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European Neighbourhood Policy: Many reservations – some progress – uncertain prospects

- The aims of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) – stability, security and prosperity in the Eastern and Southern neighbourhood countries – are not contested in the EU. ENP has so far enjoyed only tepid political support, however, and in many member states is the object of reservations and criticisms.
- The German government functions as the driver of ENP and supports it as a central priority of EU foreign policy. ENP is a form of *Ordnungspolitik* structuring the common neighbourhood.
- The FES survey of national positions and interests conducted in eleven EU member states shows a patchy record so far and uncertain prospects for this new policy.
- The finality of ENP (prospects of EU membership) should remain open for the time being. It is still too early for a transition from ENP to enlargement policy, given the need for consolidation within the EU and the Eastern ENP states' shortcomings as regards Europeanisation. Instead of pushing through a decoupling of Southern from Eastern ENP the best solution would be country-specific differentiation within a multi-speed ENP.
- Further recommendations concern the intensive parliamentary monitoring of ENP implementation, the formation of extensive free trade zones and responsible governance in ENP countries, as well as the full utilisation of the new provisions of the Lisbon Treaty.

JUNE 2008

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1. A map of interests

Each enlargement of the European Union brings with it new neighbourhoods and alters the old ones. The major enlargement by 12 states carried out in 2004 and 2007 led the EU to think more systematically about re-ordering its relations with neighbours in the South and the East. This concerned above all the group of states with no prospects in the long term –

neighbouring states includes neither the countries of the Western Balkans, which have some prospect of EU accession, nor Turkey, with which the EU is already engaged in membership negotiations, nor Russia, which demands a strategic partnership with the EU.

The purpose of the project launched by the FES in 2007 was to examine the formation of the new ENP policy area from the standpoint of member states' specific interests and political positions. In particular

Table 1: Countries included in the study

Country	Size (population)	Enlargement round	Geographical location	EU/EEA external border
Czech Republic	Small (10.3 million)	2004	East Central Europe	No
Finland	Small (5.3 million)	1995	North/East Europe	Yes
France	Large (63.8 million)	Founding member	West/Southern Europe	Yes
Germany	Large (82.2 million)	Founding member	Central	No
Hungary	Small (10.0 million)	2004	South Eastern Europe	Yes
Lithuania	Small (3.4 million)	2004	East Central Europe	Yes
Poland	Medium (38.0 million)	2004	East Central Europe	Yes
Romania	Medium (21.4 million)	2007	South Eastern Europe	Yes
Slovakia	Small (5.4 million)	2004	East Central Europe	Yes
Spain	Medium (45.3 million)	1986	Southern Europe	Yes
UK	Large (60.9 million)	1973	Western/Northern Europe	No

Source: Own presentation.

see North Africa – or for the foreseeable future – see Eastern Europe – of EU membership. Since 2003–2004 the EU has created a uniform political framework under the title 'European Neighbourhood Policy' (ENP), within which it wishes to organise its relations with six Eastern European countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) and ten Mediterranean countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian Autonomous Territories, Syria, Tunisia).¹ This circle of

the new member states – six of which (Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Hungary) were included in the study – confirmed their sustained interest in ENP and above all in the Eastern dimension of neighbourhood policy. Apart from that, five other states were included in the survey sample that stand out in terms of size, geographical location and EU accession: the two large founder states Germany and France, the UK, which joined within the framework of the first accession round in 1973, as well as Spain, a country that formed part of Southern enlargement, and Finland, which joined as part of EFTA enlargement.

Of the eleven states eight are located on an EU/EEA external border and so have neighbours that count as third countries in relation to the EU.

ENP does not start from scratch in relation to the 16 partner countries. In particular in respect of the Mediterranean countries it looks back on a long prehistory as EC/EU Mediterranean policy (since the

¹ See EC Commission, Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, 'Wider Europe – Neighbourhood: A new framework for relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours', COM(2003) 104 final, 11 March 2003; Communication from the Commission, European Neighbourhood Policy, Strategy Paper, COM(2004) 373 final, 12 May 2004; Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, 'On strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy', COM(2006) 726 final, 4 December 2006; Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, 'Black Sea synergy – a new initiative for regional cooperation', COM(2007) 160 final, 11 April 2007; General Affairs and External Relations Council, 'Strengthening of European Neighbourhood Policy. Chairman's Progress Report', Doc. 10874 / 07, 18–19 June 2007; EC Commission,

Communication from the Commission, 'A strong European Neighbourhood Policy', COM(2007) 774 final, 5 December 2007.

Table 2: EU treaty relations with ENP countries (February 2008)

ENP partner country	Coming into force of treaty relations with the EC	ENP Country Report	ENP Action Plan	Adoption by the EU	Adoption in partner country
Algeria	AA* – September 2005	–	–	–	–
Armenia	PCA** – 1999	March 2005 (spring 2008)	autumn 2006	13.11.2006	14.11.2006
Azerbaijan	PCA – 1999	March 2005 (spring 2008)	autumn 2006	13.11.2006	14.11.2006
Belarus	–	–	–	–	–
Egypt	AA – June 2004	March 2005 (spring 2008)	end 2006	06.03.2007	06.03.2007
Georgia	PCA – 1999	March 2005 (spring 2008)	end 2006	13.11.2006	14.11.2006
Israel	AA – June 2000	May 2004 (spring 2008)	end 2004	21.02.2005	11.04.2005
Jordan	AA – May 2002	May 2004 (spring 2008)	end 2004	21.02.2005	11.01.2005
Lebanon	AA – April 2006	March 2005 (spring 2008)	autumn 2006	17.10.2006	19.01.2007
Libya	–	–	–	–	–
Moldova	PCA – July 1998	May 2004 (spring 2008)	end 2004	21.02.2005	22.02.2005
Morocco	AA – March 2000 Negotiations on relations at a 'higher level' – since July 2007	May 2004 (spring 2008)	end 2004	21.02.2005	27.07.2005
Palestinian Autonomous Territories	Interim AA – July 1997	May 2004 (spring 2008)	end 2004	21.02.2005	04.05.2005
Syria	–	–	–	–	–
Tunisia	AA – March 1998	May 2004 (spring 2008)	end 2004	21.02.2005	04.07.2005
Ukraine	PCA – March 1998 Negotiations on a 'deeper agreement' since February 2007	May 2004 (spring 2008)	end 2004 ten-point plan – February 2005 Action plan 'Freedom, Justice and Security' June 2007	21.02.2005	21.02.2005

Note: * AA: Association Agreement, ** PCA: Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.

Source: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/1676&format=HTML&aged=1&language=DE>; updated.

beginning of the 1970s)² and includes the Barcelona Process (from 1995). The EU has concluded an association agreement with all the Mediterranean countries, or at least offered one. On the other hand, the

EU's policy of partnership and cooperation with the Eastern European neighbours is of recent date and was until not so long ago less ambitious and of lower intensity as far as treaty, institutional and procedural matters are concerned (cf. Table 2).

