Council and its preparatory bodies. Over the last five decades, however, the Presidency has evolved from an ennobled secretary to a responsible and functional element of European decision-making, due to increasing international commitments of the EU, successive enlargements, growing complexity of EU decision-making, and a rising number of policy areas dealt with by the Council (Westlake & Galloway, 2004). Despite the rising importance of the Presidency, this actor was not institutionally reformed until 2009.

The question whether the Presidency has additional influence on decision-making has been the subject of much academic debate in the past decades. A growing number of quantitative (see e.g. Schalk, Torenvlied, Weesie, & Stokman, 2007; Thomson, 2008; Warntjen, 2007) and qualitative (see e.g.: Arter, 2000; Bengtsson, 2002; Bjurulf, 2001; Bunse, 2009; Kajnič & Svetličič, 2010; Pintelon & Van Lancker, 2011; Tallberg, 2003, 2004) studies provides convincing evidence that it does make a difference which country is in the chair.

This paper discusses the influence of the Hungarian (first half of 2011) and Polish (second half of 2011) Council Presidencies on the European Union's (EU's) policies towards the Eastern Partnership (EaP), covering Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. The selection of those two Presidencies and the regional focus is motivated by three main considerations. To begin with, Hungary and Poland were the first Presidencies that took place after the Lisbon Treaty entirely entered into force. The transitional periods were finished and the division of competences between the different decision-making bodies worked according to the Treaty. These case studies thus provide useful information on the Presidency's role in the new institutional context. Second, it would be impossible and undesirable in the framework of this paper to scrutinise the whole range of external policies of the EU. The most interesting parts of external policy are those where the Presidency has a clear interest, where we may observe attempts to influence policies and can assess under which circumstances such attempts are successful. EU policy towards the Eastern Neighbourhood is an area that is of great strategic importance to both Hungary and Poland, though slightly more to the latter than to the former (Copsey & Pomorska, 2010; Hungarian MFA, 2010; Kaczyński, 2009; Raik & Gromadzki, 2006). Third, not being members of the Eurozone, Hungary's and Poland's role was very limited in the most important dossier of the last years – the financial and debt crisis. This arguably gave both Presidencies an additional motivation to make progress in areas where they have substantial expertise, e.g. the Eastern neighbourhood.

After a summary of the changes introduced by the Lisbon Treaty with regard to external policy, the second part clarifies two theoretical perspectives. Both rational choice and sociological approaches are powerful tools to understand Presidency behaviour. In this part, I discuss their respective assumptions, and point out why the rational choice approach is the most suitable for the present study. The third part reflects on the notion of 'influence' and how to observe it. Subsequently, the interests of Hungary and Poland in the Eastern neighbourhood are briefly described, followed by an overview of events related to the EaP or some its members, and an analysis of the influence of the respective Presidencies on those events in sections 5 and 6. The EaP includes a multilateral track and a bilateral track – in which Belarus does not participate so far (European External Action Service, 2011), both of which will be discussed in the paper. Sections 5 and 6 explore the two research questions of this paper: (1) the extent to which the Presidency can influence EU policies towards the EaP, and (2) under which circumstances the Presidency can influence external policies.

The main sources of information for this paper are official documents and interviews, complemented by news articles and other secondary sources.

1. The Presidency in external relations post-Lisbon

The Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force in December 2009, profoundly reformed the Presidency's responsibilities and competences, responding to a number of problems that had arisen throughout the previous decades (Schout, 2008; Vanhoonacker, Pomorska, & Maurer, 2011). The new institutional architecture (see e.g. Bunse, Rittelmeyer, & Van Hecke, 2011) should provide for more continuous, coherent, and strategic policies of the EU. The Lisbon Treaty preserved the rotating Presidency system, except for the European Council (EC) and the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC). There is more input from the EU-level in external policy, but the final responsibility remains with the Member States. Ashton, the High Representative and Vice-President of the Commission (HRVP), who is appointed for five years, prepares and chairs the FAC, represents the EU externally at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and ensures consistency and coherence in the external EU policies, together with the European External Action Service (EEAS). Van Rompuy, Permanent President of the European Council (PPEC), with a renewable mandate of two-and-a-half years, represents the EU externally at the level of Heads of State and Government, and co-decides on the strategic options of the EU's external policy.

The role of the Presidency in external policy has thus changed, yet it did not become entirely irrelevant (Debaere, De Ridder, & Nasra, 2011; Gostyńska, 2011; Vanhoonacker et al., 2011). The Presidency still chairs a number of preparatory bodies related to external affairs,¹ as well as all the other Council configurations and their preparatory bodies, including those with an external aspect. The Presidency also chairs the FAC when trade issues are discussed. A second reason why the Presidency is still considered relevant for EU external policies is that, although the HRVP is the official external representative of the EU, some partners of the EU do not accept the authority of the HRVP and prefer to negotiate with individual Member States or with the Presidency, and the Member States are not always willing to give in their power. Furthermore, the agenda of the HRVP is overfilled and she soon started a practice of asking the Presidency to replace her in inter-Ministerial meetings with third countries or before the European Parliament (EP) (Grevi, 2011, June). Fourth, the Presidency plays an increasingly important role as mediator between the Council and the EU institutions (Debaere et al., 2011; Vanhoonacker et al., 2011). The Presidency can finally play a role as coordinator, lead the files through the different procedural steps in the Council, and ensure consistency between the different aspects of external policy. In short, the substantive impact of the Presidency is expected to be reduced, but its impact on the procedures has risen (see e.g. Van Hecke & Bursens, 2011).

2. A rational choice or a sociological perspective?

Presidencies often face the dilemma of 'getting things done' (move forward with the European project) versus pursuing their own national interests (influencing EU policies to their own benefit)

¹ The Presidency chairs Coreper I and II, all working parties related to trade and development, as well as the horizontal working parties on Foreign Relations Counsellors (RELEX), on International Aspects of Terrorism (COTER), on specific measures to combat terrorism (COCOP), on Consular Affairs (COCON), on Public International Law (COJUR), and on the Law of the Sea (COMAR) (Council of the European Union, 2009, 30 November).

(Bjurulf, 2001). It is no secret that most 'new' EU Member States view the EU as a way of promoting their views on the neighbourhood (see e.g. Raik & Gromadzki, 2006). An examination of the priority programmes of Hungary and Poland (Hungarian EU Presidency website, 2011c; Polish EU Presidency website, 2011) indeed reveals that both countries would opt for the latter approach during their Presidencies. Hungary's Government Commissioner Robák even explicitly expressed his hope "that the prestige of Hungary will increase and its influence in the EU will be larger after the Presidency" (Hungarian EU Presidency website, 2011b).

Rational choice institutionalism (see e.g. Elgström, 2003; Tallberg, 2004) provides a theoretical rationale both for the origins of chair and for Presidency behaviour. This approach assumes that parties in multilateral negotiations have previously established and well-defined interests, that they know their interests, and that all parties try to gain as much as possible from the negotiations. Holding the office of the Presidency can facilitate the promotion of a Member State's preferences. Adherence to Presidency norms, such as the neutrality norm, is explained in terms of cost/benefit calculations (e.g. concerns about its reputation).

An alternative framework for explaining Presidency behaviour is the sociological approach (Elgström, 2003), in which Presidencies – as much as all other negotiators – internalise certain norms and behave accordingly, because they sincerely believe this is the right way to behave.

In the rationalist point of view, norms *constrain* Presidency behaviour, while in the sociological approach, norms have a more prominent place, they *shape* Presidency behaviour. Niemann and Mak (2010) argued that both explanations for norm compliance can be valid, depending on the circumstances. They expected the norms to be more internalised (sociological approach) in 'old' Member States, among officials who have intensive and sustained contacts with each other, and on the level of bureaucrats (in working parties and Coreper). Conversely, norm compliance is likely to be motivated by cost/benefit calculations (rational choice approach) within 'new' Member States with little experience and thus little opportunities for norm internalisation, among representatives who meet each other rarely, and on the political level (Ministers).

Taking into account the priority programmes – including clear national preferences for external policy – and the statement of the Hungarian Government cited *supra*, I consider the rational choice perspective the most accurate approach to explain Hungary's and Poland's behaviour during their respective Presidencies.

3. Studying Presidency influence

The definition of 'influence', like many social science concepts, is highly debated. Influence is interlinked with 'power' (see e.g. Arts & Verschuren, 1999), but they are not synonyms. Betsill and Corell (2001), described power as a general ability to exert influence, whereas influence refers to concrete files, decisions or people where an actor has an impact. Power may be converted into influence, but it does not necessarily do so, and actors may exert influence without being powerful. For this paper, the definition of influence proposed by Bunse (2009, p. 5) is used. Influence is understood as the capacity "to change an outcome from what it otherwise would have been in the absence of an action."

Having formulated a definition of influence, the question remains of how to 'measure' it. Three problems are connected with this question (see e.g. Warntjen, 2008). The first and most important problem is that measuring influence is inherently counterfactual; it is impossible to find out what would have happened if another Presidency was in office. Second, it is not easy to deal with negative findings. If the researcher finds an apparent lack of influence, it is not always clear whether this is

because of a real lack of influence or because the Presidency did not have the ambition to exert any influence. Third, it is problematic to draw a line between influence on preparations of decisions, on intermediate negotiations, and on the actual outcome. Most dossiers are dealt with only on one of those stages during a Presidency, so the Presidency's influence on each of the steps is difficult to distinguish.

