The European Neighbourhood Policy
This study sets out to retrace how the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) emerged, by going back over the early 2000s debates, before describing in detail how the ENP operates at institutional level. It goes on to discuss the ENP’s regional initiatives before highlighting the impact of the geopolitical upheavals in the European neighbourhood since 2008. Those upheavals and the calibrations made to the ENP are reflected in particular in the differing levels of EU financial engagement in the neighbourhood, which the study examines in detail before addressing avenues for reforms.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2004, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) has provided a framework for relations between the EU and its 16 geographically closest eastern and southern neighbours, affording enhanced cooperation and access to the EU market under bilateral action plans which should eventually result in association agreements.

The ENP is complemented by three regional initiatives: the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the Black Sea Synergy and the Eastern Partnership. The UfM and the Eastern Partnership are multilateral and involve shared institutions (Parliamentary Assembly of the UfM, Euronest, regular summits).

The major geopolitical upheavals brought about by the Arab Spring in the southern Mediterranean since 2011 and by the conflict in Ukraine since 2014 have prompted the EU to overhaul what it is doing in the neighbourhood. That overhaul — and action to put it into practice — must succeed if the EU is to assert itself as an international player.

In March 2015, the Commission and the European External Action Service issued a joint consultation paper on ENP reform, attracting considerable interest from international organisations (the UN, UNICEF, UNESCO and OECD), national parliaments (Italy, Lithuania and Sweden), regional parliaments (Catalonia), think-tanks, universities and a host of citizens.

This study sets out to retrace how the European Neighbourhood Policy emerged, by going back over the early 2000s debates, before describing in detail how the ENP operates at institutional level. It goes on to discuss the ENP’s regional initiatives before highlighting the impact of the geopolitical upheavals in the European neighbourhood since 2008. Those upheavals and the calibrations made to the ENP are reflected in particular in the differing levels of EU financial engagement in the neighbourhood, which the study examines.

The study takes its lead — from start to finish — from concepts put forward in the academic literature in order to shed light on the dilemmas and opportunities presented by what is an unprecedented EU policy.
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Main abbreviations

EEAS: European External Action Service
ENI: European Neighbourhood Instrument
ENP: European Neighbourhood Policy
ENPI: European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
EP: Eastern Partnership
UfM: Union for the Mediterranean

Figure 1 — Main stages in ENP development — Timeline

Figure by European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS).
1 European Neighbourhood Policy — a cross between regional diplomacy and foreign policy

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was designed, in the early 2000s, to provide a consistent institutional framework with instruments for the EU to negotiate its relationship with partner countries in the eastern neighbourhood (Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova, and then Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan after 2005) and in the southern neighbourhood (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria and Tunisia).

There have been a number of ENP reforms, in an ever changing environment, in response to the ‘Colour Revolutions’ in Georgia and Ukraine in 2003 and 2004 respectively, the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings, and, on the EU’s doorstep, the present-day conflicts in Libya, Syria and Ukraine.

The reforms have chiefly served to set up or boost regional initiatives (Union for the Mediterranean, Black Sea Synergy, Eastern Partnership); they have also led to the establishment of specific funding instruments (ENPI and subsequently ENI) and tools such as the European Endowment for Democracy. In response to events in the neighbourhood, successive reforms have prompted the EU, lastly, to adopt a new approach focusing on partnership based on freedom of expression, democracy and the rule of law (the ‘more for more’ principle).

The radical changes which have been made to the ENP, in the 10 years since it was introduced, demonstrate that devising and conducting a regional foreign policy in an ever-changing environment poses a difficult challenge.

1.1 The ENP and the European security complex

Analysts of the ENP have noted how difficult it is, conceptually, to put a label on the policy. It does indeed look like an offshoot both of EU foreign policy and of enlargement policy in that its stated objectives are similar to those pursued under a classical foreign policy (promoting stability and fostering trade) while it employs a number of enlargement policy features (internal-market presence and conditionality).

Like the European Union, the world’s major powers appear to be principally concerned about security in their neighbourhood; this is clear as far as the United States, China and Russia are concerned. The ENP — looked at from that perspective — is a form of regional foreign policy. Stabilising or destabilising the geographic environment has an immediate impact that is, respectively, either positive (expansion of economic links and people-to-people and intercultural exchanges, less military spending) or negative (trade barriers, tariff and non-tariff barriers).

1 Belarus is a special case: the EU proposed that, if the autumn 2004 parliamentary elections were regarded as fair and there was progress with democratic reforms, Belarus should be involved in all aspects of the ENP; but that was not the case.

2 European Endowment for Democracy (EED).

3 Laure Delcour and Elsa Tulmets (eds.), ‘Pioneer Europe? Testing EU Foreign Policy in the Neighbourhood’; Elsa Tulmets, ‘Policy adaptation from the enlargement to the neighbourhood policy: a way to improve the EU’s external capabilities?'; Julien Jeandesboz, ‘Définir le voisin. La genèse de la Politique européenne de voisinage’; Thierry Balzacq, ‘La politique européenne de voisinage, un complexe de sécurité à géométrie variable’.

4 Laure Delcour and Elsa Tulmets, Pioneer Europe?, op. cit.

5 Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, Regions and powers: the structure of international security.
arms race). A region in which such interdependence exists can be termed a ‘security complex’. Accordingly, the European continent is a security complex for the EU, of course, as is the Mediterranean region. The term itself does not make it clear whether, within such a complex, security is viewed in terms of competition or of cooperation. Where it is viewed as a competitive undertaking, each actor seeks to maximise its security irrespective of the impact that has on its neighbours’ security. That produces a zero-sum game destabilising for the region. Where it is viewed as a collaborative undertaking, actors – be they states or international organisations – act in such a way that security for some enhances security for the rest. Within a cooperative security complex, states tend to set up common institutions turning that security complex into a security community\(^6\) – a set of countries with minimised mutual tensions that present a united external front.

Suffice it to say – in order to illustrate those concepts – that the Cold War made post-1945 Europe a most competitive security complex. After the Helsinki Final Act was signed in 1975, there was a permanent forum for reducing tensions in Europe, but no security communities were established on top of those already in place (NATO and the Warsaw Pact), which continued to compete against each other in some areas while experimenting with cooperation in others.

After the Cold War, the EU emerged as one of the best-ever illustrations of how to formalise a security complex. EU enlargement policy made it possible to establish a cooperative security complex with the former Warsaw Pact countries before they were formally incorporated into the EU set-up. The key European problem after 1989 and 2004 was how to extend that community, therefore, with or without new institutions.

### 1.2 The dilemma of conditionality without enlargement

Ahead of the 2004 enlargement, some European actors thought that the success that the EU had had in the 1990s in bringing about radical political and economic change could be repeated in its new eastern and southern neighbours. That was echoed by the Commission in 2003 when it noted\(^7\) that geographical proximity ‘presents opportunities and challenges’ and that the challenges to be overcome not only were those of a neighbourhood potentially unstable for the EU, but also involved threats common to the EU and its neighbours: ‘threats to mutual security ... from the trans-border dimension of environmental and nuclear hazards’.