The present paper is based upon 11 country reports that are the result of structured expert interviews with ministry officials (primarily in foreign ministries), MPs and independent experts in think tanks and research

² See Eberhard Rhein, 'Die EU und der Mittelmeerraum', in Werner Weidenfeld (ed.), *Die Europäische Union – Politisches System und Politikbereiche*, Bonn (2004), pp. 521–538.

institutes, as well as journalists in the member states listed in Table 1. The 100 or so interviews were conducted using a uniform questionnaire that referred *primarily to the Eastern dimension of ENP*. (Since the interviewees were assured of anonymity they cannot be quoted verbatim in what follows.) The positions attributed to the countries in this text rest largely upon the unpublished country reports interpreted in light of the interviews (see the following box: On the FES project 'European Neighbourhood Policy'.) Apart from that, it refers to the FES analysis 'EU Neighbourhood Policy under discussion – concepts, reform proposals and national positions'.³

On the FES project 'European Neighbourhood Policy'

The aim of the ENP project was the examination and analysis of the national positions and interests of selected EU member states with regard to European Neighbourhood Policy. To this end approximately 100 expert interviews were conducted in July–December 2007, primarily with MPs, high-ranking officials in the administration, experts and media representatives in the following EU countries: Germany, France, the UK, Poland, Finland, Lithuania, Romania, Spain, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia. Further interviews were conducted with representatives of EU institutions in Brussels. The study was carried out by the academics listed below using a specially prepared questionnaire. The main focuses of the questionnaire included: European Neighbourhood Policy in the national context; ENP concepts and instruments; prospects and options for action for the next 3–5 years; Russia's role; the future of ENP. The results of the investigation form the basis of the present study.

The project, which was conducted under the overall control of the International Political Analysis section of the International Dialogue department of the FES, commenced on 1 January 2007 and ends on 30 April 2008.

Further details concerning the FES project may be found on the IPA website at: www.fes.de/ipa/inhalt/nachbarschaftspolitik.htm

We would like to thank the following study participants for their support:

Prof. Attila Ágh, Corvinus University, Budapest
 Laia Carbonell Agustin, Center of International Relations and Development Studies, Barcelona
 Prof. Dr Christian Deubner, Paris
 Dr Alexander Duleba, Foreign Policy Association Research Centre, Bratislava
 Olga Hetze, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Brussels
 Dr Petr Kratochvil, Institute of International Relations, Prague
 Octavian Milevschi, National School for Political Science, Bucharest
 Markus Palmén, Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Helsinki
 Arturas Racas, Baltic News Service, Vilnius
 Andreas Stahn, Freie Universität, Berlin
 Prof. Dr Richard Whitman, Department of European Studies and Modern Languages, University of Bath
 Boleslaw Wozniak, Centre for European Strategy, Warsaw

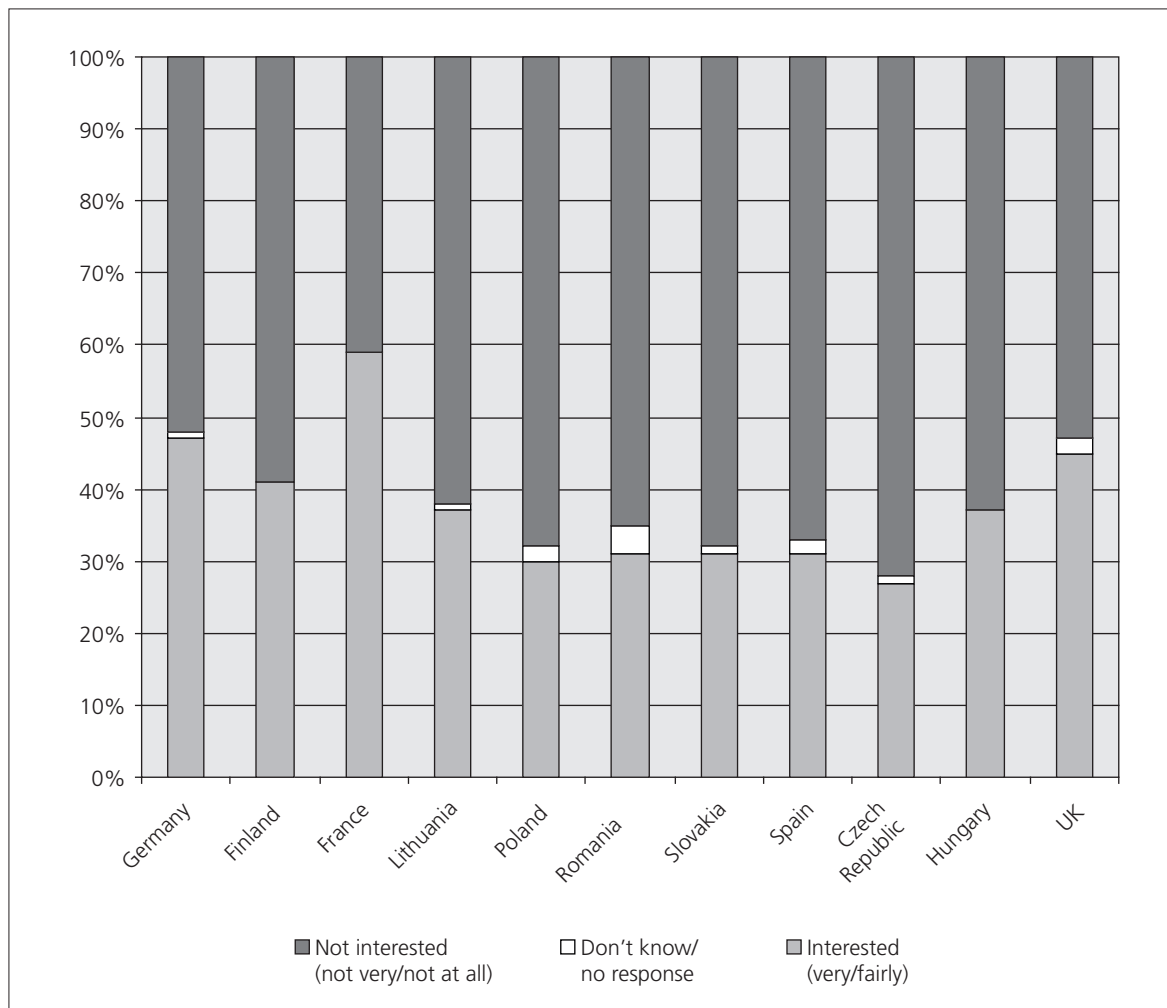
The map of interests concerning ENP drawn here is divided into five sections:

1. ENP in the national context – German European policy and ENP;
2. ENP – the record so far;
3. Medium-term challenges (2009–2014);
4. ENP 2020;
5. Outlook and recommendations for European and German policy.