Arts and Verschuren (1999) developed the EAR method (Ego perception / Alter perception / Researcher's analysis) for measuring the chair's influence in complex negotiations. Ego perception is an analysis of the perceptions of politicians and civil servants from the country chairing the meetings about their (lack of) influence. Alter perception concerns perceptions of key players from other countries about the chair's (lack of) influence. Ego- and Alter perceptions are typically gathered during expert interviews. The Researcher's analysis is a process tracing analysis of the (lack of) influence of the chair. The authors argued that, if the three sources of information do not correspond, the Researcher in most cases the best judge; the Ego and Alter players have interests and may give biased answers for several reasons, while the Researcher is supposed to be more neutral. Still, when a country is found to be influential in the negotiations, it is difficult to establish whether this was *because of its position as chair* or due to other factors (power of that country, external events or pressure, legal obligations, etc.). Arts and Verschuren proposed to express the 'degree' of political influence (PI) as the product of three factors: the extent of goal-achievement (GA), the extent to which GA can be ascribed to the chair (AS), and the political relevance (PR) of the outcome, written as $PI = GA \times AS \times PR$. For each component, they foresaw the following scores: 0 = no, 1 = some, 2 = substantial, and 3 = great. From this formula, a number of outcomes are possible, which are translated in verbal assessments that do not necessarily correspond to the relative distance between the numbers. A score of 0 reflects "no influence", 1, 2, 3 means "some influence", 4, 6, 8, 9, 12 shows "substantial influence", and 18, 27 equals "great influence." I apply this method and its four categories of influence (no influence, limited influence, substantial influence, high influence) in the present paper, however modified on one point: the degree of Presidency influence can be maximum as large as the extent to which it can be ascribed (AS) to the Presidency. For example, if the Presidency goals are achieved (GA=3) and the decision is very relevant (PR=3) but this can be ascribed to the Presidency only to a limited extent (AS=1, e.g. because there was a broad consensus and the agreement would be reached anyway, or the Presidency was only slightly involved), then the Presidency's influence is still considered limited (instead of substantial according to the original formula). Otherwise, Presidency influence tends to be overestimated.

Goal-achievement (GA) is scored as follows: (0) there is no progress in decision-making or the decision outcome goes against the Presidency's point of view, (1) there is limited progress in decision-making, not contradicting the Presidency's preferences, (2) there is substantial progress in decision-making, reflecting the Presidency's preferences, (3) the Presidency's preferences and priorities are realised.

The four categories reflecting the extent to which decision outcomes can be ascribed (AS) to the Presidency are: (0) the outcome is not related to the involvement of the Presidency, (1) the outcome was influenced by the Presidency country but this country would have the same influence if it was not in the chair, (2) the outcome was influenced by the Presidency, though this was conditional upon other actors (e.g. a Commission proposal) and factors (e.g. legal requirements, deadlines), (3) the outcome is clearly due to the involvement of the Presidency and would not have been the same if this country was not in the chair.

Political relevance (PR) is scored (0) if the decision or event has no direct practical or legal impact, (1) when the decision prioritises issues for the future but is as such not binding (e.g. (informal) Council conclusions, negotiation mandates or invitations to the Commission), (2) if the decision has clear implications for decision-making (e.g. negotiations are brought to a nearly-completed stage), and (3) for binding decisions (e.g. legislation, treaties).

In the next section, the interests and preferences of Hungary and Poland in the EaP region are outlined. Subsequently, the influence of the respective Presidencies on the EU's bilateral and multilateral policies towards the EaP will be discussed, applying the EAR method.

4. Hungarian and Polish preferences regarding the Eastern Partnership

Hungary had no well-developed EU policy formulation before 2010; most of its attention was directed to domestic issues, the economic crisis, the legitimacy of the Government, and corruption scandals (Pogátsa, 2009). With a view to the upcoming Presidency, the new Orbán Government has tried to streamline those policies. The Hungarian Government is not the most active supporter of the EaP initiative, though it does not hinder it either (Vida, 2010). The EaP is considered an important region, but Hungary has stronger interests in good EU-Balkan relations, which was reflected in its activities during the Presidency (Vandecasteele, Orbie, & Bossuyt, 2012). Within the EaP, the geographically closest neighbours – Moldova and Ukraine – receive the highest priority, because of economic, but also cultural, reasons: “Hungarians generally have the feeling that they are surrounded by strangers [...] Hungarians are more focused on their direct neighbours, where many Hungarians live, than on far neighbours” (Interview 7). Hungary is especially active in Moldova. Since 2007, its Embassy to Chisinau hosts a common EU visa centre, where visas are provided for Schengen countries that do not have a representation to Moldova (imedia, 2011, 3 March). The most important EaP-related policy area for Hungary is trade, with a particular focus on Moldova and Ukraine (Interview 6; Interview 17; Interview 24). External energy policy also receives much attention. Hungary is heavily dependent on imports from Russia for nearly all its energy resources. Despite this dependency, and contrary to most other Central and Eastern European countries, Hungary considers Russia a reliable partner in energy supply and it has not suffered from the gas crises of 2006 and 2009. Hungary favours a common EU external energy policy and has supported the Nabucco project from the beginning, but its national energy company MOL also signed an agreement with Gazprom to extend the Blue Stream pipeline until Western Hungary (Pogátsa, 2009).

Poland, on the other hand, is one of the strongest advocates of strengthening the EU's relations with the Eastern neighbourhood in all possible ways (Copsey & Pomorska, 2010; Raik & Gromadzki, 2006; Wisniewski, 2010). The country was one of the initiators of the EaP initiative in 2008, after a failed attempt to add an “Eastern Dimension” to the EU's Neighbourhood Policy in 2003 (Pisarska, 2011; Polish MFA, 2003). Although it is not feasible in the near future, Poland considers EU cooperation with the EaP countries as a stepping stone for further enlargement to the East. Regarding Belarus, Poland is more sceptical and favours ‘cold war tactics’: fundraising for pro-democracy movements and visa liberalisation for ordinary citizens, so they can come to the EU and share their experiences with fellow Belarusians, which would eventually lead to the breakdown of Lukashenka's regime. Poland actively promotes cooperation with the EaP in all the aforementioned policy areas. Visa facilitation, student exchange programmes, increased trade, and integration of transport markets and infrastructures are believed to enhance people-to-people contacts and democratisation of the neighbourhood (EUObserver, 2011, 11 January; Interview 22; Interview 23). Poland is also dedicated

to integrated external energy policies and diversification of supply routes, in order to reduce the country's (and the EU's) dependence on Russian gas supplies (EUObserver, 2011, 7 June).

5. The Eastern Partnership during the Hungarian Presidency

Bilateral relations of the EU with **Belarus** have always been problematic. 2011 was a year of increasing repression in Belarus against opposition forces, followed by toughened sanctions of the EU against the regime. The main cause was the crackdown of mass protests following the presidential elections of 19 December 2010, where Lukashenka was re-elected by 80% of the voters (The Economist, 2010, 20 December). The initial reaction of the EU was rather weak: the HRVP did not question the official election results and, though she "regretted" the violence, did not call for the release of political prisoners taken after the demonstrations (EUObserver, 2010, 21 December). In early January 2011, the Hungarian Presidency hesitatingly tried to make a stronger point. In the absence of a fully operational EEAS representation to Belarus, the Hungarian Ambassador to Belarus declared on 5 January on behalf of the Union that EU diplomats wanted to meet the detainees and check up on their physical well-being. Foreign Minister Martonyi also said that he would agree with sanctions targeting the Belarusian regime. A high-level meeting of EU diplomats on 7 January however revealed that Italy was opposed to economic sanctions or a visa ban (EUObserver, 2011, 7 January). The EU Member States reached a compromise by the end of the month: the FAC conclusions of January 2011 used much stronger language and reinstated a visa ban and asset freeze against more than 150 members of the regime, among which the President himself (Council of the European Union, 2011, 31 January-b). Győri, Hungary's State Secretary for European Affairs, had earlier announced that Lukashenka was unlikely to be invited for the EaP summit in May, while she emphasised that the EU should not let down the Belarusian people (Hungarian EU Presidency website, 2011, 27 January). The FACs of March, May and June decided on increased restrictive measures, ever in response to the imprisonment of key opposition members or journalists (Council of the European Union, 2011, 20 June, 2011, 21 March, 2011, 24 May). The June FAC also decided to freeze the assets of three companies controlled by Peftiev, one of Lukashenka's main financial sponsors (Council of the European Union, 2011, 21 June). Targeting private companies was a big step and faced initial opposition from Italy and Latvia, who have strong business ties with Belarus (EUObserver, 2011, 17 June).

Parallel to the restrictive policies towards Belarusian officials, the EU took a cooperative stance towards civil society and tried to promote people-to-people contacts. To this end, the Council approved mandates for the Commission on 28 February 2011 (Council of the European Union, 2011, 28 February) to negotiate on facilitated issuance of short-stay visas and readmission agreements with Belarus.

The role of the Presidency in the bilateral policies was blurred, considering its limited institutional powers, the long time span, and the amount of actors involved. In any case, the EU policies towards Belarus – combining targeted sanctions and attempts to improve relations with civil society and with ordinary citizens – were repeatedly put on the agenda of Coreper II. "We [Hungary] didn't push it hard, but we made it very clear that – if the EU would like to keep its credibility – we have to do this [impose sanctions]" (Interview 16). The policies were politically relevant (PR=3), they consistently corresponded to Hungary's preferences (GA=3), and consensus was reached despite the concerns of certain Member States. This could be ascribed to the Hungary only to a limited extent (AS=1), since it did not have a special (Presidency) position in most of the meetings. The Presidency thus had a limited influence on the EU's policies towards Belarus.