The EU’s objective is therefore to recreate the success of enlargement processes in promoting democracy, stability and prosperity. The challenge for the ENP, however, is to bring about radical change in the EU’s neighbourhood on the basis of a peer-to-peer partnership with no clear prospect of enlargement. The ENP, viewed through that prism, has been an innovative solution in an attempt to transform a security complex that is a Cold War hangover into a security community.

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\(^6\) Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and powers*, op. cit.

2 The origins of the European Neighbourhood Policy: the challenges posed by new neighbours and the colour revolutions

2.1 Security and regional issues

The first discussions on what was to become the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) began in 2002. The aim was to work out how the European Union, with its 10 new Member States, could manage its relations with the former Soviet republics to the east, and the Mediterranean countries to the south. In the wake of the terrorist attacks in the USA on 11 September 2001, the UK was keen for the new European policy to focus on security, while other Member States, such as Sweden, focused on the economic aspects of relations with new neighbours. The Commission, for its part, emphasised the need to promote European values and stability. In 2002 the Council of the European Union called on the Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Policy to come up with a policy for the EU’s relations with its future neighbours in the east. In 2003, the European Security Strategy emphasised the security aspects of the ENP in the east and in the south, as well as in the Caucuses.

Commission President Romano Prodi emphasised in 2002 that the EU ought also to rethink its policy as regards the south, ensuring that security was not the only stated priority. He thought that an alternative to enlargement ought to be found for the EU, since the accession of 10 new Member States in 2004 was such a major step that it could not be repeated within a short space of time. In a speech in late 2002, Mr Prodi put forward the idea of a policy designed to set up a ‘circle of friendly states’ whose aim was to share everything except their institutions. These different priorities would be taken up by the Copenhagen European Council in December 2002, the Presidency Conclusions of which stated that ‘The Union remains determined to avoid new dividing lines in Europe and to promote stability and prosperity within and beyond the new borders of the Union’.

2.1.1 The ‘Wider Europe – Neighbourhood’ communication (2003)

Against a backdrop of calls for stabilisation and a desire to come up with diplomatic alternatives to enlargement, the ENP was officially launched in 2003 in a Commission

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9 Copy of a letter entitled ‘EU’s relationship with its future neighbours following enlargement (Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova)’, Mr Jack Straw, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the UK to Mr Josep Piqué i Camps, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Spain, President-in-Office of the Council of the EU, 28 January 2002, 7703/02, Limite, NIS 45, COEST 16, archive of the Council.
10 Copy of a letter entitled ‘EU’s relationship with its future neighbours following enlargement’, Ms Anna Lindh, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Mr Leif Pagrotzky, Minister of Trade of the Kingdom of Sweden to Mr Josep Piqué i Camps, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Spain, President-in-Office of the Council of the EU, 8 March 2002, 7713/02, Limite, NIS 46 COEST 17, archive of the Council.
11 Council of the EU, 2421st Council meeting. General affairs.
15 Copenhagen European Council, Presidency Conclusions.
communication\textsuperscript{16} entitled ‘Wider Europe – Neighbourhood’. The communication sought to strike a balance between short-term concerns such as stabilisation and combating illegal immigration, and long-term aims such as taking the \textit{acquis communautaire} further afield and looking into the possibilities as regards the free movement of people\textsuperscript{17}.

At the time, Russia was a key element of the European strategy. The communication placed much emphasis on the fact that the ENP should be one of the cornerstones of EU-Russia relations. Russia, however, rejected this\textsuperscript{18} in favour of a specific partnership based on four areas of cooperation launched in St Peters burg in 2003.

Although Russia was mentioned in the Commission communication of 2003, the countries of the South Caucuses (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia), however, were not. It seems, therefore, as though the specific geography of the ENP was still unclear at the time the policy was being formulated. It included Russia, as well as Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova (the ‘new independent states’ as they were known at the time), but not the countries in the Caucuses. Candidate countries like Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, and the countries with European prospects in the Western Balkans, were not included in the scope of the ENP. The Commission stated in the communication that ‘enlargement has unarguably been the Union’s most successful foreign policy instrument’, but also that ‘a response to the practical issues posed by proximity and neighbourhood should be seen as separate from the question of EU accession’. The ENP therefore appears to be a compromise between security and stabilisation, on the one hand, and the promotion of European values and rules, on the other. The idea behind combining those two elements in one policy was therefore to make it possible to expand the security community of which the European Union forms the hub, but without actually expanding the Union itself.

\textbf{2.1.2 The European Neighbourhood Policy strategy paper (2004)}

After the adoption of the European Security Strategy\textsuperscript{19} and following the Thessaloniki European Council\textsuperscript{20}, the Council asked the Commission to make detailed proposals relating to action plans under consideration with neighbours in the context of the ENP. In the European Neighbourhood Policy strategy paper published in May 2004, the Commission clarified some of the points it had made in its previous communication\textsuperscript{21}.

First of all, an explicit link was made between the ENP and the European Security Strategy: ‘The ENP should reinforce the EU’s contribution to promoting the settlement of regional conflicts’. With that in mind, the situation with regard to Russia was also defined more clearly. While funding for cooperation and assistance was coming from the ENP, Russia had no official involvement in the policy. At the St Petersburg Summit in May 2003, the EU and Russia agreed to launch a strategic partnership in four ‘common spaces’: one in the field of economics, one for freedom, security and justice, one for

\begin{itemize}
  \item Julien Jeandesboz, ‘Définir le voisin. La genèse de la Politique européenne de voisinage’, \textit{op. cit.}
  \item EU-Russia Summit. Joint \textit{Statement}, 300th anniversary of St.-Petersburg — celebrating three centuries of common European history and culture. 9937/03 (Presse 154).
  \item Javier Solana, \textit{A secure Europe in a better world — European Security Strategy}, \textit{op. cit.}
  \item Thessalonika European Council, Presidency \textit{conclusions}.
\end{itemize}
external security and one for research and education. The Commission called for efforts made in the context of the ENP to be drawn on to enrich the four common spaces.

Although Russia was officially excluded from the scope of the ENP, the Commission recommended that the South Caucuses (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) be included in the policy. Belarus was a special case. The Commission pointed out that ‘When fundamental political and economic reforms take place, it will be possible for Belarus to make full use of the ENP’.

With regard to the follow-up to action plans, the Commission proposed that the action plans should draw on structures already in place for association agreements (for the south) and partnership and cooperation agreements (for the east). In practice this meant the annual Association Councils involving EU foreign ministers and ministers from the partner countries. The Commission also pointed out that once the action plans had been negotiated with the EU’s partners, it would publish yearly assessment reports, as was the case with enlargement policy.

