

MINORITIES ISSUE IN CENTRAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES BEFORE AND AFTER THEIR ACCESSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Abstract: *The EU integration is an ongoing process, with multiple political, economic, cultural and identity dimensions, which does not stop with the accession of a state. The study analyzes the situation of the minorities from four Central European states, namely the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary before and after their accession to the EU, on May the 1st 2004. As we may see, these countries passed laws regarding minorities, promoted supporting policies for the minority groups, trying to be compatible with the European norms, especially those promoted by the Council of Europe, OSCE and EU. The countries were chosen because of their specific character, their national policies concerning national minorities, the percent of the minorities and the administrative capacity of the state's institutions. The question we start from is: What is the impact of the enlargement process upon the minority policies in the four Central European states?*

Keywords: *ethnic minority, national minority, minorities' identity, national legislation, integration process, subsidiarity.*