2. ENP in the national context – German European Policy and ENP

Opinions and positions on ENP are still in flux throughout the member states. In common with the subject's low politicisation this involves opportunities as well as restrictions for ENP's development. At present ENP, which is a topic in and for a circle of experts, has little status as an EU policy and correspondingly few are committed to it: for Poland, for example, ENP is inseparable from the debate on continuing EU enlargement. France, circumventing ENP, initiated a Mediterranean Union. In these and other member states ENP has predominantly been co-opted to the national agenda. At the same time, we may observe that even at government level the actors concerned with ENP in the foreign ministries and parliaments are uncertain of how great their 'national influence' is over the for-

³ Barbara Lippert, 'Die EU-Nachbarschaftspolitik in der Diskussion – Konzepte, Reformvorschläge und nationale Positionen', FES International Policy Analysis (July 2007).

Table 3: Interest in ENP countries in EU member states⁴

Source: Special Eurobarometer 285, The EU's relations with its neighbours. A survey of attitudes in the European Union: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_285_en.pdf

mation of ENP. In the EU there are only initial signs of the emergence of ENP stakeholders outside executive foreign and security policy circles: they include businessmen, EU citizens in areas bordering the neighbourhood countries and population groups such as students who have a particular interest and particular opportunities (mobility programmes) to work in EU countries and to remain there. A survey on ENP conducted by Eurobarometer in 2007 showed that around 80% of EU citizens have no knowledge of European Neighbourhood Policy. The interest of citizens from the eleven member states with which we are con-

cerned is extremely varied. In the study countries it is strongest in France and Germany, and lowest in the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland and Spain.⁵ It is true that the Eurobarometer results rest upon a very general question that does not differentiate between the South and the East (see Table 3), however.

In Germany too, ENP surfaces only sporadically in the public debate, although in European policy circles it is increasingly gathering attention. The German government sees itself as a driver of ENP and supports

4 Special Eurobarometer 285, Question QC7: 'How interested are you in what is happening in countries neighbouring the EU? Are you ...?' Respondents were shown a map on which the ENP countries were highlighted in colour. Possible answers: 'Very interested, Fairly interested, Not very interested, Not at all interested, NSP/DK.'

5 Special Eurobarometer 285, Beziehungen der EU zu ihren Nachbarländern. Eine Umfrage über Einstellungen in der Europäischen Union, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_285_de.pdf (last accessed 1 February 2008) [in English: The EU's relations with its neighbours. A survey of attitudes in the European Union, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_285_en.pdf]

it as 'a central priority of EU foreign policy'.⁶ ENP is *Ordnungspolitik* for structuring the neighbourhood in accordance with the principles, values and procedures on which the EU is based and for which it enters into international relations.⁷

Apart from its interest in enhancing the status of ENP's Eastern dimension Germany has traditionally supported EU Mediterranean policy, including the Barcelona Process, and is very definitely not engaged in a zero-sum game of East versus South. This was made clear by the state minister for Europe in the Foreign Ministry: '[ENP] is directed towards *all* partners in the South and the East. A balanced relationship must be ensured. Interregional competition or even rigid allocation quotas should be avoided.'⁸ This position was also taken recently in the German government's reaction to French plans for a Mediterranean Union, in respect of which it claims the right to participation and to have a say. German foreign minister Steinmeier emphasised that it is 'natural that Germany, though not bordering the Mediterranean, has interests around the Mediterranean. We are therefore justified in issuing a reminder that Germany too wishes to be involved in deliberations concerning such a Mediterranean Union. ... We have the Barcelona Process and we have the proposal for a Mediterranean Union. Their added value must be expounded convincingly and must not come into conflict with the aims of the EU, to which the cultivation of the European neighbourhood, also to the south of the Mediterranean, belongs.'⁹

With the initiative for an EU Central Asia strategy the German government has also put the focus on the neighbours of the Eastern neighbours as target countries for strong EU involvement and so has emphasised both ENP's foreign and security policy thrust and its contextualisation.¹⁰

The German government favours a state of suspension in relation to the political finality of ENP-East, which also represents ENP's inherent purpose: 'ENP has become established as a central instrument in the formation of EU relations with the neighbourhood countries. It will be indispensable in both the medium and long term in order to remove lines of division and to render the dichotomy "EU accession: yes or no" less dramatic.'¹¹ The German government's multi-dimensional and open position on ENP has encountered only mixed support among its strategic partners in the EU (France, Poland, UK). The fragile consensus with *France* at best applies to the most immediate practical steps as regards ENP (implementation). Sarkozy's coup in calling for a Mediterranean Union and France's long-held reluctance as regards offers of association to Eastern European countries are not in tune with the preferences of the German government. *Poland's* one-sided interest in its Eastern European neighbours (above all Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova) and its lack of concern for the Southern dimension of ENP, as well as the stimulation of greater expectations among the Eastern neighbours stand in the way of a common German–Polish ENP agenda, but not of practical cooperation as regards the Eastern neighbours. For example, some interviewees in Poland emphasised that although Berlin had voted against a membership option this would not necessarily interfere with medium-term cooperation.¹² The *UK* is as usual a good partner to Germany with regard to practical steps and the foreign and security policy analysis of the situation. But the UK and Germany disagree on enlargement policy concerning their evaluation of the implications of the different options for developing ENP (as a preliminary stage for membership, even for countries of the Maghreb and the Middle East) for the EU's internal make-up and political identity. According to the British foreign minister, for example: 'The goal must be a multilateral free-trade zone around our periphery – a version of the European Free Trade Association that could gradually bring the countries of the Maghreb, the Middle East and Eastern Europe in line with the single market, not as an alternative to membership, but potentially as a step towards it.'¹³ Alongside Poland, *Lithuania* has so far been most prominent as regards ENP among the new member states. Other 'natural' supporters of the Eastern di-

6 European Council, Chairman's Progress Report (2007), p. 1 – see note 1 above.

7 Cf. Barbara Lippert, 'Teilhabe statt Mitgliedschaft? Die EU und ihre Nachbarn im Osten' [Participation rather than membership? The EU and its Eastern neighbours], in *Osteuropa*, 2–3 (2007), pp. 69–94.

8 Günter Gloser, 'Europäische Nachbarschaftspolitik nach der deutschen EU-Ratspräsidentschaft – Bilanz und Ausblick' [European Neighbourhood Policy after the German EU Council Presidency – outcome and outlook], in *integration*, 4 (2007), pp. 493–498; p. 494.

9 Interview with Frank-Walter Steinmeier, in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (17 December 2007).

10 See the speech given by German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier at the opening of the conference 'Zentralasien und Europa: Eine neue Wirtschaftspartnerschaft für das 21. Jh.' [Central Asia and Europe: a new economic partnership for the 21st century], 13 November 2007.

11 Gloser, 'Europäische Nachbarschaftspolitik' (2007), p. 498 – see note 8 above.

12 See FES ENP Country Report Poland, Bonn (2007), unpublished manuscript.

13 David Miliband, 'Europe 2030: Model Power not Superpower', speech given at the College of Europe, Bruges, 15 November 2007.

mention of ENP tread more warily or mainly pursue close cooperation with immediate neighbours – for example, *Hungary* in relation to Serbia and Ukraine – so far without contributing to the overall design of ENP. For example, for *Bulgaria* and *Romania* Black Sea cooperation is a priority aspect of ENP. Among Central and Eastern European countries the Czech Republic is the most receptive towards EU engagement in the Mediterranean and, with a view to the Eastern European ENP countries, particularly supports democratisation efforts towards Belarus. For the Czech Republic, which does not have an external EU border (see Table 1), the Visegrad Group is also an important arena for harmonising ENP positions and developing initiatives with Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. Such an engagement could also play a part in the Czech Council presidency.