2.1.3 What was the difference between the ENP and enlargement policy?
A number of academics, looking into the tools that were being used, noted that enlargement policies and the ENP involved similar stakeholders and instruments.

Although many of the officials involved in designing and implementing the policy had previously worked in DG Enlargement at the Commission, the EU made it clear on a number of occasions that the ENP was not an enlargement policy and did not mean that any particular approach would be taken as regards the possibility of the eastern neighbours joining the EU in the future.

However, if we look at the document templates used and the career paths of those chiefly responsible for designing the ENP, it is clear that there might well have been a relationship between the two policies. But in practice, in extending its security arrangements to the east and to the south, the EU was attempting to set up a security community using instruments rather than institutions, setting enlargement aside.

2.1.4 Towards a regional foreign policy?
Some observers thought that the ENP was a step towards a more coherent European foreign policy. Before 2004, relations with countries in the greater European neighbourhood were governed by various instruments such as association agreements and partnership and cooperation agreements, as well as by shared strategies relating to Russia and Ukraine drawn up by the Council following a procedure laid down in the Treaty of Amsterdam.

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22 Over time, two kinds of action plan developed: action plans for the southern partners and association agendas for the eastern partners.


24 Johannes Hahn, Theorizing the European Neighbourhood Policy. Commissioner Hahn acknowledged this in a speech at the College of Europe in Bruges on 17 September 2015.


This increased cohesion within EU external action involving both traditional diplomacy and external components of domestic policies (e.g. transport, energy, the internal market, readmission agreements) led to the emergence of a new kind of foreign policy which some ENP experts called ‘external governance’\textsuperscript{28}. The basis of this view of European foreign policy was the observation that the various European stakeholders, Member States and European institutions were tending to align their views and possibly the approaches they were taking in external relations, in particular as regards the appeal of Europe and the leveraging effect of internal policies.

Others thought that the inception and implementation of the ENP were a sign of the development of the EU’s role as a ‘regulatory power’: in other words, as an exporter of its own rules and values\textsuperscript{29}. For its neighbours, the EU is a vital trading and political partner and it seemed at the time that exporting rules and regulations would be more effective within the neighbourhood given the high level of trade made possible by geographical proximity, but also because of the power differential — i.e. the asymmetrical relationship — between the EU and some of its neighbours.

The ENP was therefore designed with a view to adjusting to a strategic environment which, it seemed at the time, was favourable and deserved support. Beyond its practical achievements, the mere fact of the policy’s existence gives it a performative value. It helped to create an image of European action which played a role, and still does, in the EU’s neighbourhood, particularly in Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia.

2.2 A regional situation open to European initiatives

At the turn of the Millennium, it seemed as though the values promoted by the EU were successfully being taken up in some of the countries in the neighbourhood.

In 2003, the Rose Revolution\textsuperscript{30} brought Mikheil Saakashvili to power in Georgia, enabling him to promote his pro-European policies for reform. In a scenario that was later to be echoed in a number of other countries\textsuperscript{31}, Eduard Shevardnadze had been toppled when the Georgian people protested against the result of presidential elections that demonstrators and the OSCE had said were rigged\textsuperscript{32}.

A year later in Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko was brought to power after the Orange Revolution\textsuperscript{33} maintained that the presidential elections had been unfair. Poland and Lithuania, two new EU Member States, played a very active role, alongside Javier Solana, in mediating between the government and the demonstrators, who were calling for a re-run of the second round of the presidential elections. The OSCE\textsuperscript{34} had taken the view that the first two rounds had not met the standards required for free and fair elections.


\textsuperscript{34} OSCE, Ukraine. \textit{Presidential election. 31 October, 21 November and 26 December 2004. OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report}. 
Opposition candidate Viktor Yushchenko’s victory in the third round seemed to herald a new dawn in the EU’s relations with its neighbours in the east, given his very pro-European leanings.

The fact that these movements were greeted with enthusiasm in Europe should not mask the fact that Russia was clearly displeased, objecting to what it saw as interference in what it considered to be its sphere of influence. In addition, there were countries in which popular protests were unsuccessful in the same period.

This happened in Azerbaijan in 2003, when Ilham Aliyev was elected president. Ilham Aliyev (the son of Heydar Aliyev, who was gravely ill in hospital) had initially been made prime minister following a change to the constitution allowing him to step in in the event of a power vacuum. He was later elected president with around 76% of the vote. The OSCE was unhappy with the way in which the elections had been conducted. Spontaneous protests were subject to tough police crackdowns.

With regard to Belarus, the Commission emphasised in its communication on the neighbourhood that the political situation had deteriorated since 1996, in particular as regards electoral fraud and the increasing power of the president within the regime. In 2002, the EU decided to introduce visa restrictions for leading figures in the regime. In 2004, with the Orange Revolution in progress in Ukraine, the OSCE noted that the Belarusian elections had failed to meet democratic standards. Not one opposition candidate had been elected to the Belarusian Parliament.

To the south of the EU, in the Mediterranean, the roadmap for peace between Israel and Palestine drawn up in 2003 was a source of hope that the situation in the region might improve. This too contributed to the optimism surrounding the inception of the ENP, despite Arab-Israeli tensions hampering the development of cooperation and the limited results of the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

The circumstances pertaining at the time therefore played an important role in the formulation of the ENP and in the way its initial successes were perceived. Although no one could argue that the ENP led to the ‘colour revolutions’, for civil society in

36 Former member of the Soviet Politburo and President of Azerbaijan since 1993.
43 Belarus history in Europa World.
neighbouring countries like Georgia and Ukraine it was a sign of European commitment. It seems, therefore, that EU enlargement can act as a catalyst for reform in the eastern neighbourhood, but only sometimes, since some undemocratic regimes are able to shore up their power and stifle the opposition.

In 2004, upon completion of the negotiation process between the EU and its neighbours, the ENP therefore emerged as an instrument which provided a template for political and economic dialogue with the EU’s neighbours. The geographical scope of the ENP and the instruments related to it had also been established.

Map 1 – The geographical area covered by the ENP

Source: EEAS and European Commission. Figure by DG EPRS. Figure by European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS).

3 Institutional governance of the European Neighbourhood Policy

The ENP works through action plans negotiated with each of the partner countries, under which the European Union gradually enables them to participate in its market, receive financial assistance and have input to its policies, in exchange for the adoption of a reform agenda. Some of the action plans are overlaid on existing agreements and they differ substantially from one partner country to another. The action plan agreed with Israel, for example, includes a number of measures to facilitate the movement of persons, whereas there are no such measures in the plan agreed with the Palestinian Authority\(^\text{46}\). In the case of some states – Algeria, Belarus, Libya and Syria, for example – difficulties between the partners (lack of interest on Algeria’s part, and concerns about the human rights situation in the other countries) have prevented the conclusion of action plans.

