

of civil servants are also important factors.<sup>29</sup> Small states try to use their special administrative characteristics, such informal ways of communicating, to enhance the possibility of a favourable outcome in negotiations and stick firmly to their position when their interests are threatened. However, they try to avoid isolation in negotiations. Alliance formation is crucial for them in the Council. It is particularly important because as a number of cases indicate, small states are not regarded as having a veto in the Council while Britain, France, Germany and Spain, have a potential power of veto.<sup>30</sup> The assertiveness of Poland in a number of cases in EU decision-making both on treaty reform and individual policy sectors further demonstrates the proactive nature of the negotiation tactics of large states and their use of their right to block decisions.<sup>31</sup> Small states have to be aware of their limitations because of the small size of their administrations compared to those of the large states. They risk minimizing their ability to influence EU policy in sectors that are most important to them if they do not limit their scope of action to areas of direct national interest.

## 6. Conclusion

An enlarged Union, consisting of 25 members, poses a considerable challenge for the national administrations of all the member states in general and the small ones in particular. The member states that entered the

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29 *Hosli*, The Balance between Small and Large: Effects of a Double-Majority System on Voting Power in the European Union. In: *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1995, p. 255–256.

30 See detailed discussion in *Thorhallsson*, 2000, *ibid.*, 185–208. Also, *Moravcsik*, Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach. In: *Bulmer/Scott* (eds.), *Economic and political integration in Europe. Internal Dynamics and Global Context*, 1994, 54; *Moravcsik*, Negotiation the Single European Act: National Interests and Conventional Statecraft in the European Community. In: *International Organizations*, Vol. 45, No. 2, 1991, 25; *Henig*, Power and Decision in Europe. *The Political Institutions of the European Community*, 1980; *Wallace*, Bilateral, Trilateral and Multilateral Negotiations in the European Community: In *Morgan/Bray* (eds.), *Partners and Rivals in Western Europe: Britain, France and Germany*, 1986.

31 For instance, Poland stuck firmly to its position in the negotiations on the European Constitution in 2003 and its demands delayed the signing of the agreement on the extension of the EEA Agreement to the new member states in 2004.