The *Nordic countries* can be regarded as advocates of both geographical coherence and pragmatic forms of cooperation with regional and multilateral components. Traditionally, they have emphasised conditionality and therefore are sympathetic towards the sensitivities of the new member states, which stem from both historical experiences with Russia and the USSR and the authoritarian-imperialist tendencies of recent times. The position of the German government is closest to the governments of the Nordic countries, especially *Finland* (reliable but passive), as well as the *Netherlands, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania*. Finland's ideas on strengthening ENP are similar to German demands for better incentives and stronger differentiation. Finland's main interest in the neighbourhood is Russia, so that traditionally it has given priority to the development of the Nordic dimension of CFSP and partnership with Russia over engagement in ENP. Like Berlin, Helsinki is committed to a geographically balanced East–South alignment of ENP. Hungary has, for example, supported Germany's attempt to establish a 'new *Ostpolitik*', as well as the setting up of a neighbourhood investment facility under the German Council presidency.

Altogether from the German perspective this suggests a new version of the difficult constellation of interests within the EU that prevailed in relation to Eastern enlargement. But the German government's position with regard to ENP is more ambivalent than with regard to Eastern enlargement. ENP, as the following account will show, has encountered numerous reservations in EU capitals, which have significantly reduced its political feasibility and credibility.

3. ENP – the record so far

In 2007 ENP found its feet and made some progress in terms of consolidation and focus. The following consolidated positions concerning ENP are currently to the fore:

- the goals of ENP: stability, security and prosperity in the Eastern and Southern neighbourhood;
- the principle of country-specific and performance-related differentiation to counterbalance the disputed precept of East–South geographical coherence;
- the ENP toolbox (action plans, ENPI, governance facility, neighbourhood investment facility, TAIEX, twinning, opening of EU agencies and programmes, agreements under international law), which will be supplemented in 2008 by improved monitoring procedures.¹⁴

The at first very broad and diffuse ENP offer – 'sharing everything but institutions'¹⁵ – has become more strongly focussed on the following:

- At the centre stands the creation of extensive bilateral (and later on possibly intraregionally integrated) free trade zones that are planned as mandatory in new, more extensive agreements between the EU and the neighbourhood countries. They should initiate regulatory convergence through the neighbours' adoption of the relevant parts of the *Acquis*. Adoption of the *Acquis* can count as practical preparation for accession in respect of intensive utilisation of and orientation towards the core components of the Single Market.
- Other important areas of cooperation from the EU standpoint are energy policy and energy security, internal security (particularly the fight against organised crime), as well as foreign and security policy cooperation, in respect of which above all Poland and other new member states (Romania, Slovakia) are urging a stronger EU involvement in dealing with frozen conflicts.¹⁶

Another important issue for the EU is mobility, including migration and visa policy, and the im-

14 See European Commission, 'A strong European Neighbourhood Policy' (2007): 'The annual Progress Reports on ENP partner countries will be further refined in 2008 as a basis for an objective assessment of performance of the partner countries, which will increase the transparency of decisions on Governance Facility allocations.'

15 Romano Prodi, 'A wider Europe – a Proximity Policy as the key to stability', SPEECH/02/619, Brussels, 6 December 2002.

16 See FES ENP country reports Poland and Romania, Bonn (2007), unpublished manuscripts; also Lippert, 'EU-Nachbarschaftspolitik in der Diskussion' (2007), pp. 11 ff – see note 3 above.

provement of civil society exchange, which should involve above all young people, students, businessmen and NGO representatives. Certainly, the EU is still a long way from a coherent approach that can bring its foreign policy goals – promoting direct exchange for the purpose of understanding, education and economic and business activities – into harmony with its other goals – maintenance of internal security and the targeted recruitment of workers in accordance with specific needs.

- The EU's bilateral relations with its neighbours are a priority, but they are supplemented by a regional component. The EU's best-case scenario is basically regional cooperation with variable geometry in respect of which, primarily represented by the Commission, it would play an observational and possibly also a participatory role. The Baltic Sea Cooperation is widely considered as a model for regional cooperation in the member states. In connection with ENP the Black Sea region has developed into a new regional focus; however, France, for example, has treated this with some scepticism on account of US influence in the region.

ENP's conceptual and structural deficits remain, however. Its notorious weaknesses – oscillation between foreign and security policy, development and enlargement policy, as well as its geographical arbitrariness, opaque incentive structure and strategic ambivalence – are kept alive by the heterogeneous preferences and interests of EU actors.

The structure of ENP as a uniform, integrating and coherent political framework is perceived both internally and externally as unbalanced and perhaps liable to break down in due course, although the danger could also be brought under control and reduced by incremental efforts. Explicit criticisms have been expressed in the FES country reports from Poland and Hungary. For example, the combination of the Eastern and Southern dimensions under the single roof of ENP is pointed out as a clear design fault; in future, separate policy approaches will be necessary for the two regions (due to their different legal status)¹⁷ on the part of the EU. French experts¹⁸ also consider the uniform approach of ENP as inappropriate, even if the underlying logic – namely to bring the member states' disparate preferences under one roof – is understandable (see Table 4).

17 According to Article 49 EU Treaty all European countries that adhere to the principles of the EU can apply for EU membership. Morocco's application for EC membership, however, was rejected on geographical grounds in 1987.

18 See FES ENP Country Report France, Bonn (2007), unpublished manuscript.

Alongside the imperative of geographical coherence (that is, East and South under one ENP roof), another constant restriction on ENP is strategic ambivalence (with disagreement concerning accession prospects) or open finality. The main critics include governments of the new member states such as Poland, but also France, which considers itself as guardian of the interests of the 'old' Southern neighbours, which without French intervention would supposedly have been neglected. Polish critics emphasise the difference between 'neighbours in Europe' and 'neighbours of Europe'. It is questionable, however, how important these two restrictions are in practice. This applies, for example, in relation to the policy on conditionality, which is predominantly classified as weak in the member states in the study. There is a widespread belief that the EU's conditionality policy is only strong – and only can be – where the Community has an established and operationalisable *Acquis*. Analyses of enlargement policy have already reached similar conclusions. It would therefore be advisable to distinguish between *Acquis*- and policy- or else value-oriented political conditionality, the latter being comparatively weaker.¹⁹ To that extent it is not surprising that the promotion of democracy is rarely mentioned as a thematic emphasis in respect of ENP. By and large, the dominant impression in the member states is that ENP benefits above all those that are already making progress, but that it is not powerful enough to break through obstacles put up by those unwilling to reform and to overcome resistance.