Relations with **Ukraine** were much less on the EU's agenda than Belarus in the first half of 2011. Martonyi paid a visit to his Ukrainian counterpart in February 2011, where he called Ukraine the most important Eastern partner of the EU, and promised to use all possible means to support the country in getting closer to the EU, by promoting progress in the negotiations on visa liberalisation and a DCFTA (Hungarian EU Presidency website, 2011, 10 February). The latter proved necessary at some point. After numerous rounds of DCFTA negotiations between the Commission and Ukraine, the Commission wanted to suspend the whole process due to a lack of commitment from the Ukrainian side. "They did not live up to the promises they made [...] It was a very tough fight, some Member States were not even in favour of continuing the negotiations" (Interview 6). The Presidency reached consensus in the Trade Policy Committee on a number of principles the Ukrainian negotiations should agree on in order to resume the talks. "As Presidency we explained this to the Ukrainians, we asked them to agree on these principles and they finally did. [...] We kept the negotiations alive, but it wouldn't have happened if the Ukrainians did not agree to the principles and, even more importantly, if Russia didn't decide to put extra pressure on the Ukrainians by asking them to join its customs union and to reintegrate with some former Soviet republics. Many delegations then thought 'OK, we don't want Ukraine to turn towards the Russians'" (Interview 6). Hungary reached its objectives (GA=3) in a dossier that was substantially relevant (PR=2), though the decision to continue negotiations was dependent on many other actors (AS=2). The Presidency had a substantial influence on trade relations of the EU with Ukraine.

Moldova was hopeful about 2011, because Hungary – as well as its successor Poland – has a favourable attitude towards EU enlargement, especially concerning Moldova. Hungarian diplomacy knows Moldova very well and their bilateral relations are outstanding (imedia, 2011, 3 March). Hungary, together with France, was also the first EU country to launch a twinning project with Moldova in 2008 (Söderköping Process website, 2010). Moldovans expected that the reviewed European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) would provide for more differentiation according to the needs of each partner country, more financial support and a deeper political dialogue, and hoped that Hungary could play a role here. The expectations from the Moldovan side were too ambitious, since most bilateral policies with Moldova were prepared and implemented by the HRVP and the EEAS (see e.g.: European External Action Service, 2011 4 April; European External Action Service, 2011, 3 March). Hungary was however very active in promoting free trade with Moldova. The Presidency brokered an agreement within the Council to extend autonomous trade preferences for Moldova until 2015 and to increase the wine quota by 50% (Council of the European Union, 2011, 27 May). It was as such not problematic to build a consensus in the Council, but the increase of the wine quota was only acceptable for France if it was combined with an agreement on the protection of geographical indications (Interview 6), which was concluded in April 2011 (European Commission, 2011, 18 April). The decisions on trade relations were in line with the Presidency's preferences (GA=3) and are substantially relevant (PR=2), but can be ascribed to the Presidency only to a limited extent (AS=1). The Presidency had a limited influence on the EU's trade relations with Moldova.

In the field of transport relations with Moldova, the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy (TTE) Council of June 2011 agreed on a negotiation mandate for the Commission on a Common Aviation Area agreement (Council of the European Union, 2011, 16 June). The agreement was initialled in October of the same year and signed in June 2012 (European Commission, 2011, 26 June). The Presidency had a limited influence on this process: its goals were achieved (GA=3), but the decision

to adopt a mandate was politically not so relevant (PR=1) and could be ascribed to the Presidency to a limited extent, since only the timing of its adoption may have been influenced by Hungary (AS=1).

EU relations with the **South Caucasus** were no important issue for the Hungarian Presidency. The main event was the signature on 13 January 2011 of an agreement between Commission President Barroso, Energy Commissioner Oettinger, and the Azerbaijani President Aliyev, where the latter agreed to supply substantial volumes of natural gas to the EU, and the EU promised to open its market for these volumes. It was the first written commitment of gas deliveries signed by Azerbaijan (European Commission, 2011, 13 January). This agreement was certainly in the interest of Hungary (GA=3), but could not be ascribed to the Presidency since it was not involved (AS=0). Hungary had no influence. As regards the EU's relations with Georgia and Armenia, there were no important developments or breakthroughs. The priority programme did not mention these countries, and the Presidency did not try to put the South Caucasus more in the spotlights.

The biennial **EaP summit**, foreseen for 26-27 May 2011, was to be the main multilateral event of EaP policies 2011 (Hungarian EU Presidency website, 2011c). Yet in February, the Hungarian Coreper Ambassador informed the EEAS (Interview 11) that he and his Polish counterpart had decided to postpone the summit, due to "purely logistical" reasons (Council of the European Union, 2011, 17 February). The date of the summit, at the end of May, was not compatible with those of the G8/G20 summits and the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the OECD (Vida, 2011). Besides, 26 May is the national holiday of Georgia, which was not taken into account during the initial planning (Interview 17). Many officials believe that there was more behind the decision to postpone the summit to the Polish Presidency than just a clash of dates. Possible reasons were that the summit was a prestige project for Poland, especially in the run-up to the elections, and that its Government strong-armed the Hungarians to give it to them (Interview 12; Interview 13; Interview 17); that the Hungarian Prime Minister was disliked by other Member States because of his internal politics and they therefore did not want to attend the summit (Interview 5; Interview 17; Interview 20); and that the EU's priorities were elsewhere due to the Arab Spring (Interview 5; Interview 13; Interview 20; Vida, 2011). A complex interplay of factors and events motivated the decision to postpone the summit: "probably there are only three or four people who know what happened" (Interview 15). Since Hungary did not achieve its goal of organising and hosting the summit (GA=0), it had no influence on this event. Though the Hungarian and Polish Prime Ministers agreed to jointly prepare and co-host the summit in Warsaw (Hungarian EU Presidency website, 2011a), it was Poland and not Hungary that was in the spotlights. In the official press release announcing the summit, Hungary was not mentioned as a host (European Commission, 2011, 28 September), and Orbán barely appeared in the media (on his comments, see: EUObserver, 2011, 30 September). At the press conference at the end of the summit, Orbán spoke fourth, after Polish Prime Minister Tusk, Van Rompuy, and Barroso. Hungary's most remarkable influence was probably on the choice of special Hungarian wines for the participants (Hungarian EU Presidency website, 2011, 29 June).

Budapest also started preparations for an **EaP Business Forum**, to be organised during the EaP summit. The event should bring together business people and politicians from the EU and EaP countries and discuss ways to improve business with a view to the future DCFTAs. When it became clear that the summit would be postponed, the preparations were suspended and handed over to

Poland (Hungarian EU Presidency website, 2011d; Interview 6). Hungary had no influence on this forum or its results.

Hungary had limited ambitions for multilateral **Justice and Home Affairs** (JHA) cooperation with the EaP (Interview 7). This is due to the nature of this policy area: most agreements with third countries are bilateral, and the JHA priorities are set by the 5-year programmes; this leaves little room for manoeuvre to individual Presidencies (Interview 10). Yet, the Presidency worked hard on the integration of the Söderköping process into the EaP structures (Interview 16). This cross-border cooperation on asylum and migration was initiated in 2001, in response to the Eastern enlargement of the EU. By 2009 it consisted of 14 partners, including eight EU members and the six EaP countries. Ever since the launch of the EaP in 2009, it was the aim of the participants to link the Söderköping process to EaP policies. Platform 1 (on democracy, good governance and stability) was considered the most suitable platform to link this process to (IOM, 2011; Swedish Migration Board, 2012, 3 January). The integration of the process was prepared throughout 2011, discussed at the EaP summit in September (Council of the European Union, 2011, 30 September-b, p. 4), and adopted by the JHA Council of December 2011 (Council of the European Union, 2011, 14 December). Hungary achieved its goal (GA=3) of 'uploading' this cross-border cooperation to the level of the EU-EaP cooperation, but this has limited political relevance (PR=1) and is to be ascribed to a limited extent to the Presidency (AS=1); its influence was limited.

Hungary clearly prioritised a further development of the EU's **energy policy**. The Presidency organised an informal Ministerial meeting in January, in preparation of the 4 February European Council (EC), which would be devoted to energy and innovation. The participants highlighted, *inter alia*, the importance of well-developed supply routes leading to the EU (Hungarian EU Presidency website, 2011, 17 January). The EC of February was in practice partly prepared by the Belgian (second half of 2010) and Hungarian Presidencies. After a discussion on energy policy of 3 December 2010, the Belgian Energy Minister Maignette sent a letter to the PPEC on energy policy, after consultation with the incoming Hungarian Presidency (Delreux & Crieckemans, 2011; Interview 17). This is quite an original way of trying to influence the EC's agenda. The letter included a number of ideas on (external) energy policy. The agenda of the EC was discussed and drafted in Coreper I and II, and during the General Affairs Council (GAC) of January 2011 (Council of the European Union, 2011, 31 January-a). During the actual EC, little time was spent talking about energy: "99% of the questions had been discussed before in the GAC" (Interview 17). The conclusions of the EC (European Council, 2011, 4 February) very much corresponded to the content Maignette's letter. With regard to external energy policy, the EC invited the Commission to continue its work on establishing a Southern energy corridor. Energy should be fully reflected in the ENP, and the Energy Community should be expanded and deepened with a view to integrating the markets of the EU and its neighbours.

From March onwards, the EU's external energy agenda was dominated by the nuclear disaster in Fukushima. Energy relations with the EaP were mentioned only once afterwards: the TTE Council of June 2011 (Council of the European Union, 2011, 10 June) discussed a Commission recommendation of 3 May (Council of the European Union, 2011, 26 May) on a negotiation mandate for an agreement with Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan on the legal framework for building a trans-Caspian pipeline system. A mandate was not adopted yet.

The EC conclusions fully reflected Hungary's preferences (GA=3) and could be substantially ascribed to the Presidency – conditional on cooperation from Belgium (AS=2), but their practical implications

are restricted (PR=1) since they mainly set the broad lines for future energy policies (Interview 17). The negotiation mandate on a trans-Caspian pipeline system would have been in the interest of Hungary, but the treatment in the Council can be ascribed to the Presidency to a limited extent (AS=1), it has a low political relevance (PR=1), and no agreement was reached (GA=1). Hungary had a substantial influence on – indirectly EaP-related – external energy policies during the first two months of 2011, but afterwards its influence became more limited.