The action plan system is intended to lead to the conclusion of association agreements with the states in question, along with Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area agreements. The Commission publishes annual reports\(^\text{47}\) assessing the progress made towards the action plan objectives.

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\(^{46}\) idem.

\(^{47}\) The reports are available on the European External Action Service site.
The institutional structure of the ENP, as set out at its inception, was based primarily on bilateral dialogue, with a standard set of principles and instruments applying to all the countries concerned. The bilateral approach seems to have become a stumbling block in the very early years as the policy was taking shape: a communication issued in 2003 pointed out that while there was multilateral cooperation in the southern neighbourhood through the Barcelona Process there was no similar forum in the east, apart from the ‘Northern Dimension’48, which involved only Russia. The EU has endeavoured to build regional partnerships not only to take account of the specificities of the neighbouring regions but also as a way of differentiating between the eastern partner countries, which might, in theory, accede to the Union, and the southern partners, for which that is not an option.

As it expands its cooperation-based security arrangements, the EU effectively has to address three types of ambiguity in its relationships – as summarised in Table 149.

Table 1 – Types of relationship between the EU and its neighbours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imbalanced relationship</th>
<th>Balanced relationship</th>
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<tr>
<td>Conditionality</td>
<td>Negotiated aims</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bilateral relationship</td>
<td>Multilateral framework</td>
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<td>Homogeneous approach</td>
<td>Differentiated approach</td>
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<td>Effect</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tends to promote values</td>
<td>Tends to promote interests50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The left-hand column of the table summarises a relationship close to the enlargement model, in which European values and standards are more easily exportable. The partner country in such a relationship commits to them because it aspires to EU accession in the medium term. Where there is no promise of EU enlargement, however, the partners in unbalanced relationships of this type may ultimately lose interest because there is no shared vision of a framework for cooperation, and indeed may engage in compensatory strategies of engagement with third parties in their region. These unintended effects may ultimately lead to regional destabilisation rather than integration.

That is why the EU has tried, through three regional initiatives, to strengthen the shared vision of common frameworks and make them more adaptable to local circumstances.

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48 EU relations with Northern Dimension, EEAS.
50 In reading this table it should be borne in mind that, although values and interests are not in conflict, the acceptance of values is sometimes made a precondition for the discussion of interests. This is how the process of EU enlargement works, for example: the Copenhagen criteria ensure that the Union’s values (the rule of law, human rights, protection of minorities, and the market economy) are protected before negotiations open. In the foreign policy arena it is harder to apply this conditional approach, and the parties involved seek to promote their values and their interests in parallel. The ENP uses certain enlargement instruments in the pursuit of regional foreign policy, and has to steer a course between making the promotion of values a precondition and striving for it as an effect.
4 Regional initiatives complementing the European Neighbourhood Policy

The EU has taken multilateral, and more politically oriented, initiatives to complement the ENP – in 2004 with the Barcelona Process and subsequently with the Eastern Partnership and the Black Sea Synergy.

The three initiatives have created a more complex backdrop for the ENP, which was intended as – and on paper remains – a uniform policy, despite the high profile of the regional initiatives.

To understand the complex nature of the relationship between these various policies, several distinctions need to be borne in mind.

– The European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) finances cooperation with the ENP countries and Russia, although the latter is not officially part of the ENP.

– The ENP potentially involves 16 countries, not all of which have agreed action plans with the EU.

– The regional initiatives (Barcelona Process/Union for the Mediterranean, Eastern Partnership and Black Sea Synergy) afford a multilateral framework for political cooperation on top of the ENP. The ENP itself was not designed to include a multilateral forum.

– The emphasis in the three regional initiatives is on political and economic priorities and they give visible expression to the concept of partnership between the Union and its neighbours, while reflecting southern and eastern regional specificities.

– The Union for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea Synergy involve states that are not officially part of the ENP, either because (like Montenegro and Turkey) they are candidates for accession, because there is a prospect of their accession (as is the case with Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina) or because (like Monaco and Mauritania) they are neighbours in the area in question.

51 Since the imposition of sanctions in March 2014, in response to events in Crimea, the ENI has ceased to finance cooperation with Russia.
It should, however, be noted that the three regional initiatives have very different histories and the degree to which they have been institutionalised differs significantly: The Barcelona Process is the broadest and longest-standing initiative of the three, the Eastern Partnership the most recent. The Black Sea Synergy is a somewhat different type of initiative less characterised by institutions.

4.1 From Barcelona to Barcelona: the Union for the Mediterranean

Since 1995, the EU has developed a special form of cooperation with its Mediterranean partner countries under the title of the 'Barcelona Process'\(^{52}\). It seemed in the mid-1990s that the end of the Cold War would lend new momentum to conflict resolution in the region and this was reflected in the progress achieved with the Oslo Agreements\(^{53}\). That there is a direct line linking the Barcelona Process back to the 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe is evident: from the European states’ insistence in 1975 on a reference to the Mediterranean in the Helsinki agreement; from the name ‘Barcelona Process’, echoing that of the Helsinki Process; and from the establishment of three areas for cooperation, recalling Helsinki’s ‘three baskets’ – policy and security dialogue, an economic and aid dimension, and cooperation on cultural and social affairs. The plan was an ambitious one but the results fell short\(^{54}\) of what had been hoped for in the mid-1990s, and the Barcelona Process has tended to be regarded in the south as a form of ‘soft’ supremacism rather than a genuinely shared space\(^{55}\).

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52 [Barcelona process](#), EEAS file.
53 [Chronology of the Oslo agreements](#), Orient XXI.
54 European Parliament [Resolution](#) of 19 February 2009 on the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean
Furthermore, in terms of its structures the Barcelona Process continued to be based for the most part on a bilateral dialogue between the European Union and its partners in the South, leading to an imbalance in North-South relations. In addition, the cooperation formats were more restrictive — for instance, the 5+5 dialogue bringing together five northern Mediterranean countries (Spain, France, Italy, Malta and Portugal) and five Arab Maghreb Union countries (Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia). The benefits in terms of economic integration have not proved any more convincing. Over the past decade, the southern and Mediterranean countries’ share in European trade has declined proportionately as they have lost out to China, Russia and Turkey. Nor have the Mediterranean partner countries’ exports moved upmarket as a result of free trade. Ten years into the Barcelona Process, little had been achieved, and in 2005 Turkey’s Prime Minister was the only head of state from the southern Mediterranean countries who showed up at the anniversary summit.

Moreover, the EU was prompted by conflicts in the Mediterranean region, and by the ENP, to take a bilateral approach to relations with its Mediterranean partners. The individual negotiation of action plans and the ‘advanced status’ option available to certain partners thus helped to ensure, in the early 2000s, that a bilateral approach predominated.