Furthermore, there is widespread agreement in the member states that ENP must offer better incentives if it is to be successful. For example, there have been calls to put greater emphasis on fighting corruption and poverty in the action plans (see Table 5). It is true that action plans are largely held to be 'appropriate', but it should be noted that only a few experts in government ministries have precise knowledge and concrete information concerning their implementation. The most frequent proposals on improvements refer to economic incentives (access to the Single Market, granting of asymmetrical trade facilitation), as well as to the facilitation of civil society contacts. In France, however, the predominant view is that conditionality mechanisms within the framework of ENP in principle cannot or can barely achieve their ends since accession prospects are lacking as ultimate incentive. Countries that do not rule out accession prospects in prin-

19 Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier, 'Governance by conditionality: EU rule transfer to the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe', in *Journal of European Public Policy*, 4/04, pp. 661–679.

Table 4: EU member states' evaluation of ENP – FES interview results

Country	ENP successful so far?	Stronger geographical differentiation favoured?	Geographical interest	Support for democracy/political Institutions	Content of action plans	Political conditionality	Financing
<i>Czech Republic</i>	rather yes	differentiation appropriate	East	–	–	stronger political conditionality required	more money needed
<i>Finland</i>	generally yes; depends strongly on partner country	yes; both the Eastern and the Southern dimensions are significant	East; especially Russia	country-specific approach necessary; successful in relation to Ukraine	appropriate	better incentives (financial, economic, civil society)	under evaluation
<i>France</i>	not really	yes; critical assessment of the Eastern dimension	South	absolutely correct; but realistically of only limited influence	–	not effective; prospect of accession the only effective incentive	–
<i>Germany</i>	differentiated; depends strongly on partner country	differentiation appropriate; different preferences among members accepted	East	country-specific approach necessary; successful in relation to Ukraine and Morocco	appropriate	better incentives needed (financial, economic, civil society)	adequate provision; under evaluation
<i>Hungary</i>	rather no	strict distinction between East and South recommended	East	not appropriate	appropriate	better incentives needed (economic, accession)	stronger differentiation between individual countries called for
<i>Lithuania</i>	government: Yes opposition: no	yes	East	appropriate	appropriate	better incentives needed (accession)	more for the Eastern dimension
<i>Poland</i>	partly yes;	introduce a difference between 'European neighbours' and 'neighbours of Europe'	exclusively East	limited effectiveness	non-EU experts: too vague EU experts: appropriate	better incentives needed (financial, economic, civil society, accession); monitoring should be improved	more money needed; unequal distribution between East and South criticised
<i>Romania</i>	no	yes; both the Eastern and the Southern dimensions are significant	East	better if the Council of Europe took it over	clearer standards and stronger differentiation required	better incentives needed (financial); possibility of negative conditionality called for	more money needed;
<i>Slovakia</i>	yes	yes; critical assessment of the Eastern dimension	East	appropriate	appropriate	better incentives needed (financial, economic, civil society) monitoring should be improved	unequal distribution between East and South criticised
<i>Spain</i>	too early to make a judgment	yes; both the Eastern and the Southern dimensions are significant	South	limited effectiveness due to lack of political will	appropriate	better incentives needed (economic, institutional integration)	more money needed
<i>UK</i>	yes (as first) step to accession	yes	East and South	–	too vague	better incentives needed	–

Source: FES ENP Country Reports, Bonn (2007), unpublished manuscript.

Table 5: EU member states' priorities for the development of ENP

Country	Priorities for development
<i>Czech Republic</i>	Focus on energy, migration and economic cooperation Democratisation of Belarus
<i>Finland</i>	Better incentives (above all trade liberalisation) More differentiation between individual countries Fighting corruption Strengthening of civil society contacts
<i>France</i>	Energy supply Migration control Fight against crime
<i>Germany</i>	Free trade with ENP countries; first of all, asymmetric market opening in certain sectors Visa exemptions Stronger cooperation on energy issues, migration control, fight against organised crime Strengthening of cross-sectoral topics such as good governance, rule of law, justice, internal security, transport, environment Strengthen political dialogue through involvement of civil society Deeper agreement with Ukraine as a model
<i>Hungary</i>	Migration control Fight against organised crime (human trafficking and drug smuggling)
<i>Lithuania</i>	More flexibility and differentiation (in action plans prospects of association/accession) Visa exemptions Free trade and trade facilitation
<i>Poland</i>	Establishment of deep, extensive free trade zones Cooperation in the energy sector Establishment of a community of values Strengthening of civil society contacts (visa exemption)
<i>Romania</i>	–
<i>Slovakia</i>	Improved market access Migration control Energy security External security Political dialogue Stronger differentiation Free trade agreement and other strong incentives for particularly 'willing' countries, such as Ukraine
<i>Spain</i>	–
<i>UK</i>	Multilateral free trade zone (model: EFTA) Strengthening of civil society contacts Fight against terrorism Energy security

Source: FES ENP Country Report, Bonn (2007), unpublished manuscript.

principle, at least for Eastern countries, correspondingly regard accession prospects as the best possible potential incentive as regards ENP. This is particularly the case for countries such as Poland, but also for Spain.

The Council formula that ENP shall in no way prejudice the future development of relations between the EU and the neighbourhood countries²⁰ means that the EU is not closing the door to membership for the Eastern European countries. Generally speaking, in the EU those countries are gaining ground that favour accession prospects for Eastern European countries or at least do not rule them out in the medium term. An ideal model of future development envisages the stabilisation of the South and the integration of the East.²¹ Although most governments favour a country-specific approach, national preferences vary a lot. Here lurks the danger of lazy package solutions. Effective opinion- and decision-making, however, requires that Commission evaluation reports are of high quality and have political credibility.

The regional components of ENP are generally welcomed, even if support for individual regions varies. Black Sea cooperation is supported above all by bordering country Romania,²² but also by Germany, which intervened strongly for Black Sea Synergy.²³ Furthermore, regional cooperation in the Baltic has encountered interest from old and new member states, including Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Sweden, Finland and, with some reservations, Poland. Indeed, as far as a pragmatic *bottom-up* and *low politics*-based approach is concerned the Northern dimension provides some positive lessons for regional cooperation. It is true that there are also a number of peculiarities to be taken into account. Among other things one might mention: the relatively balanced political power constellation; the parallelism of EU and NATO enlargement in relation to the three Baltic countries and Poland; the economic strength and attractiveness of the Baltic region for investors; the high level of consolida-

tion of democracy and the rule of law of the bordering countries; the low conflict intensity (referring to the soft security risks and, for example, border issues); as well as the financial and economic incentives for cooperation with Russia, however limited.