The EU-Neighbourhood East Parliamentary Assembly (**EuroNest PA**), an inter-parliamentary forum consisting of representatives from the EP and from the EaP countries, held its constituent meeting on 3 May 2011 in Brussels (EuroNest PA, 2012). The idea of such a forum came up as early as 2006, but its launch was postponed several times due to different points of view on the participation of Belarus (Ćwiek-Karpowicz & Wojna, 2010). At present, Belarus does not participate but is welcomed to do so as soon as it fulfils the political criteria. The launch of EuroNest PA, which was planned long before 2011, was not influenced by Hungary, quite the contrary. Unlike the similar Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA)² and the different forms of (regional, business, Governmental, civil society) cooperation with the EaP, there are no representatives from the national parliaments of the Member States to the EuroNest PA. Taking into account the aim of the Hungarian Government to strengthen the position of the Member States in the EU (Hungarian EU Presidency website, 2011b), which was not achieved (GA=0), the EuroNest PA illustrates a lack of influence. Besides, the constituent meeting was held in Brussels and not in Hungary; the Presidency did not take the opportunity to host the event and show its commitment to the initiative.

6. The Eastern Partnership during the Polish Presidency

The EU's relations with **Belarus** further worsened throughout 2011 and hit a low when the Belarusian delegation left the EaP summit in September. The EU invited the Belarusian Foreign Minister, Martynau, instead of the President (against whom a visa ban is in force). There had been lengthy discussions on Belarus' representation in Coreper II prior to the summit. Poland was in favour of having the highest possible representation and was ready to invite the President in order not to downsize the summit (Interview 1; Interview 5), which was unacceptable for other countries (Interview 4). The Belarusian Government finally declined the invitation and sent its Ambassador in Warsaw to the summit. He was however not allowed to take part in some meetings because of his lower rank (Interview 5; Kyiv Post, 2011, 1 October), and left the summit. Martynau issued a statement where he deplored the "discriminatory measures" against Belarus and the "substitution of the principles on which the EaP is built" (EurActiv, 2011, 30 September). Poland had no influence on the EU's policies towards Belarus. The Presidency could not convince the other Member States to invite the President, and during the whole second semester of 2011 there were no improvements in the relations (GA=0) – albeit mainly due to the attitude of the regime in Belarus (Interview 8; Interview 11).

The EU-**Ukraine** Association Agreement (AA), the first of its kind with an EaP country, was the main topic in the bilateral relations throughout the second semester of 2011. At the start of the Polish Presidency, the negotiations on the AA were nearing conclusion (EUObserver, 2011, 6 July).

² EMPA consists of 49 MEPs, 81 representatives from the 27 Member States, 10 from the Western Balkans, and 130 from Northern Africa (EMPA, 2012).

However, the arrest in August 2011 of Ukrainian former Prime Minister Timoshenko (EUObserver, 2011, 5 August), and the subsequent conviction of seven years of imprisonment, a fine of \$188 million and a prohibition to seek elected office for three years October 2011 (EUObserver, 2011, 11 October), was widely criticised as being politically motivated and strained relations between the EU and Ukraine. Many EU Members became highly reluctant to sign an AA with Ukraine and it became increasingly unlikely that the agreement would be finalised in 2011, i.e. during the Polish Presidency. Polish politicians, who are strong supporters of Ukraine's integration with the EU, tried to unblock the relations through interventions of President Komorowski during a bilateral visit (President of the Republic of Poland, 2011, 30 August), Foreign Minister Sikorski during the Gymnich meeting in Sopot in early September (EUObserver, 2011, 3 September), and former President Kwaśniewski (EUObserver, 2011, 27 September).

Political relations did not improve, but technical negotiations continued. Van Rompuy cancelled a visit of Yanukovich to Brussels in October 2011 due to the Timoshenko trial (Kyiv Post, 2011, 18 October). Yanukovich was replaced by Deputy Prime Minister Kluyev, who finalised the negotiations on the DCFTA with Trade Commissioner De Gucht (Centre for Eastern Studies, 2011, 20 October). The AA, including the DCFTA, was due to be initialled during the EU-Ukraine summit of 19 December 2011, but this was unfeasible in the given circumstances. The creative solution was to announce that the EU and Ukraine had reached a common understanding on the Agreement and that it should be technically completed and initialled as soon as possible (Council of the European Union, 2011, 19 December-b).³ Prior to the EU-Ukraine summit, Polish politicians were very active in emphasizing the need to initial the AA with Ukraine and not losing the momentum. Sikorski visited Ukraine in November together with his Swedish colleague Bildt, where they discussed Ukraine's integration with the EU (Polish MFA, 2011, 22 November). Also Poland's President attempted to improve the EU-Ukrainian relations: besides his meeting with Yanukovich in August, he met his Ukrainian counterpart twice more in 2011 (President of the Republic of Poland, 2011, 15 November, 2011, 28 November). On both occasions, Komorowski raised the issue of the Timoshenko trial and emphasised the importance of reforms in Ukraine in order to bring it closer to the EU.

Poland partially achieved its goals (GA=2) in that the dialogue between the EU and Ukraine was not broken down, and the decision to agree on the contents without initialling the AA was substantially relevant (PR=2) for maintaining the momentum. However, those developments can be ascribed to the Presidency to a limited extent (AS=1). The only thing Poland could do was giving the AA a sense of urgency by discussing the issue at Coreper and trying to mediate with the Ukrainian side (Interview 4; Interview 12; Interview 23; Interview 24). During the bilateral discussions with Ukraine, however, Poland had no formal role and was not even present. The Presidency's influence on the EU-Ukraine relations was limited.

As mentioned *supra*, many Moldovans hoped that Poland – which supports further EU enlargement to the East, could reach agreement among the EU members to give **Moldova** a concrete membership prospect (Berbeca, 2011). This was however not among Poland's Presidency priorities, and would be unacceptable for many Member States. The most important development in EU-Moldova relations was that the Trade Policy Committee adopted, the 2nd of December 2011, negotiation mandates for

³ The Association Agreement has meanwhile been initialled on 30 March 2012, but signature and ratification by the different Member States will depend on democratic progress and on the course of the 2012 legislative elections in Ukraine (EurActiv, 2012, 30 March).

the Commission on a DCFTA with Moldova and with Georgia. Negotiations on an AA with both countries are on-going since 2010, but the launch of DCFTA negotiations depended on the fulfilment of a number of conditions related to the internal market. After a positive assessment by the Commission, the Council thus authorised the former to start negotiations on the trade part of the AA (European Commission, 2011, 5 December). Making progress in trade relations with Moldova – and Georgia – was a priority of Poland and its objectives were thus met (GA=3), but the decision had a rather low relevance (PR=1). The decision was dependent on the assessment of the Commission, and the mandate had been discussed before, under the Hungarian Presidency (Interview 6), which further limited Poland's role (AS=1). A positive assessment by the Commission would sooner or later entail a negotiation mandate, though Poland probably speeded up the process (Interview 4; Interview 5). Poland's influence on trade relations with Moldova and Georgia was limited.

A number of other events in the second half of 2011, related to **Georgia** and the Caucasus region, were not to be ascribed (AS=0) to Poland. The Presidency had no role in Ashton's visit to Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia in November 2011 (European Commission, 2011, 15 November), and was not involved in a resolution of the EP on Georgia, where it called for more assistance to the country, a recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as occupied territories, and a recognition of Georgia as a European State (European Parliament, 2011, 17 November). Also when the EP President and Ashton rejected the constitutional and legal framework in which the August Presidential elections of Abkhazia (EurActiv, 2011, 29 August) and the November Presidential elections of South Ossetia (EurActiv, 2011, 16 November) took place, this reflected a broadly supported point of view. Poland had no influence on the EU's policies towards Georgia, apart from the limited influence on trade relations (see *supra*).

With **Armenia** and **Azerbaijan**, progress was made in the JHA area during the Polish Presidency, notably on visa facilitation and migration. Following Commission proposals of 16 September 2011 to start negotiations with both countries on visa facilitation and readmission agreements (European Commission, 2011, 19 September-a, 2011, 19 September-b), the Council adopted negotiation mandates in December 2011 (Council of the European Union, 2011, 19 December-a). Prior to this Council decision, a Mobility Partnership between the EU and Armenia had been signed on 27 October 2011 during a meeting of Home Affairs Commissioner Malmström and Poland's Internal Affairs Minister Miller with the Armenian Foreign Minister (European Commission, 2011, 27 October). There is traditionally some resistance of some Member States, e.g. the Netherlands, against visa facilitation for citizens of third (unstable) countries. The political relevance of negotiation mandates on visa facilitation and readmission agreements is limited (PR=1), but Poland's objectives were reached (GA=3). Ascription scores 2, because the decision was taken soon after the Commission proposal, despite resistance from some Member States. Poland's enthusiasm accelerated the adoption of the mandate (Interview 3; Interview 4; Interview 5). The Presidency had a substantial influence on the adoption of the negotiation mandates.

EU-**Azerbaijan** relations also developed in other policy areas during the Polish Presidency. Following the visit in January 2011 of Barroso and Oettinger to Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, discussions started in Coreper on a negotiation mandate for a legally binding treaty to build a trans-Caspian gas pipeline system. Unanimity on the mandate was reached in Coreper I on 18 July 2011 (Polish EU Presidency website, 2011, 22 December), and the mandate was formally adopted during the GAC of

September 2011 (Council of the European Union, 2011, 12 September). In October, the Council also adopted a negotiation mandate for the Commission, on an aviation agreement with Azerbaijan (Council of the European Union, 2011, 6 October). As for all negotiation mandates discussed in this paper, the Presidency's goals were achieved (GA=3), but the relevance is limited (PR=1). The adoption of mandates is always a response to a Commission initiative, the Presidency can at best speed up or slow down the decisions (Interview 9) (AS=1). The Polish Presidency had a limited influence on EU-Azerbaijan relations.