In 2007, France put forward a proposal to group just the Mediterranean coastal states in a ‘Union for the Mediterranean’. The aim was twofold: the new group was to take a functional approach, focusing on practical projects, as the European Community had successfully done in the 1950s; but the initiative was also to be directed in an overtly political way, introducing a joint north-south policy-making dimension. The political thrust was enshrined in the provision for biannual summits and also in the fact that France and Egypt co-chaired the initiative in 2008.

The ‘Union for the Mediterranean’ (UfM), established in July 2008 in Paris, brought together the EU, several Balkan states with a Mediterranean coastline (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro), Monaco and all the countries of the EU’s Mediterranean neighbourhood, plus Mauritania. Turkey is both a candidate country for accession to the EU and a UfM member.

The UfM did not replace the European Neighbourhood Policy in the south: rather, it sought to breathe new life into the Barcelona Process and to be a visible, multilateral adjunct to the ENP. Its constituting summit in Paris in July 2008 was the first meeting of the region’s heads of state and government – 43 of them, with only the Libyan President staying away. The summit was considered a success, particularly because Syria seemed...
keen at the time to resume its place among the states of the region: it was in Paris that it announced the normalisation of its relations with Lebanon.

The UfM had four component bodies: a North-South Co-Presidency; a secretariat located in Barcelona; a Euro-Mediterranean Assembly; and an Assembly of Euro-Mediterranean Local Authorities. There was provision for a summit of the heads of state and government of the partner countries to be held biannually.

**Figure 3 – Institutions of the Union for the Mediterranean**

Source: Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean. Figure by European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS).

The UfM’s initial goals were to develop energy, transport and education projects and to promote the growth of SMEs. This reflected a practical approach under which the partner countries would be encouraged to participate in sector-based cooperation according to their respective interests. The European Parliament backed that view of the UfM’s role, pointing out in a resolution in 2010 that the ENP needed a framework for multilateral cooperation and that the project-based approach was a promising one for the region. The 2014 activity report by the UfM secretariat recorded that six ministerial meetings had been held, 30 projects had been proposed, worth a total of EUR 0.25 billion, and 55 meetings of experts had taken place.

In May 2015, the Secretary-General of the Union for the Mediterranean reported to the UfM Parliamentary Assembly that 30 projects had been proposed, of which 15 had received funding, and a further 80 were in the pipeline. Financing for the projects was to come from the member and partner countries, including the Gulf states, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development under SEMED.

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64 According to the 2014 UfM activity report, 60 people are currently employed in the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean. op. cit.
68 Address of 12 May 2015.
(since 2011) and private funds. However, the economic crisis had caused the member countries to pull back somewhat\(^{69}\), and the secretariat’s 2014 activity report did not include any project-by-project indication of sources of financing or amounts required.

Political dialogue within the UfM has run into major problems: since 2008, new conflicts have flared in the region (in Libya in 2011 and in Syria ongoing since 2011) and no significant progress has been made on resolving older ones (in Western Sahara or the Arab-Israeli conflict since 1948). The events of the Arab Spring, of course, produced a shake-up in the region: leaders who had been committed to cooperation – but who had been criticised for their poor human rights record – were overthrown in both Tunisia and Egypt (see below).

Problems arose, too, in relation to economic cooperation: intra-regional trade on the southern shore of the Mediterranean is very limited\(^{70}\) (accounting for approximately 5\% of all trade there) and some oil exporting countries feel little need to invest in the requisite diversification of their economies.

Over the past three years the predominant concerns have been the EU response to the events of the Arab Spring and also the issue of migration – a product not just of political upheaval in the region but also of armed conflict (in Syria, Iraq and Libya) and global warming. For all these reasons, not a single summit of UfM heads of state and government has been held since 2008. However, the meetings of Foreign Affairs Ministers recently resumed\(^{71}\) for the first time since the launch of the project\(^{72}\).

Since 2012, given these difficulties, several options\(^{73}\) have been floated for the future of the UfM: to dismantle it, to turn it into a development agency, or to refocus it either as a political union or as one concerned with security, following the model of the Helsinki Process. The current hybrid nature of its cooperation agenda – seeking both to pursue a political process and to finance specific projects – is both the strength and the weakness of the UfM. Yet most observers\(^{74}\) and most of the parties involved agree on the need for closer cooperation between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean to address development and security issues, the pursuit of prosperity, environmental matters and the movement of persons.

4.2 Eastern Partnership

In June 2008, Poland and Sweden proposed\(^{75}\) the creation of a specific framework for relations with the EU’s eastern neighbours. This was a response not only to the wish for

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\(^{70}\) [2014 Activity Report](#) of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean.

\(^{71}\) UfM Secretariat, Fathallah Sijilmassi: ‘The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership should rely more than ever on the continued political impulse initiated within the Union for the Mediterranean’.

\(^{72}\) On 13 April 2015, an informal meeting in Barcelona, the first of its kind since 2008, brought together – at the invitation of Spain and Latvia, which held the EU Council Presidency at the time – the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Commissioner responsible for the ENP, the 28 EU Ministers for Foreign Affairs and their counterparts from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Jordan and Lebanon.


\(^{75}\) Polish Swedish proposal.
balanced cooperation in both the eastern and southern neighbourhoods but also to the imperative of preventing the erection of new borders in Europe. Poland, as a neighbour of both Belarus and Ukraine, was a particularly active participant. The war in Georgia in 2008 accelerated the establishment of the Eastern Partnership. The neighbour countries that are members of the partnership are Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. The EU offered these countries closer cooperation based on the planned conclusion of association agreements accompanied by Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area agreements and mobility partnership arrangements that include visa liberalisation and readmission agreements. The Eastern Partnership initiated a system of biannual summits (held in 2011 in Warsaw, 2013 in Vilnius and 2015 in Riga) and has a parliamentary assembly known as Euronest.

The Eastern Partnership’s multilateral track is based on four thematic platforms: democracy, good governance and stability; economic convergence; energy security; and people-to-people links. A Civil Society Forum has also been established to promote exchanges between NGOs in the EU and the eastern countries.

Like the Union for the Mediterranean, the Eastern Partnership has found itself tested by events in its region. All the participating countries with the exception of Belarus have been affected by territorial conflicts.

Map 2 – Eastern Partnership and conflicts in the EU’s eastern neighbourhood

The conflicts in Transnistria (Moldova), Abkhazia, South Ossetia (Georgia) and Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan, and involving Armenia) have been termed ‘frozen conflicts’. Over

78 Association agreements.
79 Mobility partnerships.
80 Euronest is the Parliamentary Assembly of the Eastern Partnership, which includes the EU Member States, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.
the past decade, it has been evident that the ceasefire in the region was only relative: in 2008, war broke out again in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Since then, Russia has recognised the independence of these two territories. The situation in Nagorno-Karabakh is fragile, with sporadic exchanges of fire continuing along the border.