Although the stabilisation and association process for South-Eastern Europe and EU policy in relation to the countries of the Western Balkans do not come under ENP, linking up with this region is gaining more attention in view of the precarious security situation and border and minority conflicts, for example, from Hungary and Romania, but also Italy. Apart from France, the Mediterranean Union finds favour only in Spain (and Italy) for the time being, while otherwise attitudes range from neutral (Czech Republic) to disapproving (Germany).²⁴

Regional cooperation in the Eastern neighbourhood could develop more dynamically in future, to which end the EU appears to be indispensable as external 'mover and shaker'. A basic sympathy for regional cooperation and multilateral enhancement of ENP in Eastern Europe is widespread among the member states. How this develops and settles down in concrete terms and as regards the status-quo oriented 'counter forces' in the Southern member states will be subject to political negotiations and deal making in the EU.

Other weaknesses of ENP include its low visibility and bad image in the partner countries, but also in EU member states. For example, people complain about 'marketing mistakes' and note that in the partner countries ENP has negative connotations and associations. From the standpoint of many member states ENP's record so far is at best mixed; in this respect the partner countries' receptiveness to what the EU is offering by way of Europeanisation is decisive (cf. Table 4). In many member states Ukraine, which has made significant progress as regards implementation of the action plan and with which a 'deeper agreement' is currently being negotiated, is considered an example of ENP's great potential.²⁵

The new member states have criticised the distribution of ENP financial resources as being to the detri-

20 See European Council, Chairman's Progress Report (2007), p. 2; see note 1 above.

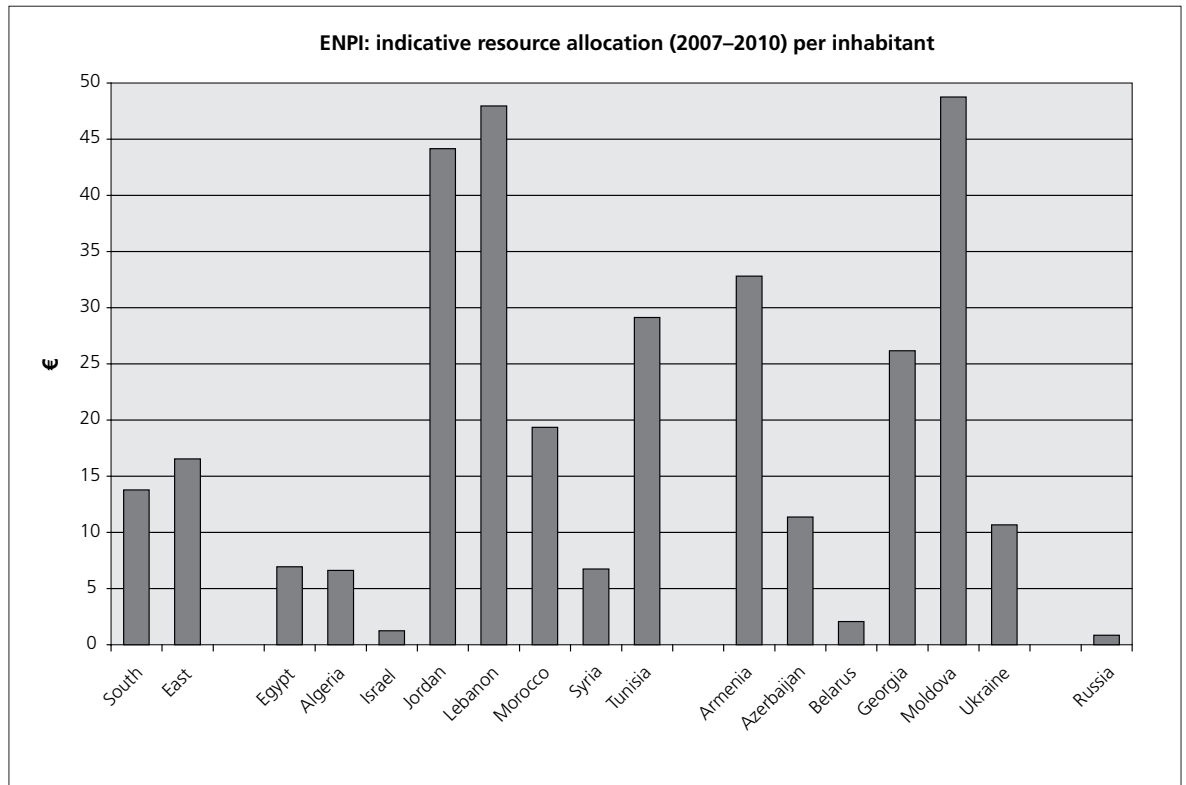
21 See FES ENP Country Report Czech Republic, Bonn (2007), unpublished manuscript.

22 See intervention by Mr László Borbely, Minister of Development, Public Works and Housing, Romania, speech to the conference 'Working together – strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy', Brussels, 3 September 2007: 'Romania welcomes and strongly supports enhanced energy dialogue between the EU and the countries in the Black Sea-Caspian region. We believe the Black Sea region can play an important role as a transit route towards the European markets and is, therefore, strategically important.'

23 See State Minister for Europe Günter Gloser at the ENP conference 'Working together – strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy', Brussels, 3 September 2007.

24 See FES ENP country reports Czech Republic and Germany, Bonn (2007), unpublished manuscripts; see also, among other things, 'Angela Merkel clearly against Mediterranean Union but Nicolas Sarkozy seeking to reassure her', in *Agence Europe*, 8 (December 2007); 'Paris verprellt Berlin mit Mittelmeer-Union', in *Handelsblatt* (6 February 2008).

25 See, among other things, FES ENP country reports Czech Republic and Finland, Bonn (2007), unpublished manuscripts; see also Frank-Walter Steinmeier, 'Verflechtung und Integration. Eine neue Phase der Ostpolitik der EU: Nicht Abgrenzung, sondern Vernetzung lautet das Gebot der Globalisierung', in *Internationale Politik*, 3/07, pp. 6–11.

Table 6: Regional distribution of ENPI resources per capita

Source: European Commission and own calculations; South = Southern ENP countries + regional programme for the Europe-Mediterranean Partnership; East = Eastern ENP countries (without Russia) + programme for the Eastern Region.

ment of the Eastern ENP countries. Things look different if one looks at per capita expenditure, however (see Table 6). If one includes the respective regional programmes, during the period 2007–2010 the Eastern ENP countries (without Russia) will receive €16.55 per inhabitant, while the Southern ENP countries will receive only €13.79. Increasing the available resources, however, is not a priority for EU member states.²⁶

On the whole it is to be noted that the member states' ENP profiles are currently much less distinct than their geographical preferences.

A fundamental problem for the EU remains the partly weak and largely very inconsistent political support from governments, even if the political rhetoric often sounds much more positive. The Commission takes a similar view: 'In this connection what will be decisive is that the member states encourage the Commission in its efforts'.²⁷ In order to provide the partner countries with solid offers and effective incentives the EU countries would have to meet their com-

mitments reliably and energetically, and enrich them substantially also in individual sectors in terms of dynamic cooperation and integration. The Commission tends to encounter the familiar reflexes of protectionism, internal conflicts over distribution and individual actors' desire to make their mark. Apart from that, over the longer term the ENP countries will have to contend with transformation problems, which the EU will counter above all by means of socialisation and development strategies. That requires a long-term policy.