The multilateral **EaP summit** of 29-30 September in Warsaw was attended by most Heads of State and Government from the EU (Kucharczyk & Łada, 2012), which was quite a success given the low interest of EU Member States in the EaP (Interview 20). From the EaP side, five out of six countries were represented at the highest level, with the remarkable exception of Belarus (see *supra*). Two documents were adopted at the end of the summit. The first was a joint statement, endorsed by all participants, which confirmed the participants' commitment to the EaP and "acknowledge[d] the European aspirations and the European choice of some partners" (Council of the European Union, 2011, 30 September-b, p. 1), a much more careful formulation than an explicit membership prospect. The joint statement (Council of the European Union, 2011, 30 September-b) envisaged a deepening of cooperation in nearly all policy areas, including trade, visa facilitation (and at a later stage liberalisation), energy, transport, agriculture, environment, communication technologies, education, and culture. The participants welcomed several recently or soon to be established forms of institutional cooperation with the EaP.

The second document adopted at the summit was a separate declaration on Belarus, where the EU Member States expressed their concern about the deteriorating human rights, democracy and rule of law situation and the worsening media freedom in the country, and called for the immediate release of all political prisoners and the start of a dialogue with the opposition (Council of the European Union, 2011, 30 September-a). The declaration did not mention the human rights situation in other EaP countries, and was not co-signed by the EaP countries. When asked why this declaration was not part of the joint statement, Tusk failed to give an answer (EU TV Newsroom, 2011, 30 September). Analysts and officials put forward several explanations for the attitude of the five EaP countries: Ukraine and Moldova wanted to avoid trade problems with their neighbours, Georgia feared revenge in the form of Belarus' recognition of its two breakaway regions Abkhazia and South-Ossetia, and Armenia did not want to offend its fellow member of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (EUObserver, 2011, 30 September; Interview 5); if the other EaP would align themselves with the declaration, its contents could be used against them at a later stage, particularly against Ukraine (Interview 5; Interview 12; Interview 16); there had not been enough time to find common language (Interview 4; Interview 5); according to one official, the underlying reason was that the EU is not very attractive nowadays and that third countries are not eager to engage in possibly costly forms of cooperation (Interview 16).

The joint declaration was rather ambitious, but had no direct legal implications (PR=1). The situation in Belarus, its boycott of the summit, the Timoshenko trial, and the absence of agreement with the other EaP countries on a rather standard declaration on human rights and basic principles, was perceived as a lack of value for money (Pawlak & Kurowska, 2011, 5 October). Not all the goals of the Presidency were achieved (GA=1). The EaP summit in Poland was mostly of symbolic value. The EaP was undeniably much higher on the EU agenda than in the period prior to and after the Polish Presidency, but Poland's influence on the contents of the summit was limited due to legal restrictions

(AS=1): Poland was the host country, but the meetings were chaired by the PPEC. The joint statement had been prepared mostly in the COEST working party of the Council – which is chaired by an EEAS official – and only to a limited extent in Coreper (Interview 18; Interview 20). The negotiations with the EaP countries on the declaration about the human rights situation in Belarus were led by the HRVP (Interview 24). Poland, as a host country, had a limited influence on the EaP summit.

Poland organised and hosted a number of multilateral events, whose contents were however not influenced by the Presidency. The inaugural meeting of the **Conference of Regional and Local authorities in the EaP (CORLEAP)** in Poznań on 8 September (Committee of the Regions, 2011), the conference of **EU and EaP Ministers of Economy** on 9 September (Economic Forum, 2011), the first **EaP Business Forum** during the EaP summit (ENPI info centre, 2011, 6 October), and third **Civil Society Forum** in Poznań on 28-30 November (European External Action Service, 2011, 30 November) were all organised by other institutions than the Presidency, or lacked political relevance. Poland had no influence on these events, but together they raised the profile of the EaP during the second semester of 2011.

It appeared very difficult to achieve progress on the multilateral aspect of **JHA cooperation**, as was the case for Hungary. Improving cooperation on police training and combating drug-related crime were Presidency priorities. Poland organised a preparatory meeting for the Euro-East police training programme⁴ in August 2011 (Polish EU Presidency website, 2011, 18 August), but the Commission did not yet issue a Communication that was expected in October 2011, and the programme did not start yet. On drug-related crime, the only progress was the organisation of an expert conference in October 2011 on “Promotion of cooperation with Eastern Europe on Fight against Drug-Crimes” (Polish EU Presidency, 2011). The Presidency had no influence on multilateral JHA cooperation, since the developments in this area were politically irrelevant (PR=0).

(External) **energy policy** was an important priority of Poland. One of the successes 2011 was that Armenia was granted observer status to the Energy Community during its Ministerial meeting in October 2011 in Chisinau (Energy Community, 2011, 6 October), in line with Poland’s priorities. This was however not due to a specific Polish influence (AS=0), but because Armenia met the criteria (Interview 2). Another success was the adoption of conclusions on the external aspect of energy security during the TTE Council of November 2011 (Council of the European Union, 2011, 24 November). These conclusions were based on a Commission Communication published in September 2011 (European Commission, 2011, 7 September). The Council endorsed four key priority areas on external energy policy, including a further coordination of energy policies, enhanced cooperation with third countries through multilateral instruments, a deepening of partnerships with key global suppliers, and support to developing economies in their energy policies. These Council conclusions were considered the most important success of the Polish Presidency in the energy relations with the EaP (Interview 2). The relevance of the conclusions for the EaP was however limited (PR=1), since they had no direct practical impact and they covered the whole world – not only the EaP. It is true that Poland worked hard to find a consensus on the conclusions, but their adoption depended on the Commission Communication, and much groundwork had been done by the Hungarian Presidency (AS=2) (Interview 8, , see also supra). Poland’s priorities were realised in energy policy (GA=3); the

⁴ Euro-East is an EU-funded training programme for police forces from the EaP countries.

Presidency had a substantial influence (PI=6) on external energy policy, however only indirectly related to the EaP.

Transport cooperation with the EaP, a rather new topic in this framework, was high on the agenda of the Polish Presidency. The most important event in this respect was the Ministerial conference of EU and EaP Transport Ministers and Transport Commissioner Kallas in Kraków on 24-25 October 2011 (European Commission, 2011, 25 October). The conference followed a Commission Communication of 7 July 2011 on “The EU and its neighbours: a renewed approach to transport cooperation” (European Commission, 2011, 7 July), in which the Commission proposed a series of initiatives with a view to integrate the markets and improve infrastructure connections with the EU’s neighbours. The Commission also proposed to set up an Eastern Partnership Transport Panel (EPTP), a permanent body that monitors transport cooperation, including the progress made in specific negotiations. The panel met for the first time on 14 October 2011 (ENPI info centre, 2011, 25 October).

The Ministerial conference in Kraków was prepared during the TTE Council of October 2011. The Member States adopted conclusions where they emphasised the need of deeper transport cooperation with the neighbouring countries – the Eastern and Southern neighbourhood and the Western Balkans – and approved the establishment of an EPTP (Council of the European Union, 2011, 6 October). During the conference, the Azerbaijani delegation at some point threatened not to sign the joint declaration, due to disagreement with Armenia on the status of Nagorno-Karabakh. After bilateral negotiations of the Presidency with Azerbaijan, the latter agreed to sign the declaration (Interview 9; Interview 22). The participants endorsed the Commission Communication and agreed on the need of closer market integration, the advantage of increasing the levels of security, safety, environmental and social standards in transport, and the need to improve interconnections (Council of the European Union, 2011, 4 November). The participants agreed that the EPTP would report on the results of its work during the next Ministerial meeting, to be organised on the proposal of the Commission and the Council Presidency. Such a follow-up meeting will depend on the political climate and on the Presidency; Denmark showed no interest and it is very unlikely that Cyprus will organise such an event (Interview 2; Interview 9; Interview 22).

Poland achieved its goal of prioritising transport cooperation with the EaP and obtaining the agreement from the other EU members (GA=3). The Council conclusions and the Kraków conference both were the results of Poland’s initiative (Interview 2; Interview 9; Interview 22), though they again depended on the Commission Communication (AS=2). The political relevance is limited (PR=1) no binding decisions were taken, and the EPTP has produced no tangible results so far. Poland had a substantial influence on transport cooperation between the EU and the EaP.

Finally, the establishment of the **European Endowment for Democracy (EED)**, a fund to support democratic movements abroad (including political parties), is noteworthy. Sikorski proposed to set up such a fund in May 2011, in the framework of the ENP review and in response to the Arab spring. The initial idea was to use the fund for democracy support in the Southern and Eastern neighbourhood (Youngs & Brudzinska, 2012). During the Polish Presidency, Sikorski defended his idea at several occasions (see e.g. Polish EU Presidency website, 2011, 4 October). However, not all Member States were convinced about its viability and desirability. It was not clear if enough funding would be available, especially in a climate where all Governments try cut budgets, and most Member States like to put their own accents in democracy promotion (Interview 4). Ashton and Füle were not enthusiastic about the idea because it would overlap with existing funds such as the EIDHR. Also the

intention to support political parties – which comes very close to interference in the internal affairs of third countries – was rather controversial, (Interview 4; Interview 5). Ashton’s office called the EED “primarily a Polish initiative”, whereas Polish diplomats said it is entirely in Ashton’s hands (European Voice, 2011, 1 December). Despite the wide-spread scepticism about the initiative, the Presidency put the issue on the agenda as much as was needed in order to reach a consensus on the idea (Interview 1; Interview 4; Interview 5). The Presidency announced on 16 December 2011 that a political agreement on the EED was found in Coreper (Polish EU Presidency website, 2011, 16 December). The endowment will cover democracy support all over the world, it is to be funded jointly by the Commission and the Member States, and technical discussions were planned for 2012. The political agreement on the EED reflected the Presidency’s objectives to a large extent (GA=2). It is a rare example of a proposal that is launched by the incoming Presidency and (partially) finalised during the same Presidency: this is largely to be ascribed to Poland’s efforts (AS=3). The political relevance of the EED should however not be overestimated (PR=1): it is not yet operational, and its resources are very limited compared to other funds for democracy promotion (Youngs & Brudzinska, 2012). The Polish Presidency had a substantial influence (PI=6) on the establishment of the EED, which can become a part of future EaP policies.

