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THESSALONIKI INTERNATIONAL STUDENT  
MODEL UNITED NATIONS

### **European Parliament: Committee on Foreign Affairs**

*The European Neighbourhood Policy: How to strengthen the relations  
with the neighbouring countries*



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“[...] We stand firm on the principle that this is not about forcing any country in a particular direction. It is about responding to the decisions you make towards realising our common vision of a zone of stability and prosperity. [...]”

*José Manuel Durão Barroso*  
*President of the European Commission*  
(European Neighbourhood Policy Conference  
Brussels, 3 September 2007)



## Introduction

The European Neighbourhood Policy represents a new approach in the EU's relations with its neighbours. It sets out to create enhanced relationships with our neighbours, based on shared values. Working through the structures of the existing Association Agreements, the ENP builds on the potential of the existing relationship and breaks new ground. As a result, it allows each country to develop closer links with the EU, based on its particular needs and capacities. Along with the traditional cooperation-based approaches (e.g. the *Partnership and Cooperation Agreements* with the eastern neighbours, the *Association Agreements* with the southern neighbours etc.), it also:

- Brings together the main policy instruments in a more focused way, in order to enhance the partnership
- Covers a wider range of issues with greater intensity and throughout all fields of governance
- Allows the EU to offer a measure of economic integration and closer political cooperation
- Includes improved financial and technical assistance
- Encourages reforms in partner countries, using efficient methodology that has also been applied in transition countries of the central and southeastern Europe.

The ENP is based on the concept of 'shared values', i.e. the values and interests that ensure our prosperity, stability and security. For example, among those belong the democratic reforms (e.g. fundamental rights, rule of law), the market economy, sustainable development (including reforms in sectors such as trade, competition, energy and transport, environment, people-to-people contacts) etc. Promoting those values will allow the EU and ENP partners to face issues such as migration, crime, extremism, terrorism etc.



## Objectives

The main objectives of the European Neighbourhood Policy are:

- ✓ The promotion of reform, the rule of law, stable democracies, prosperity, security and stability throughout the neighbourhood of the enlarged European Union
- ✓ The promotion of prosperity in the European neighbourhood by supporting the EU neighbours' economic reform processes and offering significant economic integration
- ✓ The advance of freedom and democracy in the European neighbourhood by deepening political cooperation, on the basis of shared values and common interests
- ✓ The promotion of security and stability by working with neighbours to address development, environment, non-proliferation and counter-terrorism issues – in line with the *European Security Strategy*

## Historical Background

The ENP was firstly introduced in a Commission Communication on Wider Europe, in March 2003, and was further discussed in the *Strategy Paper on European Neighbourhood Policy* published in May 2004. In December 2006, further *Proposals* were made by the Commission, as to how the ENP could further be strengthened. In June 2007, the *Conclusions on the ENP* were adopted by the European Union Foreign Ministers.

## Members of the ENP

The European Union's immediate neighbours by land or sea, i.e. Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine.

EU-Russia neighbourhood relations are developed via a Strategic Partnership covering four 'common spaces'.

Candidate countries: Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia



Potential candidate countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia including Kosovo

*Notes:*

- Belarus and the EU will be able to develop contractual relations when Belarus has established a democratic form of government, following free and fair elections.
- Libya would need to first become part of the Barcelona Process before we can consider having an Association Agreement and eventually an ENP Action Plan.
- Syria has to ratify the Association Agreement before an ENP Action Plan can be considered.

### **Structure of the ENP**

In order for an ENP Action Plan to be implemented, the existence of an agreement between the EU and the partner in question is required; That is, a *Partnership and Cooperation Agreement*, or an *Association Agreement* in the case of the EuroMediterranean Partnership (Barcelona Process).

The ENP is then built upon the bilateral *ENP Action Plans* agreed between the EU and each partner. These Action Plans contain an agenda of political and economic reforms with short and medium-term priorities. The implementation of the Action Plans is monitored through sub-committees.

- ➔ The ENP is not yet activated for Belarus, Libya and Syria, since no agreements are in force yet.
- ➔ Algeria, having only recently ratified its Association Agreement with the EU, has not negotiated an Action Plan yet.



## **Incentives for ENP partnership candidacy:**

- New forms of technical assistance ‘borrowed’ from the European proven methodology
- Concrete benefits such as gradual participation in EU Agencies and programmes in fields such as education, training and youth, research, environment, culture, audio-visual policy etc.
- A new, specific and policy-driven financial instrument – the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument - with increased funding and more efficient and streamlined procedures to better support partner countries’ reform priorities
- A new emphasis on improved cross-border cooperation along the EU’s land and maritime borders.

In other words, a possible ENP partnership will result in strengthened relations with the EU, which will lead to the implementation of political, economic and social reform agendas, the contribution to sustainable growth and development, the anchor of macroeconomic stability, the reduction of trade barriers, the stimulation of investment, the creation of growth and employment.

## **Stages of the European Neighbourhood Policy:**

1. The Commission prepares *Country Reports*, showing the political, economic, institutional and sectoral situation, to assess the best possible time and way to deepen relations with the country in question. Country Reports are submitted to the Council, which then decides whether to move to the next stage, or not.
2. The development of *ENP Action Plans*. These are negotiated with and tailor-made for each country, taking into consideration its capacities, needs and interests, as well as the European ones. An agenda of political and economic reforms is jointly defined, based on



short and medium-term priorities (3-5 years). Once agreed with the partner countries, they also provide useful guidance for EU and other donors and actors seeking to support, financially or otherwise, the countries' reform agendas.