Russia is a key player in each of these conflicts, as it is in Ukraine. During the 1990s, the OSCE accepted the stationing of Russian troops as peacekeepers in the territories affected by the frozen conflicts. The conflicts have impeded the development of multilateralism in the Eastern Partnership and they give Russia leverage over EU activity in the region.

### 4.3 Black Sea Synergy

The same logic that led to the creation of the ENP following the EU enlargement of 2004 prompted a rethink of EU relations with the Black Sea countries after Bulgaria and Romania became Member States in 2007. In April of that year, the Commission published a communication calling on the EU to adopt a consistent overall approach to the region, embracing the various ENP initiatives for countries there (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine), as well as the Turkish accession process and the special partnership with Russia. It asserted that, by strengthening the regional dimension for cooperation on the rule of law and human rights, the management of population movement and energy, the Union would be able to consolidate its role in the region and help to improve the situation in relation to the frozen conflicts.

Since 2007, the security situation in the region has deteriorated severely. Bulgaria and Romania are currently the only conflict-free states on the shores of the Black Sea. It is against this backdrop that the Black Sea Synergy has been seeking to mobilise EU instruments to promote cooperation in the region. Initially, the EU contribution to regional cohesion seems to have focused on the environment and maritime transport, as noted in a joint staff working paper produced by the Commission and the European External Action Service in January 2015. The working paper also calls not only for further strengthening of the regional dimension, through the financing of joint projects, but also for the EU to have a greater role in regional organisations such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation and the Bucharest Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution.

There is no provision in the Black Sea Synergy for specific multilateral bodies: instead, it is based on voluntary participation in practical projects.

### 4.4 Differences between the three regional initiatives

All three regional initiatives, including the Union for the Mediterranean with its financing dimension, are essentially policy-making forums: the bulk of the financial assistance and most of the activity in terms of political relations are still governed by the standard bilateral framework created under the ENP.

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84 Joint staff working paper.
85 Organisation for Black Sea Economic Cooperation.
86 Bucharest Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution.
The choice of partner countries for each of the multilateral initiatives reflects not only regional geography but also, in some cases, historic and strategic ties. Such ties informed the extension of the ENP and the Eastern Partnership to the South Caucasus, even though the EU has no land borders with the countries of that region. Likewise, those countries have been involved in the Black Sea Synergy, although only Georgia has a Black Sea coast. The inclusion of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Turkey and Mauritania in the Union for the Mediterranean reflects connections of a similar kind.

The three forums differ in the degree to which they have been institutionally structured. The UfM is undoubtedly the most formalised of them, with a permanent secretariat, a co-presidency and several official bodies such as the Standing Committee and Senior Officials’ Meeting. It combines specialised institutions, including its Parliamentary Assembly and the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly, clearly political agenda-setting through regular summit meetings, and a project-based approach.

The Eastern Partnership has no permanent secretariat but it does have its Euronest assembly. It is driven mainly by political agenda-setting and the pursuit of cohesion on the basis of association agreements. Thematic platforms and the Civil Society Forum bring flexibility to the system, facilitating regional exchanges.

The Black Sea Synergy is the least institutionally developed of the regional initiatives: it is not underpinned by regular summit meetings and it has neither a permanent secretariat nor a regional assembly. It works primarily through specific projects.

Clearly, the EU felt the need for regional initiatives to take account of the specific characteristics of the respective regions, with a more political and institutional focus in some cases and a more functional approach in others. A core question in relation to all three initiatives remains: to what extent have the Union’s partner countries invested in these frameworks? The conflicts to the south of the Mediterranean and in the EU’s eastern neighbourhood have had a major effect on the functioning of political cooperation beyond the context of the bilateral relations developed under the ENP. Thus the multilateral forums have, in some cases, failed to function as they were intended to do. Several of the UfM bodies, for example, found it hard to meet against the backdrop of conflict in the region (the biannual summits and the Foreign Affairs Ministers’ meetings suffered in this respect).

5 The Arab Spring and the first reform of the European Neighbourhood Policy

In 2010, the series of social upheavals and protests in the Arab world – Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, Egypt, Syria, Yemen and Bahrain – produced reforms (in Morocco\textsuperscript{88}), regime change (in Egypt and Tunisia) and the start of civil war (in Libya and Syria). At the same time, the collapse of the authoritarian regimes in Libya and Syria, coupled with the unstable situation in Iraq, enabled Jihadist groups such as Da’esh/ISIS to emerge\textsuperscript{89}.


\textsuperscript{89} European Parliament Research Service, \textit{ISIL/Da’esh (the ‘Islamic State’): Background Information}.
In the face of these upheavals and the volatility of the situation, the EU took some time\textsuperscript{90} to adapt. The promotion of stability and the support for democratic movements at times seemed\textsuperscript{91} like contradictory objectives.

Two communications from the Commission and the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, noted the transformations. The communication\textsuperscript{92} of March 2011 proposes a partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean, underlining the differences between the countries, the need for in-depth reform regarding the rule of law, the necessary links between the EU and civil society in the partner countries and the need for sustainable growth.

The first communication focused on measures to be taken in response to the Arab Spring. In 2013, a more detailed communication\textsuperscript{93} concerning European neighbourhood policy in its entirety was published, stressing the need to assist transition to genuine democracy, involving not only the holding of elections but also freedom of expression and association at political level and elsewhere, impartial justice and anticorruption measures. The second priority is to support inclusive economic development and strengthen regional policy initiatives both in the east and in the south. The communication also sets out a number of measures to implement these objectives: the creation of a fund for civil society\textsuperscript{94} to the tune of EUR 26 million annually and the establishment of the European Endowment for Democracy\textsuperscript{95}.

However the principal change brought about by the ENP following the Arab Spring was the introduction of the ‘more for more ‘principle\textsuperscript{96} seeking to focus European assistance on countries carrying out effective reforms in respect of democratisation and the rule of law. It can be seen from the figures (see table below) that such assistance depends on the European institutions’ assessment of the political situation in each case, applying the ‘more for more’ principle.

As a result, the variations in respect of Egypt reflect the political changes occurring there: the Tahrir Square uprising in Cairo in 2011, assumption of power by the Muslim Brotherhood in 2012, impeachment of Mohammed Morsi in 2013 and assumption of power by General Sissi in 2014. The same applies to Tunisia, for which the amount of support has increased significantly since 2011.


\textsuperscript{91} Stefan Lehne, ‘Time to Reset the European Neighborhood Policy’, \textit{op. cit.}

\textsuperscript{92} European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Communication, \textit{A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood. A review of European Neighbourhood Policy}, 2011.


\textsuperscript{94} Fund for civil society.

\textsuperscript{95} European Endowment for Democracy.