Discussion and conclusions

An examination of the different bilateral and multilateral aspects of EaP policies in 2011 showed that both the Hungarian and Polish Presidencies were influential in some dossiers.

The Hungarian Presidency had a limited influence on the EU's sanction policies towards Belarus, and on trade and transport policies towards Moldova. The continuation of negotiations on trade liberalisation with Ukraine was substantially influenced by Hungary, which mediated between the Member States, the Commission, and Ukrainian policy-makers. By contrast, Hungary had no influence on bilateral relations of the EU with the South Caucasus members of the EaP. In multilateral policies, Hungary had a limited influence on the inclusion of the Söderköping process into the EaP structures, and a substantial influence on (external) energy policies in the beginning of 2011, though this diminished from March onwards. The Presidency had no influence on the EaP summit and the EaP Business Forum (which were in the end not organised in the first semester of 2011), nor did it influence the establishment of the EuroNest PA.

Poland, which had more priorities related to the EaP and is more enthusiastic about the initiative than Hungary (Vandecasteele et al., 2012), was influential in more policy areas. The Polish Presidency had a substantial influence on the launch of negotiations on visa facilitation and readmission agreements with Armenia and Azerbaijan, hereby overcoming resistance from some Member States. Poland also had a limited influence on the EU's negotiations with Ukraine, on the launch of free trade negotiations with Moldova and Georgia, and on progress in air transport and energy relations with Azerbaijan. In all these issues, the Presidency was however not directly involved in the bilateral relations. Poland had no influence on the EU-Belarus relations during the second half of 2011. In the multilateral track, the Presidency had a substantial influence on the adoption of (indirectly EaP-related) Council conclusions on energy policy, on the institutionalisation of transport cooperation with the EaP, and on the establishment of the (partly EaP-related) EED. Poland influenced the EaP summit to a limited extent, but had no particular influence on the EaP Business Forum and other forms of multilateral economic cooperation, on multilateral JHA cooperation, and on the inauguration of the CORLEAP.

The answer to the first research question of this paper, to which extent the Presidency can influence EU policies towards the EaP, is twofold. First, the Presidency does still have some influence on external policies, despite its limited official role since the Lisbon Treaty. The Hungarian and especially the Polish Presidencies managed to expand the framework of cooperation with the EaP, contributed to its institutionalisation, and placed the region more in the centre of EU policies than it was before and after 2011. If influence was observed, this was limited or substantial, but never 'great'. Second, Presidency influence is restricted to areas where this country has strong interests. For Hungary, this was mainly in bilateral trade policies towards geographically close countries, and in external energy policy. Poland had much broader preferences, including also visa liberalisation with South Caucasus countries, political association of EaP countries, transport cooperation, and democracy promotion. In general, a successful EaP is important for Poland, which is one of its initiators. In line with what can be expected in the post-Lisbon institutional context, it is not anymore the case that the Presidency functions as the main external representative. However, by carefully selecting priorities and interfering at the right time in the right decision-making body, the Presidency can be an influential player. This confirms the validity of a rational choice approach to Presidency influence.

As to the second research question, under which circumstances the Presidency can influence external policies, a few remarks can be made. A first observation is that the Presidency can play a rather prominent role in multilateral policies, simply by hosting and organising events, but the political relevance of such policies is limited. Multilateral policies are mostly not binding and can at best give impetus to certain ideas or projects. Presidency influence is only possible if these multilateral events are not managed by a supranational institution of the EU. In bilateral policies, the Presidency can facilitate the work of the Commission and the HRVP and act as an inter-institutional negotiator, but can play no official role on behalf of the EU. Second, the influence of the Presidency on external relations is most tangible in the preparatory bodies of the Council, and not during the Ministerial meetings. Third, the Presidency mostly has influence through other Council configurations than the FAC (which it does not chair), such as the TTE and the JHA Councils.

This paper explored some issues that are specific to the policy areas in order to understand under which circumstances Presidencies can exert influence on parts of EU external policy where they have a strong interest. Further research is needed to examine the country- and context-specific characteristics that contribute to Presidency influence.

References

- Arter, D. (2000). Small State Influence Within the EU: The Case of Finland's 'Northern Dimension Initiative'. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 38(5), 677-697.
- Arts, B., & Verschuren, P. (1999). Assessing Political Influence in Complex Decision-making: An Instrument Based on Triangulation. *International Political Science Review*, 20(4), 411-424.
- Bengtsson, R. (2002). Soft Security and the Presidency. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 37(2), 212-218.
- Berbeca, V. (2011). Poland's Presidency - An Opportunity to Gain Recognition of Moldova's European Prospects. *Moldova's Foreign Policy Statewatch*(18).
- Betsill, M. M., & Corell, E. (2001). NGO Influence in International Environmental Negotiations: A Framework for Analysis. *Global Environmental Politics*, 1(4), 65-85.
- Bjurulf, B. (2001). How did Sweden Manage the European Union? *ZEI Discussion Papers*, C 96.
- Bunse, S. (2009). *Small states and EU governance : leadership through the Council presidency*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bunse, S., Rittelmeyer, Y.-S., & Van Hecke, S. (2011). The Rotating Presidency under the Lisbon Treaty: From Political Leader to Middle Manager? In S. Van Hecke & P. Bursens (Eds.), *Readjusting the Council Presidency: Belgian Leadership in the EU* (pp. 43-63). Brussel: ASP.
- Centre for Eastern Studies. (2011, 20 October). Completion of Ukraine/EU negotiations on DCFTA. Retrieved 6 January, 2012, from <http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/eastweek/2011-10-19/completion-ukraine/eu-negotiations-dcfta>
- Committee of the Regions. (2011). Conference of the Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership (CORLEAP). Retrieved 20 August, 2012, from <http://cor.europa.eu/en/activities/Pages/corleap.aspx>
- Copsey, N., & Pomorska, K. (2010). Poland's Power and Influence in the EU: the Case of its Eastern Policy. *Comparative European Politics*, 8(3), 304-326.
- Council of the European Union. (2009, 30 November). Council Decision of laying down measures for the implementation of the European Council Decision on the exercise of the Presidency of the Council, and on the chairmanship of preparatory bodies of the Council (16517/09).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 4 November). Note from General Secretariat to Delegations, Subject: Joint Declaration on transport cooperation between the EU and Eastern Partnership countries - Ministerial Conference on Eastern Partnership in Transport (Krakow, 24-25 October 2011) (16406/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 6 October). Press release, 3116th Council meeting, Transport, Telecommunications and Energy (15141/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 10 June). Press release, 3097th Council meeting Transport, Telecommunications and Energy (11145/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 12 September). Press release, 3109th Council meeting, General Affairs (13587/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 14 December). 3135th Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting. Council conclusions on cooperation in the area of justice and home affairs within the eastern partnership (17596/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 16 June). Press release, 3098th Council Meeting, Transport, Telecommunications and Energy (11572/1/11 REV 1).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 17 February). Eastern Partnership Summit. Retrieved 1 May, 2011, from http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/119349.pdf
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 19 December-a). Press release, 3139th Council meeting, Environment - provisional version (18786/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 19 December-b). Ukraine-EU Summit Joint Statement (18835/11).

- Council of the European Union. (2011, 20 June). Press release, 3101th Council meeting, Foreign Affairs (11824/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 21 June). Council Decision 2011/357/CFSP of 20 June 2011 amending Decision 2010/639/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against certain officials of Belarus. *Official Journal of the European Union*.
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 21 March). Press release, 3078th Council meeting, Foreign Affairs (7781/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 24 May). Press release, 3091st Council meeting, Foreign Affairs (10440/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 24 November). Press release, 3127th Council meeting, Transport, Telecommunications and Energy, Energy items (17398/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 26 May). Note from General Secretariat of the Council to Delegations, International relations in the field of energy (10723/1/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 27 May). Press release, 3093rd Council meeting, Transport, Telecommunications and Energy (10494/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 28 February). Press release, 3072nd Council meeting, Transport, Telecommunications and Energy, Energy Items (6950/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 30 September-a). Declaration on the situation in Belarus adopted on the occasion of the Eastern Partnership Summit, Warsaw on 30 September 2011 (14983/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 30 September-b). Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit, Warsaw, 29-30 September 2011 (14983/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 31 January-a). Press release, 3064th Council meeting, General Affairs (5640/11).
- Council of the European Union. (2011, 31 January-b). Press release, 3065th Council meeting, Foreign Affairs (5888/1/11 REV 1).
- Ćwiek-Karpowicz, J., & Wojna, B. (2010, 3-5 November). Paper presented at the Eastern Partnership: A Strategy for 2011 and Beyond, Lublin.
- Debaere, P., De Ridder, E., & Nasra, S. (2011). Het roterende Voorzitterschap na Lissabon: op zoek naar een nieuwe rol binnen het EU buitenlands beleid. *Res Publica*, 53(3), 269-289.
- Delreux, T., & Crikemans, D. (2011). Environment, Climate Change and Energy: Inter-institutional Compromises and International Representation. In S. Van Hecke & P. Bursens (Eds.), *Readjusting the Council Presidency: Belgian Leadership in the EU* (pp. 169-187). Brussel: ASP.
- Economic Forum. (2011). Eastern Partnership Ministerial Conference of Ministers of Economy. Retrieved 3 October, 2011, from <http://www.forum-ekonomiczne.pl/21st-economic-forum/eastern-partnership-ministerial-conference-of-ministers-of-economy/?lang=en>
- Elgström, O. (Ed.). (2003). *European Union Council Presidencies: A comparative perspective*. London: Routledge.
- EMPA. (2012). Parliamentary Assembly - Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM). Retrieved 14 August, 2012, from http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/empa/content_en.html
- Energy Community. (2011, 6 October). 9th Energy Community Ministerial Council, Meeting Conclusions.
- ENPI info centre. (2011, 6 October). First Eastern Partnership Business Forum met in Poland. Retrieved 9 January, 2012, from http://www.enpi-info.eu/maineast.php?id=26611&id_type=1
- ENPI info centre. (2011, 25 October). EU and Eastern Partnership countries take transport cooperation one step further. Retrieved 6 January, 2012, from http://www.enpi-info.eu/main.php?id=26821&id_type=1
- EU TV Newsroom. (2011, 30 September). Eastern Partnership Summit 2011, Press Conference Part 5 (reference 94452-5). Retrieved 1 October, 2011, from <http://tvnewsroom.consilium.europa.eu/event/eastern-partnership-summit-2011/press-conference-part-5-qa2047/>

