

liance over treaty reforms, where their common interest was to keep the structure in their favour, as set in the original Treaties.<sup>4</sup>

The enlargement in 1995 brought three small states (Austria, Finland and Sweden) into the Union. As the date of the 2004 enlargement eastwards and southwards approached, the large states became increasingly more worried about their position as nine small states (except Poland) were about to enter the EU. The large states feared that the power balance might shift to the group of 19 small states. The growing anxiety of the large states as to their ability to influence EU decisions came to the fore at the Nice Summit (December 2000). The treaty reform at Nice, seen from the large states' perspective, was of key importance since it was their only chance to shift the balance of power towards the group of large states before enlargement in 2004. The large states wanted to secure their influence in an enlarged Union,<sup>5</sup> bearing in mind that the small states stick together in defending their position in treaty reform. Dealing with 19 small states instead of 10 in treaty reform is bound to be a bigger challenge.

It is, however, debatable as to what extent the large states managed to strengthen their position at the Nice Summit. The media portrayed the outcome of the Nice Summit as being in favour of the large states. However, more careful analysis of the final outcome of the Summit indicates that small states did not lose out in the new institutional arrangement. Firstly, each of the large states lost one of their two Commissioners while each of the small states managed to hold on to their Commissioner. Secondly, the change in the weighting voting system in the Council of Ministers at Nice did not involve any excessive loss of voting strength for the small states, particularly bearing in mind that member states had already accepted in principle a weighting loss in the Treaty of Amsterdam as compensation for the larger states' abandonment of their right to nominate a second Commissioner. Thirdly, the large states, except for Germany, lost a similar percentage of seats in the European Parliament as the small states.<sup>6</sup> It would be simplistic to argue that the

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4 Ibid., p. 40–43.

5 See, for instance, *Gray/Stubb*, Keynote Article: The Treaty of Nice – Negotiating a Poisoned Chalice? In: *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 39, Annual Review, September 2001, p. 5–23.

6 *Galloway*, The Treaty of Nice and «Small» Member States'. In: *Current Politics and Economics of Europe*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2002, p. 11–29.