\textsuperscript{96} European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Communication, \textit{A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood. A review of European Neighbourhood Policy, op. cit.}
6 Differing levels of EU financial engagement

Neighbourhood policy financial cooperation instruments have undergone a number of modifications over time and EU budget planning cycles do not always dovetail with ENP guidelines. It is for this reason that, between 2004 and 2006, the ENP was mainly financed by the previous MEDA97 and TACIS98 instruments, which made a distinction between partners from the south and east. The first financial instrument for the 16 partners, the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), entered into force in 2006, followed by a second, the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) in 2013.

6.1. Increasing aid packages

The overall budget for the ENP has increased steadily since 2006 (see Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999-2006 (TACIS &amp; MEDA)</td>
<td>EUR 8.488 billion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2013 (ENPI)</td>
<td>EUR 11.2 billion</td>
<td>+32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2020 (ENI)</td>
<td>EUR 15.40 billion</td>
<td>+37.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Commission

In addition, part of the increase after 2011 can be attributed to the SPRING99 programme to support the Mediterranean region after the Arab Spring and the EaPIC programme for the eastern partners100. In addition, aid for reform is encouraged through participation in TAIEX101, TWINNING and SIGMA102, which were originally intended for pre-accession purposes. In this connection, account should also be taken of the role played by financial institutions such as the EIB and the IBRD. The Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF103) allows neighbourhood partners to borrow from these institutions to finance their infrastructure projects.

6.2 Major disparities between partners

Support for individual partner countries varies substantially over time.

Consequently, the amount of aid may differ significantly from one year to the next, depending on the state of relations with the different partners and in line with a project-based approach.

97 MEDA.
98 TACIS.
99 SPRING.
100 EaPIC.
101 TAIEX.
102 SIGMA.
103 Neighbourhood Investment Facility.
An analysis of the total amounts allocated to the various neighbourhood countries clearly shows that Europe’s commitment is strong in terms of volume, but that it varies over time.

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104 European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, 2007-2013, overview of activities and results, report by EuropeAid, 2014. Same source for the following tables. In EuropeAid financial documents, Palestine refers to the Palestinian Authority.
Average annual aid payments per country over the period 2007-2014 (Chart 2) reflect the differences that may exist between the partners. The Palestinian Authority is by far the largest recipient of European aid under the European Neighbourhood Policy, followed by Morocco, Egypt and Ukraine, to which Europe appears to be giving priority and which have been complying over this period with Commission eligibility criteria. The latter have come in for criticism from various quarters, including the Commission itself, which acknowledged\textsuperscript{105} that, particularly in the case of Egypt, it had attached too much importance to stability and too little to the democratic progress. If the aid is weighted by the size of the population in each case, a different picture emerges.

Chart 3 – Total aid volume for each partner country between 2007 and 2014, weighted by the number of inhabitants in 2009 (euros)

\textsuperscript{105} European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Communication, A Partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean, \texttt{COM(2011) 200 final}, 2011.
Thus it is clear that the Palestinian Authority (PA) continues to receive the largest amount of aid, while that accorded to Egypt must be measured against the size of its population (around 76 million in 2009), making Moldova, Lebanon and Jordan the principal recipients after the Palestinian Authority.

**Chart 4 – Total aid volume for each partner country between 2007 and 2011 and between 2011 and 2014, weighted by the number of inhabitants in 2009 (euros)**

![Bar chart showing aid volume](image)

Source: author’s calculations based on Eurostat data (number of inhabitants in 2009) and European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, 2007-2013, overview of activities and results report by Europe Aid.

For the purpose of measuring the effect of neighbourhood policy reorientation after 2011 and what might be termed the ‘more for more’ effect, the above figures show average per capita aid before and after 2011. In practice, the ‘more for more’ principle has meant that the per capita aid allocation has increased to all partners except the Palestinian Authority and Egypt. This applies in particular to Moldova, while Jordan, Lebanon and Armenia have also benefited. It is also necessary to be able to compare the amounts of European aid with those offered by other international powers such as the United States or the Gulf countries. By way of comparison, in 2013 Egypt received EUR 47 million from the European Union under the ENP and EUR 614 million from USAID. In 2013, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates pledged USD 12 billion to help Egypt stabilise its economy after the forced departure of President Morsi.

While the amount of EU assistance to countries in the neighbourhood appears substantial and has actually been increasing since 2011, and especially since 2014, its impact needs to be seen in perspective, especially in the Mediterranean region, where the EU is not the only aid donor. Injections of Russian cash are a powerful argument in Eastern Europe also, as illustrated by the initial refusal of Ukraine to sign the

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Association Agreement in December 2013 in Vilnius in exchange for USD 15 billion\textsuperscript{109} in Russian aid\textsuperscript{110}.

In addition, one of the continuing dilemmas\textsuperscript{111} with European aid is deciding whether the EU’s response to a lack of progress by partners towards meeting jointly agreed objectives should be to increase or to cut back its assistance. The European Court of Auditors has issued a number of decisions on specific actions and countries, such as Moldova\textsuperscript{112}. In the latter case, the report concluded that EU aid had had a limited impact, owing to external factors but also to a failure to take sufficient account of Moldova’s own objectives. While the EU is increasingly invested in the neighbourhood, it needs to target its aims, and the means of achieving them, more effectively in order to meet the needs of its partners and compete with other actors.

7 Towards in-depth reform

7.1 Restructuring for a new programme

With the renewal of the European institutions following the 2014 elections, a number of significant changes have been made. Firstly, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission is now responsible for coordinating\textsuperscript{113} the work of the Commissioners responsible for external policy, including the European Neighbourhood Policy, which is officially the remit of Commissioner Johannes Hahn\textsuperscript{114}.

Furthermore, the ENPI has been replaced by the European Neighbourhood Instrument\textsuperscript{115} (2014-2020) with a funding allocation of EUR 15.4 billion for aid to Neighbourhood countries, which will make it possible to earmark 10\% for projects with partners truly committed to reform in respect of democratisation and the rule of law\textsuperscript{116}. In addition, the multiannual package for each Partner State may be adjusted within the 20\% limit.

The radical transformation undergone in the European neighbourhood over the last 10 years, in conjunction with the reorganisation of ENP governance and the new neighbourhood instrument, has highlighted the need to rethink the purpose of this policy, the procedures to be followed and the resources allocated to it. The Ukraine conflict has served as a timely reminder that instability is a feature not only of the south but also of the East, which is why the European External Action Service and the Commission issued in March 2015 a consultation paper\textsuperscript{117} on ENP reform. The

\textsuperscript{109} Reuters, Timeline: Political crisis in Ukraine and Russia's occupation of Crimea, March 2014.


\textsuperscript{111} M. Parry, The European Neighbourhood Instrument, EPRS, 2016.

\textsuperscript{112} European Court of Auditors, EU assistance for strengthening the public administration in Moldova, special report, 2016.