EUObserver. (2010, 21 December). Business as usual for EU and Belarus despite violence. Retrieved 28 October, 2011, from <http://euobserver.com/24/31558>

EUObserver. (2011, 3 September). EU turns the screw on Tymoshenko trial. Retrieved 2 October, 2011, from <http://euobserver.com/24/113515>

EUObserver. (2011, 5 August). Tymoshenko detention strains EU-Ukraine relations. Retrieved 10 August, 2011, from <http://euobserver.com/24/32688>

EUObserver. (2011, 6 July). Ukraine signals readiness to finalise EU pact. Retrieved 2 October, 2011, from <http://euobserver.com/24/32594>

EUObserver. (2011, 7 January). Italy keen to protect Lukashenko from EU sanctions. Retrieved 24 October, 2011, from <http://euobserver.com/24/31609>

EUObserver. (2011, 7 June). A short guide to the Polish presidency. Retrieved 22 December, 2011, from <http://euobserver.com/895/32347>

EUObserver. (2011, 11 January). Poland: West should use Cold War tactics to free Belarus. Retrieved 3 November, 2011, from <http://euobserver.com/24/31621>

EUObserver. (2011, 11 October). Tymoshenko gets 7 years in jail, EU outcry begins. Retrieved 15 October, 2011, from <http://euobserver.com/1016/113889>

EUObserver. (2011, 17 June). Lukashenko's 'private banker' to face EU ban. Retrieved 26 January, 2012, from <http://euobserver.com/24/32503>

EUObserver. (2011, 27 September). Ukraine trial restarts on eve of EU summit. Retrieved 30 September, 2011, from <http://euobserver.com/24/113747>

EUObserver. (2011, 30 September). EU offers to buy Belarus for \$9bn. Retrieved 1 October, 2011, from <http://euobserver.com/15/113794>

EurActiv. (2011, 16 November). EU blasts poll in breakaway Georgian region. Retrieved 19 December, 2011, from <http://www.euractiv.com/europes-east/eu-blasts-poll-breakaway-georgian-region-news-508929>

EurActiv. (2011, 29 August). EU, NATO reject Abkhazia elections. Retrieved 2 October, 2011, from <http://www.euractiv.com/global-europe/eu-nato-reject-abkhazia-elections-news-507148>

EurActiv. (2011, 30 September). Belarus quits EU's Eastern Partnership initiative. Retrieved 1 October, 2011, from <http://www.euractiv.com/europes-east/belarus-quits-eu-eastern-partnership-initiative-news-508050>

EurActiv. (2012, 30 March). EU initials Ukraine agreement 'to keep momentum'. Retrieved 30 March, 2012, from <http://www.euractiv.com/europes-east/eu-initials-ukraine-agreement-ke-news-511882>

EuroNest PA. (2012). EuroNest Parliamentary Assembly. Retrieved 14 August, 2012, from <http://www.euronest.europarl.europa.eu/euronest/>

European Commission. (2011, 5 December). Press release, EU launches trade negotiations with Georgia and Moldova (IP/11/1504).

European Commission. (2011, 7 July). Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, The EU and its neighbouring regions: A renewed approach to transport cooperation (COM(2011) 415).

European Commission. (2011, 7 September). Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, On security of energy supply and international cooperation - "The EU Energy Policy: Engaging with Partners beyond Our Borders" (COM(2011) 539 final).

European Commission. (2011, 13 January). Press release, Commission and Azerbaijan sign strategic gas deal (IP/11/30).

European Commission. (2011, 15 November). Press release, Catherine Ashton to visit South Caucasus (IP/11/1352).

European Commission. (2011, 18 April). Conclusion of negotiations between the EU and Moldova on the protection of Geographical Indications (IP/11/481). Retrieved 15 August, 2012, from <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/481>

- European Commission. (2011, 19 September-a). Press release, The Commission proposes to open negotiations on Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements with Armenia (IP/11/1053).
- European Commission. (2011, 19 September-b). Press release, The Commission proposes to open negotiations on Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements with Azerbaijan (IP/11/1052).
- European Commission. (2011, 25 October). Press release, EU and Eastern Partnership region move forward with transport cooperation (IP/11/1240).
- European Commission. (2011, 26 June). Transport: Republic of Moldova to gradually integrate into the European common aviation market (IP/12/688). Retrieved 15 August, 2012, from <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/688&type=HTML>
- European Commission. (2011, 27 October). Press release, Better mobility between the EU and Armenia (IP/11/1257).
- European Commission. (2011, 28 September). Press release, Eastern Partnership Summit Warsaw, 29 and 30 September 2011 (IP/11/1122).
- European Council. (2011, 4 February). European Council Conclusions 4 February 2011 (EUCO 2/1/11).
- European External Action Service. (2011). EU-Belarus Relations. Retrieved 18 June, 2012, from http://eeas.europa.eu/belarus/pdf/belarus_trade_en.pdf
- European External Action Service. (2011 4 April). Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on the alignment of certain third countries with the Council Decision 2010/573/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against the leadership of the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova, as amended by Council Decision 2011/171/CFSP (8621/11).
- European External Action Service. (2011, 3 March). Remarks by Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, after her meeting with Vladimir Filat, Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova (A 086/11).
- European External Action Service. (2011, 30 November). Third Assembly of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum. Retrieved 5 December, 2011
- European Parliament. (2011, 17 November). European Parliament resolution of 17 November 2011 containing the European Parliament's recommendations to the Council, the Commission and the EEAS on the negotiations of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement. Retrieved 21 November, 2011, from <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2011-0514+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>
- European Voice. (2011, 1 December). Democracy plans in disarray. Retrieved 1 December, 2011, from <http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/imported/democracy-plans-in-disarray/72798.aspx>
- Gostyńska, A. (2011). Evaluation of the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. *Bulletin*, (288). Retrieved from <http://www.pism.pl/index/?id=6e3adb1ae0e02c934766182313b6775d>
- Grevi, G. (2011, June). The Trio Presidency and EU Foreign Policy: muddling through. *FRIDE Policy brief*(84).
- Hungarian EU Presidency website. (2011a). Eastern Partnership. Retrieved 30 June, 2011, from <http://www.eu2011.hu/eastern-partnership>
- Hungarian EU Presidency website. (2011b). Hungary is preparing for a cost-efficient, but professional Presidency. Retrieved 11 October, 2011, from <http://www.eu2011.hu/news/hungary-preparing-sparing-professional-presidency>
- Hungarian EU Presidency website. (2011c). The Programme of the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 1 January – 30 June 2011: Strong Europe. Retrieved 5 May, 2011, from http://www.eu2011.hu/files/bveu/documents/HU_PRES_STRONG_EUROPE_EN_3.pdf
- Hungarian EU Presidency website. (2011d). Six Months in the Service of a Stronger Europe: Overview of the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union January – June 2011. Retrieved 19 October, 2011, from http://www.eu2011.hu/files/bveu/documents/HUPRES_EREDMENYEK_EN.pdf