It cannot be ruled out that ENP will falter and be driven primarily by acute challenges arising from the neighbourhood. In that case the EU would remain a reactive player with limited success as regards external governance in the Eastern and Southern neighbourhood countries.

4. Medium-term challenges (2009–2014)

In formal terms the future of ENP is marked out by the cyclical use of the instruments mentioned above and their monitoring, as well as the regular comprehensive evaluation of each partner country's political and eco-

²⁶ See, for example, FES ENP country reports Finland, Germany and Poland, Bonn (2007), unpublished manuscripts.

²⁷ European Commission, 'A strong European Neighbourhood Policy' (2007), p. 5 – see note 1 above.

conomic position. In future the implementation and control of ENP, as well as the adaptation of instruments will be to the fore: pragmatism will prevail over higher notions. That also means that in the course of implementing ENP the field of neighbourhood countries that, at varying speeds, have set their sights on the EU will be reorganised. The EU will reward those that take the lead, but will also have to develop a workable and transparent position in relation to the countries that are either willing but unable to reform, or unwilling to reform but of strategic interest to the EU. In the interest of political credibility what matters here is that the EU avoids stock responses and double standards.

Apart from that it cannot be ruled out that Ukraine and Moldova will make accession applications by 2014. In that case the EU has basically two options: it can let things take their course, or, as in the case of the Western Balkans, try to manage the content and timing of the process by means of conditioned convergence stages. In this way ENP would be merged with pre-accession strategy or enlargement policy. In addition, Georgia and Ukraine in particular are seeking NATO membership, in respect of which there is no common EU position. The topic of ENP, NATO and 'double enlargement' increasingly belongs on the transatlantic agenda and in EU–US relations.

The most explosive issue inside the EU, however, is EU policy on Russia. The Brussels–Moscow rivalry scenario stands over against that of overlapping areas of cooperation. The predominant starting point of the Central and Eastern European EU member states (to a lesser extent Hungary and Slovakia) in relation to the post-Soviet sphere is Russia's claim to hegemony. From this standpoint the Kremlin seeks to sabotage in particular key-state Ukraine's migration into the 'EU camp'. These EU countries consider Russia a negative and destabilising factor in the region.²⁸ They criticise the lack of coherence of EU policy on Russia, from which they expect above all a stronger defence of their interests and principles, as well as gestures of solidarity with those EU countries that are coming under pressure from Russia, for example concerning energy supply. The plausible scenario derived from this is that of rivalry between Moscow and Brussels arising from the Russian risk factor, and which may in particular manifest itself in the ENP area. In contrast, the German and Finnish governments, for example, are seeking to further explore the possibilities of a strate-

gic partnership. They are not blind to the scenario of geostrategic rivalry, but they do not make it an axiom of EU policy on Russia. Accordingly, they reject a containment policy at present and instead of regressive relations seek cooperation and interweaving of interests wherever possible. This is confirmed by German Foreign Minister Steinmeier: 'Cooperation and partnership are also the constants of our policy on Russia. Economic ties are considerable, which stabilises relations overall. I favour a strategic partnership in order to anchor Russia to Europe as securely as possible. That does not exclude occasional differences of opinion and disagreement.'²⁹ In terms of its proactive and 'courting' approach this clearly goes beyond the 'harmonious coexistence' with Russia favoured by Polish Prime Minister Tusk.³⁰ What needs to be assessed is how limiting is Russia's lack of interest in democratisation and in establishing a community of values with the neighbouring countries. The most important lines of conflict are often considered to be Russia's role in frozen conflicts in Europe, various value concepts and energy issues. There is unanimity in the EU, however, on the assessment that ENP also suffers from the fact that there is no common EU policy on Russia. Poland, in contrast, whose relations with Russia in the last few years have been particularly strained, considers that recently, especially during the German Council presidency, some progress has been made towards a common EU policy on Russia.³¹ The question of the final fixing of the EU's borders, which some time soon will be revived in the sphere of the Reflection Group Horizon 2020–2030, will not be very productive, mirroring the open finality of ENP. But the debate maintains its perpetual function as mirror of the search for a political identity in the EU.

5. ENP 2020

Many interviewees question whether ENP will remain in being as an overarching uniform framework until 2020. Experts in France, Romania, Poland and the Czech Republic, for example, think it more likely that it is an interim solution. Generally, different (reform) speeds and self-differentiation in the Southern and Eastern neighbourhood are predicted. At best, this amounts to 'stability in the South and integration in

28 See, for example, FES ENP country reports Hungary, Czech Republic and Lithuania, Bonn (2007), unpublished manuscripts; see also remarks made by President Valdas Adamkus at the discussion 'Russia and its Neighbours', World Economic Forum, Davos, 26 January 2008.

29 Frank-Walter Steinmeier, speech of the German foreign minister at the opening of the ambassadors' conference at the Federal Foreign Office, 3 September 2007.

30 Donald Tusk, 'Unser Nachbar Russland', in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 18 February 2008.

31 See FES ENP Country Report Poland, Bonn (2007), unpublished manuscript.

the East'.³² From the German standpoint the question of Turkey's membership or close association will probably be clarified by 2020 within the framework of a special relationship. The problem of Turkey at present casts a shadow upon the question of the continuation of enlargement policy in relation to Eastern Europe.

Accordingly the granting of privileges to neighbours in relation to the EU must also take place gradually. These range from cooperation through association, EEA, EEA plus and 'membership minus' to accession. The only unambiguous thing about these options is the dominance of bilateralism, but they have not yet gathered political momentum. As regards alternatives and interim solutions concerning the admission of new members the continuation or faltering of accession negotiations with Turkey could set things in motion, and not least fuel the open debate on Ukraine. Given the well-known reservations (in some quarters) of the German government and the German population concerning Turkish EU membership, however, the German government will not be able to take the lead among those who seek more innovative models for links with neighbourhood countries, such as an EEA-like relationship or new forms of association³³ also envisaged by, for example, France,³⁴ Spain and the UK. These options, however, which also arise in connection with the Mediterranean Union, will in future play a role in the organisation of ENP.

6. Outlook and recommendations

We present for discussion the following recommendations concerning European and German policy, based on the results and analysis of the project:

1. If ENP is to be established as an alternative or a transitional and backup strategy for enlargement steadfast political engagement is required. ENP is being used by political forces in the EU as a laboratory for developing and testing a new architecture of relations between the EU and neighbouring countries, short of membership. In this regard German policy

32 See FES ENP Country Report Czech Republic, Bonn (2007), unpublished manuscript.

33 See Lippert, 'Teilhabe statt Mitgliedschaft?' (2007) – see note 7 above.

34 See Nicolas Sarkozy, quoted in 'France will not oppose EU talks with Turkey: Sarkozy', in *EUbusiness* (27 August 2007), available at: <http://www.eubusiness.com/Turkey/1188210721.96/> (last accessed: 11 February 2008): 'I'm not going to be a hypocrite. Everyone knows that I am only in favor of an association ... I think that the idea of an association will one day be recognised by everyone as being the most reasonable.'

should not impose any taboos, even if the debate in Germany cannot easily be separated from the controversy over Turkey's accession.