### **Themes of the ENP Action Plans:**

Political dialogue, reform, economic and social cooperation & development, trade-related issues, market & regulatory reform, cooperation in justice & home affairs, various sectors (e.g. transport, energy, environment, information society, research & development etc.), humanitarian issues (e.g. civil society, education, public health, people-to-people contacts etc.)

3. The implementation of the commitments and objectives contained in the ENP Action Plans are regularly monitored through sub-committees with each country, dealing with the sectors and issues in question. The progress of the implementation is reviewed via periodic Reports of Progress issued by the Commission (first report issued on December 4, 2006). These reports also include recommendations on further strengthening the process. Furthermore, the dynamic character of the process allows for the review of the EU incentives on offer, the adaptation of the Action Plans or further proposals – especially when monitoring demonstrates significant progress in attaining the mutually agreed objectives.
4. The implementation of the reforms set out on the ENP Action Plans are also supported through various EC-funded financial and technical assistance, as well as by instruments supporting reforms in Central, Eastern Europe and South-Eastern Europe.



## ENP Funding

Until December 31, 2006, European Commission assistance to the ENP partner countries was covered by the following programmes:

- TACIS: for the eastern neighbours and Russia (€3.1 billion + €500 million in the European Investment Bank lending for TACIS beneficiary countries, 2000-2006)
- MEDA: for southern Mediterranean neighbours (€5.3 billion + €2 billion in the European Investment Bank lending for MEDA beneficiary countries, 2000-2006)
- EIDHR: European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights.

From January 1, 2007, a new instrument, namely the *European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)*, takes on the funding of the ENP, with the European Commission funding being approximately €12 billion for the period 2007-2013 (i.e. an increase of ca. 32% in real terms). ENPI is a more flexible, policy-driven instrument, designed to target sustainable development and approximation to EU policies and targets, as set by the ENP Action Plans.

Moreover, the ENPI will also support cross-border contacts and co-operation between local & regional actors and the civil society. As a result, the *ENPI cross-border cooperation (CBC) programme* will cover activities across the EU's external borders in the East and the South. The CBC programme will receive a financial support of €1.18 billion for the period 2007-2013.

Then, technical assistance in the form of legislative approximation, regulatory convergence and institution-building will also be extended to the ENP partners. The mechanisms to allow for these will be similar to the ones adopted for the transition countries that are now EU Member States –e.g. targeted expert assistance (such as TAIEX), twinning arrangements with EU Member States' administrations, participation in Community programmes & agencies etc.

The EC assistance priorities are to be identified in General Country Strategy Papers – CSPs, covering a period of 7 years, more detailed National Indicative Programmes – NIPs, covering a period of 3 years, and detailed annual programmes.

The special funds allocated to individual country programmes will depend on their needs, their absorption capacity, as well as the implementation of the agreed reforms so far.



## Examples of ENP strengthening

- Substantially improved visa procedures for certain types of visitors
- A strengthened regional approach in the east based on existing Black Sea co-operation
- A Neighbourhood Investment Facility to leverage lending by the International Financial Institutions (the indicative budget for this Facility is €700 million for 2007-2013)
- A Governance Facility to give a top-up to those partners who have made most progress in implementing their Action Plan (the indicative budget for this Facility is €350 million for 2007-2013)
- Ad hoc or regular ministerial and expert level meetings with ENP partners on subjects like energy, transport, the environment and public health
- Strengthened political co-operation, more systematic association of ENP partners with EU initiatives (e.g. foreign policy declarations, positions in international fora as well as participation in key programmes and EU agencies)
- A more active role for the EU in conflict-settlement efforts in the region

## Issues to be discussed in the European Parliament:

- Form of further economic integration
- Development of civil society dimension
- Multilateral cooperation on issues such as energy, transport, environment, public health etc.
- Opening of Community Programmes & Agencies to ENP partner countries
- How to ensure equal reforms in all ENP partners, given the differentiations among them?
- ENP and the Middle East Peace Process
- Conflict among ENP partners
- ENP and the protection of natural resources
- Is there a possibility of further ENP partnerships (e.g. Turkey, Iran, Iraq etc.)?



## ANNEX: State of play of ENP Action Plans

ENP partner countries	Entry into force of contractual relations with EC	ENP Country Report	ENP Action Plan	Adoption by EU	Adoption by partner country
<b>Algeria</b>	AA – September 2005	--	--	--	--
<b>Armenia</b>	PCA – 1999	March 2005	Agreed autumn 2006	November 2006	November 2006
<b>Azerbaijan</b>	PCA – 1999	March 2005	Agreed autumn 2006	November 2006	November 2006
<b>Belarus</b>	--	--	--	--	--
<b>Egypt</b>	AA – Jun 2004	March 2005	Agreed Spring 2007	March 2007	March 2007
<b>Georgia</b>	PCA – 1999	March 2005	Agreed autumn 2006	November 2006	November 2006
<b>Israel</b>	AA - Jun 2000	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	February 2005	April 2005
<b>Jordan</b>	AA - May 2002	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	February 2005	February 2005
<b>Lebanon</b>	AA - April 2006	March 2005	Agreed autumn 2006	October 2006	January 2007
<b>Libya</b>	--	--	--	--	--
<b>Moldova</b>	PCA - Jul 1998	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	February 2005	February 2005
<b>Morocco</b>	AA - March 2000	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	February 2005	July 2005
<b>Palestinian Authority</b>	Interim AA - Jul 1997	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	February 2005	May 2005
<b>Syria</b>	--	--	--	--	--
<b>Tunisia</b>	AA – March 1998	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	February 2005	July 2005
<b>Ukraine</b>	PCA – March 1998	May 2004	Agreed end 2004	February 2005	February 2005

\* AA: Association Agreement

\*\* PCA: Partnership and Cooperation Agreement