\textsuperscript{113} She also pointed this out at her hearing before Parliament on 6 October 2014.

\textsuperscript{114} Commissioner Johannes Hahn.


\textsuperscript{116} How European Neighbourhood Policy is funded: European External Action Service.

\textsuperscript{117} The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission, Joint consultation paper Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy (JOIN(2015) 6).
subsequent review\textsuperscript{118} takes into account criticisms of the ENP for failing to distinguish properly between the two regions and, in the east, for failing to take sufficient account of Russia’s interests.\textsuperscript{119}

Another matter raised by the Commission concerns dialogue with neighbours of neighbours. While this is necessary in the east with regard to Russia, it is also essential in the south with regard to Iraq, Iran, the Gulf States and the Sahel, which must be involved in any attempt to stabilise the European Neighbourhood\textsuperscript{120}.

It now appears that the Commission is insisting\textsuperscript{121} on differentiating between the partners in the setting of priorities with regard to trade, security, connectivity, governance, migration and mobility. Given that the EU’s neighbours are different and do not all share the same desire for a closer relationship with the European Union, the Commission is recommending a more flexible approach offering a wider range of instruments, while at the same time stressing the need for balanced cooperation between partners. The Commission will therefore no longer systematically publish annual reports. Finally, the joint communication also stresses the need for partnership arrangements between the EU and its neighbours to be visible and appropriate.

7.2 The position of the European Parliament

In response to the Commission consultation paper, the European Parliament adopted a resolution\textsuperscript{122} in July 2015 on the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

In its resolution, Parliament stresses that the ENP regional environment is now more unstable and fragmented than it was ten years ago. Furthermore, the expectations of various partners regarding the EU are different and must be treated as such. In response, Parliament calls for the continuation of a policy encompassing the 16 countries in the region, and a return to ENP fundamentals based on values and stability.

It also calls for an increase in ENP funding, which remains modest compared to that of other operators in the region, in order to step up Europe’s influence. Regarding another possible incentive, Parliament underlines the distinction to be made between enlargement policy on the one hand and neighbourhood policy on the other, while not closing the door to European ENP countries attracted by this long-term prospect.

MEPs want the EU to adopt a differentiated approach between countries, based on conditionality and taking into account the aspirations of each partner. The EU is also called upon to strengthen its partnerships with neighbours of neighbours and with regional organisations.


\textsuperscript{119} Un an après Maidan, l’UE tire les leçons de ses tâtonnements, Le Matin, 23.11.2014.


\textsuperscript{121} The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European Commission, Joint consultation paper Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy (JOIN(2015) 6), op. cit.

\textsuperscript{122} European Parliament resolution of 9 July 2015 on the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy.
8  Outlook

8.1  Security complex and security community

The Arab Spring uprisings and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the south, and the frozen conflicts and the conflict in Ukraine in the east, are reminders to the EU of just how interdependent it is in relation to its regional environment. The European Neighbourhood Policy recognises that interdependence and the need for the EU’s foreign policy towards its closest neighbours to be different in nature. To that end, a uniform approach satisfying Member States having different affinities with the east or the south has been in place since 2004.

Creating a security community requires a sense of belonging to emerge gradually around shared institutions. This is why the EU has tried to create and reinforce regional initiatives in the south and the east. However, members are divided, either between themselves over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for example, or by an external actor such as Russia, in the case of the neighbours in the east. These conflicts have hampered the emergence of a strong partnership, although it should be stressed that the political and economic imbalance between the parties involved is not conducive to a genuinely multilateral dynamic. The European Union is both the most powerful and the richest player in the region; it determines the form of cooperation and the objectives and benefits of the multilateral format. While in formal terms the countries all participate on an equal footing, this disparity remains, pushing some EU partners to seek other forms of support elsewhere (e.g. the Gulf States, Russia).

8.2  Assessments and options for the future

While the bilateral dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy appears to have produced tangible results in Tunisia, Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine, other partners see their interest in a more limited form of cooperation (e.g. Algeria, Armenia and Azerbaijan) and are not seeking to engage in far-reaching reform. Commissioner Hahn recently acknowledged that ‘the idea that our power of attraction would eventually seduce all our neighbours has been proved inaccurate. We were too optimistic’\(^{123}\). The Commission is attached to the ENP as a uniform policy for both the east and the south, even if there is no real affinity between these 16 countries\(^{124}\). According to Commissioner Hahn, the main reason is that it was this uniform framework which made it possible to get all the Member States to agree the necessary compromises for EU involvement in both the east and the south, in a changing environment\(^{125}\). While the Commissioner spoke of a ‘ring of fire’ rather than the ‘ring of friends’ that had been envisaged when the ENP was conceived\(^{126}\), some analysts point to the fundamental upheaval taking place in the European neighbourhood.

The situation in the southern neighbourhood today is very different from when the ENP was launched back in 2004. Not only have a number of states collapsed (e.g. Libya) or been plunged into civil war (e.g. Syria), but these conflicts are also having a profound impact on stability in the entire region. Millions of Syrian refugees, for example, have fled to neighbouring countries (Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey) and are, in turn, jeopardising

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\(^{124}\) idem.

\(^{125}\) Idem.

\(^{126}\) Idem.
the stability of those countries. Hundreds of thousands are trying to escape areas of conflict in the Middle East and the Sahel region of Africa to reach the European Union. In Eastern Europe the conflict in Ukraine claims new victims every day, and there is no immediate prospect of any improvement in the so-called ‘frozen conflicts’.

Consequently, the ENP has undergone a profound cognitive transformation over the course of its first 10 years: its objectives and instruments are less and less inspired by the enlargement policy and increasingly by regional foreign policy. For this reason, the consultation paper published by the Commission in 2015 stressed the need for differentiation in terms of what is offered to the EU’s neighbours, depending on their interests.

A decade after its launch, the European Neighbourhood Policy, now coordinated by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, is becoming a specific foreign policy for the security complexes (east and south) in which the EU is involved.

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Since 2004, the European Neighbourhood Policy has provided a framework for relations between the EU and its 16 geographically closest neighbours. This framework offers enhanced cooperation and access to the European market by means of bilateral action plans leading ultimately to association agreements. It is complemented by three regional initiatives: the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the Black Sea Synergy and the Eastern Partnership. The UfM and the Eastern Partnership are multilateral and involve shared institutions (Euro-Mediterranean Assembly, Euronest, regular summits).

The major geopolitical upheavals brought about by the Arab Spring in the southern Mediterranean since 2011 and by the conflict in Ukraine since 2014 have prompted the EU to overhaul what it is doing in the neighbourhood. That overhaul – and action to put it into practice – must succeed if the EU is to assert itself as an international player.

For that reason, in November 2015 the Commission and the European External Action Service published a communication on reforming the European Neighbourhood Policy.