- Hungarian EU Presidency website. (2011, 10 February). Hungarian Presidency: Ukraine is our most important Eastern partner. Retrieved 22 November, 2011, from <http://www.eu2011.hu/news/hungarian-presidency-ukraine-our-most-important-eastern-partner>
- Hungarian EU Presidency website. (2011, 17 January). Preparation for energy summit launched. Retrieved 11 November, 2011, from <http://www.eu2011.hu/news/preparation-energy-summit-launched>
- Hungarian EU Presidency website. (2011, 27 January). Presidency's programme presented in Belgian Parliament. Retrieved 24 October, 2011, from <http://www.eu2011.hu/news/presidency%E2%80%99s-programme-presented-belgian-parliament>
- Hungarian EU Presidency website. (2011, 29 June). Hungarian wines at the Eastern Partnership summit. Retrieved 30 September, 2011, from <http://www.eu2011.hu/news/hungarian-wines-eastern-partnership-summit>
- Hungarian MFA. (2010). Hungary in the World. Retrieved 30 January, 2011, from http://www.mfa.gov.hu/kum/en/bal/foreign_policy/hungary_in_the_world/
- imedia. (2011, 3 March). Moldova hopeful about Hungarian EU presidency. Retrieved 21 October, 2011, from <http://www.imedia.md/libview.php?l=en&id=1830&idc=255>
- IOM. (2011). Söderköping Process (Cross-Border Co-operation Process). Retrieved 13 August, 2012, from <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/policy-research/regional-consultative-processes/rcps-by-region/cbcp#contact>
- Kaczyński, P. M. (2009). *The EU New Member States as Agenda Setters in the Enlarged European Union: Poland*. Sofia: Open Society Institute.
- Kajnc̃, S., & Svetličič, M. (2010). What it Takes to Run an EU Presidency: Study of Competences in Slovenia's Public Administration. *Halduskultuur – Administrative Culture*, 11(1), 84-109.
- Kucharczyk, J., & Łada, A. (2012). Pole Position: The Polish Presidency of the EU Council. Retrieved 13 June, 2012, from http://www.boell.eu/downloads/Pole_Position.fin.pdf
- Kyiv Post. (2011, 1 October). STRATFOR: Belarus leaves the Eastern Partnership summit. Retrieved 25 January, 2012, from http://www.kyivpost.com/news/opinion/op_ed/detail/113954/
- Kyiv Post. (2011, 18 October). EU: Yanukovich trip to Brussels canceled. Retrieved 6 January, 2012, from <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/politics/detail/115151/>
- Niemann, A., & Mak, J. (2010). (How) do norms guide Presidency behaviour in EU negotiations? *Journal of European Public Policy*, 17(5), 727-742.
- Pawlak, P., & Kurowska, X. (2011, 5 October). EU foreign policy: More for more, or more of the same? Retrieved 5 October, 2011, from <http://euobserver.com/7/113818>
- Pintelon, O., & Van Lancker, W. (2011). Weinig speelruimte, onmiskembare invloed: het Belgisch EU-Voorzitterschap en de Europese sociale agenda. *Res Publica*, 53(3), 315-335.
- Pisarska, K. (2011). Eastern Partnership as the Flagship Initiative of the Polish Presidency. Retrieved 14 December, 2011, from http://www.google.be/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=eastern%20partnership%20as%20the%20flagship%20initiative%20of%20the%20polish%20presidency&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCAQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.pism.pl%2Ffiles%2F%3Fid_plik%3D9161&ei=1LzoTqr3E4Kb8gO_1v2rBw&usg=AFQjCNEhCJvpddrr2BZFcw5cP2uYrYhGg
- Pogátsa, Z. (2009). *The EU New Member States as Agenda Setters in the Enlarged European Union: Hungary*. Sofia: Open Society Institute.
- Polish EU Presidency. (2011). *Information about the Eastern Partnership and Agenda for the Polish Presidency*. unpublished.
- Polish EU Presidency website. (2011). Programme of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union 1 July 2011 - 31 December 2011. from http://pl2011.eu/sites/default/files/users/shared/o_prezydencja/programme_of_the_polish_presidency_of_the_council_of_the_eu.pdf

- Polish EU Presidency website. (2011, 4 October). News Release: Summing up the Polish Presidency in September. Retrieved 4 October, 2011, from http://pl2011.eu/sites/default/files/users/shared/spotkania_i_wydarzenia/komm-0410_1_tlum_en_zwer.pdf
- Polish EU Presidency website. (2011, 16 December). Declaration on establishing the European Endowment for Democracy. Retrieved 17 December, 2011, from <http://pl2011.eu/node/24019>
- Polish EU Presidency website. (2011, 18 August). The visit of experts working for the European Commission in the framework of the preparations for Euroeast Police Programme. Retrieved 5 January, 2012, from http://prezydencja.policja.pl/porta/pen/122/965/The_visit_of_experts_working_for_the_European_Commission_in_the_framework_of_the.html
- Polish EU Presidency website. (2011, 22 December). Major results of the work of the Polish Presidency of the European Union Council. Retrieved 2 January, 2012, from http://pl2011.eu/sites/default/files/users/shared/spotkania_i_wydarzenia/osiagniecia_en.pdf
- Polish MFA. (2003). "The Eastern Dimension of the European Union. The Polish View." Speech by Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, at the Conference "The EU Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy" Warsaw, 20 February 2003. Retrieved 14 December, 2011, from <http://www.msz.gov.pl/20,lutego,2003r,-,The,Eastern,Dimension,of,the,European,Union.,The,Polish,View.,Speech,by,Wlodzimierz,Cimoszewicz,,Polish,Minister,of,Foreign,Affairs,,at,the,Conference,The,EU,Enlargement,and,Neighbourhood,Policy,,Warsaw,,20,February,2003,1305.html>
- Polish MFA. (2011, 22 November). Ministers Sikorski and Bildt to visit Ukraine. Retrieved 19 June, 2012, from <http://www.msz.gov.pl/Ministers,Sikorski,and,Bildt,to,visit,Ukraine,46897.html>
- President of the Republic of Poland. (2011, 15 November). Presidents of Poland, Germany and Ukraine meet in Wrocław. Retrieved 19 June, 2012, from <http://www.president.pl/en/news/news/art,237,presidents-of-poland-germany-and-ukraine-meet-in-wroclaw.html>
- President of the Republic of Poland. (2011, 28 November). President visits Ukraine. Retrieved 19 June, 2012, from <http://www.president.pl/en/news/news/art,238,president-visits-ukraine.html>
- President of the Republic of Poland. (2011, 30 August). A meeting of Ukrainian and Polish presidents. Retrieved 15 October, 2011, from <http://www.president.pl/en/news/news/art,221,a-meeting-of-ukrainian-and-polish-presidents.html>
- Raik, K., & Gromadzki, G. (2006). *Between activeness and influence: The contribution of new member states to EU policies towards the Eastern neighbours*. Tallinn: Open Estonia Foundation.
- Schalk, J., Torenvlied, R., Weesie, J., & Stokman, F. N. (2007). The Power of the Presidency in EU Council Decision-making. *European Union Politics*, 8(2), 229-250.
- Schout, A. (2008). Beyond the Rotating Presidency. In J. Hayward (Ed.), *Leaderless Europe* (pp. 269-287). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Söderköping Process website. (2010). Moldovan parliament to align to standards of EU member states. Retrieved 15 August, 2012, from <http://soderkoping.org.ua/page20485.html?template=print>
- Swedish Migration Board. (2012, 3 January). The Söderköping Process. Retrieved 13 August, 2012, from http://www.migrationsverket.se/info/441_en.html
- Tallberg, J. (2003). The agenda-shaping powers of the Council Presidency. In O. Elgström (Ed.), *European Union Council Presidencies: A comparative perspective* (pp. 18-37). London: Routledge.
- Tallberg, J. (2004). The Power of the Presidency: Brokerage, Efficiency and Distribution in EU Negotiations. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 42(5), 999-1022.

- The Economist. (2010, 20 December). Belarus's election - Lukashenka uncovered. Retrieved 4 October, 2011, from http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2010/12/belaruss_election
- Thomson, R. (2008). The Council Presidency in the EU: Responsibility with Power. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 46(3), 593-617.
- Van Hecke, S., & Bursens, P. (2011). Evaluating the Success of a Council Presidency in Post-Lisbon Europe. In S. Van Hecke & P. Bursens (Eds.), *Readjusting the Council Presidency: Belgian Leadership in the EU* (pp. 17-41). Brussel: ASP.
- Vandecasteele, B., Orbie, J., & Bossuyt, F. (2012). De rol van het roulerend voorzitterschap in het extern beleid van de EU: meer dan broodjes smeren en koffie schenken? *Internationale Spectator*, 66(6), 305-308.
- Vanhoonacker, S., Pomorska, K., & Maurer, H. (2011). The presidency in EU external relations: who is at the helm? *Politique européenne*(35), 139-164.
- Vida, K. (2010). Hungary. In K. Vida (Ed.), *The Impact of the 10 New Member States on EU Decision-Making: The Experience of the First Years*. (pp. 39-49). Budapest: Foundation for European Progressive Studies.
- Vida, K. (2011). Evaluation of the First Hungarian EU Council Presidency (ARI). Retrieved 17 November, 2011, from http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_eng/Content?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_in/zonas_in/ari134-2011
- Warntjen, A. (2007). Steering the Union: The Impact of the EU Presidency on the Legislative Activity in the Council. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 45(5), 1135-1157.
- Warntjen, A. (2008). The Council Presidency: Power Broker or Burden? An Empirical Analysis. *European Union Politics*, 9(3), 315-338.
- Westlake, M., & Galloway, D. (Eds.). (2004). *The Council of the European Union*. London: John Harper Publishing.
- Wisniewski, A. (2010). Poland. In K. Vida (Ed.), *The Impact of the 10 New Member States on EU Decision-Making: The Experience of the First Years* (pp. 67-77). Budapest: Foundation for European Progressive Studies.
- Youngs, R., & Brudzinska, K. (2012). The European Endowment for Democracy: will it fly? *FRIDE Policy brief*(128).

Interviews

- Interview 1). [Interview at the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Latvia to the EU, Brussels, 20 January 2012].
- Interview 2). [Interview at the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland to the EU, Brussels, 27 January 2012].
- Interview 3). [Interview at the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland to the EU, Brussels, 31 January 2012].
- Interview 4). [Interview at the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Brussels, 14 February 2012].
- Interview 5). [Interview at the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland to the EU, Brussels, 14 February 2012].
- Interview 6). [Interview at the Permanent Representation of Hungary to the EU, Brussels, 29 February 2012].
- Interview 7). [Interview at the Permanent Representation of Hungary to the EU, Brussels, 6 March 2012].
- Interview 8). [Interview at the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, Brussels, 2 April 2012].

Interview 9). [Interview at the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, Brussels, 3 April 2012].

Interview 10). [Interview at the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, Brussels, 4 April 2012].

Interview 11). [Interview at the premises of the European External Action Service, Brussels, 18 April 2012].

Interview 12). [Interview at the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, Brussels, 19 April 2012].

Interview 13). [Interview at the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Budapest, 8 May 2012].

Interview 15). [Interview at the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Budapest, 10 May 2012].

Interview 16). [Interview at the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Budapest, 10 May 2012].

Interview 17). [Interview at the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Budapest, 11 May 2012].

Interview 18). [Interview at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Warsaw, 14 May 2012].

Interview 20). [Interview at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Warsaw, 20 May 2012].

Interview 22). [Interview at the Polish Ministry of Transport, Construction and Maritime Economy, Warsaw, 22 May 2012].

Interview 23). [Interview at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Warsaw, 23 May 2012].

Interview 24). [Interview at the premises of the European External Action Service, Brussels, 31 May 2012].