2. ENP's (multilateral) institutional dimension has been neglected. Proposals from think tanks and the European Parliament, which emphasise both symbolically and practically the political dimension of Eastern ENP through multilateral dialogue and consultation formats (see pan-European task confederation³⁵) at parliamentary (assembly³⁶) and ministerial level, should be explored more seriously. These arrangements and initiatives, however, would probably be rejected by the Central and Eastern European member states if they were given institutional form. This would in principle also include EEA Plus, which the European Parliament has called for. Different from the EEA agreed between the multilateral EFTA and the EU, EEA Plus is obviously conceived as a developmental stage in bilateral relations between partner countries and the EU.³⁷

3. In the revision of the European Security Strategy under the French presidency ENP as 'a central priority of EU foreign policy' is to be given greater weight, and references to operationalisation and, possibly, the time horizon are to be incorporated in it. In this connection the EU should do more to settle frozen conflicts in the Eastern neighbourhood.

4. Implications of the Lisbon Treaty that arise for ENP from institutional reorganisation in relation to EU external action should be examined and practical options developed. The new leadership quartet, in particular the 'EU foreign minister' (an amalgamation of 'Solana' and 'Ferrero-Waldner'), should develop capacities to improve institutional synergies (one-stop ENP), minimise frictional losses and endow ENP with greater political presence and coherence. Otherwise, close coordination with the ENP Commission member will have to be made to work. For that reason reorganisation of the administrative substructure (for example, special head office for ENP, combination of DG Enlargement with the ENP departments of DG RELEX, the European External Action Service, the administrative substructure of the President of the European Council) is of the utmost importance to all

35 Barbara Lippert, 'Assoziierung plus gesamteuropäische Aufgabenkonföderation: Plädoyer für eine selbstbewusste Nachbarschaftspolitik der EU', in *integration* 2/06, pp. 149–157.

36 European Parliament, Resolution of 15 November 2007 on strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy, P6_TA(2007)0538, points 42 and 43.

37 *Ibid.*, point 31.

those involved in EU external action. If differentiation of South and East, as well as by country is to be pursued to the greatest possible extent and in the right way, it should be considered that administrative categorisation under the heading ENP (at the Commission and the Council) may give rise to undesired restrictions.

5. In the implementation of action plans the EU should above all emphasise the cross-cutting tasks of good governance and the rule of law, as well as the establishment of an extensive and deeper free trade zone, and press for discernible progress in both areas on the basis of agreed indicators. The negotiations with Ukraine have a pilot function and could serve as a positive example of privileged relations between the EU and neighbourhood countries.

6. The German government and the Bundestag, as well as EU national parliaments in general, should take a more intensive approach to monitoring and the Commission's progress reports on the neighbourhood countries. They should advocate higher quality standards in evaluation and regularly give neighbourhood issues a public airing. All the more so given that sensitive sectoral interests can come into question that popularise ENP (still prior-ranking), even as a topic for the foreign policy elite (visa exemptions, energy security). Proposals concerning the strengthening of positive conditionality policy – for example, the provisions and allocation criteria for the governance facility – should also be further developed in this connection in close dialogue with the Commission and state and non-state actors in the ENP countries.

7. Civil society in the partner countries should be introduced into evaluation processes more systematically, but more as target groups and cooperation partners in ENP. Dialogue forums and specific projects to strengthen societal structures and the involvement of individuals should be invoked, for example by political foundations, political parties and other NGOs, and given sustained support in the spirit of joint ownership.

8. For the German government the French and Polish governments remain difficult, but indispensable partners in the EU if further progress is to be made with ENP. The Weimar Triangle is an additional forum for dealing with ENP topics and for guiding the desire of both governments to make their mark in a positive direction. Furthermore, the consolidation of ENP's Eastern dimension should not be at the expense of engagement with the Mediterranean region. Disa-

greement concerning the geographical decoupling of Eastern and Southern ENP is of lesser importance. Country-specific differentiation will take place in practical terms in the sense of a multi-speed ENP. The EU must take these different reform results into account by means of its conditionality policy and acknowledge them.

The Mediterranean Union originally proposed by President Sarkozy won no support as France's competing organisation in respect of the Barcelona Process and ENP, especially because it diverted political energy and credibility from ENP. In addition, the term 'Mediterranean Union' suggested that the EU as a whole or in part wished to form a permanent association with the Mediterranean countries ('parallel EU'). The initiative now known as the 'Union for the Mediterranean' also raises critical questions: its added value in relation to the Barcelona Process and ENP, its inclusivity as regards the Southern neighbours, including Turkey, the participation of EU organs and institutions, as well as of EU member states, the financing of the 'Union for the Mediterranean', its orientation, institutional offers, attitude to the conditionality principle and so the ratio between giving and taking within the framework of the new relations.

9. Germany favours keeping open the finality issue in ENP. As far as the necessities of consolidation inside the EU are concerned and the neighbours' still unsatisfactory level of Europeanisation, it would be premature for the EU to offer to shift from ENP to a pre-accession and so an enlargement policy. As long as the ENP strategy – 'Europeanisation without membership' – does not operate manifestly as a brake upon reform and modernisation the EU should refrain from hasty political promises. When and if the EU decides to move towards enlargement depends on many factors: the quality of reforms and modernisation in the Eastern European countries in question, clarity concerning Turkish accession, evaluation of the Russian factor in the 'common neighbourhood', the state of NATO enlargement, the credible implementation of the three 'Cs' (consolidation, conditionality and communication)³⁸ within the EU, as well as – as a

³⁸ See Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, 'Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2006–2007, including annexed special report on the EU's capacity to integrate new members', COM(2006)649 final, 8 November 2006. 'Consolidation' means meeting existing obligations regarding the countries in the process of accession while showing caution as far as the adoption of new 'accession promises' and accession prospects by the EU is concerned. 'Conditionality' denotes the application of strict conditions as regards candidate countries: that is, whether the next step is taken in the accession process de-

signal within the EU – as experience has shown, German–French agreement on establishing this course.

10. The expected coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 January 2009 represents a clear cut for the institutional architecture of EU external action. The EU should also use this new situation to refine its foreign policy priorities. The new 'Neighbourhood article' (Art. 8 EU Treaty) in the EU Treaty can serve as a link to mobilise more practical support and loyalty towards ENP among the member states and to improve its political visibility. In the spirit of this article the EU must ensure that no 'ENP fatigue' arises and instead vigorously develop 'special relations with the countries in its neighbourhood' and 'a zone of prosperity and a friendly neighbourhood'.

pend on the progress made by individual countries in meeting requirements. 'Communication' refers to improved explanation of the benefits of EU enlargement to the citizens.



Imprint

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
International Policy Analysis
Division for International Dialogue
D-10785 Berlin

www.fes.de/ipa
E-Mail: info.ipa@fes.de

ISBN 978-3-89892-925-7

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All texts are available online:

www.fes.de/ipa

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