

A historical-comparative examination of Euro-Mediterranean institutional relations and the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy

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Abstract:

Looking through the historical path of cooperation between the European Economic Community and the Southern Mediterranean states, one can easily identify a slow institutional progress from the simple bilateral agreements of the beginnings to the complex institutional network of now-days, including the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). After drawing up the historical origins and the institutional context of the present day Euro-Mediterranean cooperation forms, this study will focus mainly on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and show how the ENP evolved from its foundation 12 years ago up till its 2016 review process. After the critical assessment of the two founding documents of the ENP, the „Wider Europe” communication of 2003 and the European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper of 2004, the study turns to the most recent development in the area, the currently ongoing review process of the ENP, and analyzes this process through historical-comparative glasses. The final aim of the study is to find out what the historical institutional development can tell us about the successes and failures Euro-Mediterranean relations on the long term, and especially how the latest ENP review could affect this process.

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Key words: Euro-Mediterranean relations, European Neighbourhood Policy, Union for the Mediterranean, institutional evolution, policy review

INTRODUCTION: THE THEORIZATION OF THE ENP

The core ambition of the current study is to draw up the historical development path of Euro-Mediterranean (Euro-Med) relations in order to gain a deeper understanding of the current institutional setup and the ongoing review process of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

On the historical roots of Euro-Mediterranean relations there are many detailed and comprehensive works from several authors. The general historical context can be tracked excellently in the work of László Póti and Erzsébet N. Rózsa (1999), where historical ties between the two regions and the origins of the current institutions of cooperation are set out in a comprehensive and clear way. Building on this work, one of the most comprehensive descriptions of the contemporary institutional structure can be found in an article of Erzsébet N. Rózsa (2010) where the complex network of contemporary institutions of Euro-Mediterranean relations are synthesized and evaluated in a precise way. An excellent evaluation of the historical progress of institutions tied together with a special study on the economic relations can be found in Tamas Szigetvari's dissertation (2003) and the more recent works of the author as well.

Several European think-tanks turned to the analysis of the EU's forming "common foreign policy" recently and the interest in the European Neighbourhood Policy attracted an increasing number of scholars in the last few years. Out of the several books and articles in the field, one of the most significant collection of essays was edited by Richard G. Whitman and Stefan Wolff (2010) where the editors tried to

collect the most relevant authors to develop a comprehensive evaluation of the ENP. The editors set out several questions regarding the ENP, one of which (and maybe the most significant for this study) is why the ENP couldn't deliver the same kind of success for the EU as the enlargement did. The authors find different ways of giving answers: first they build a theoretical and methodological context for the academic approach towards the ENP, then they evaluate the institutional structure and the implementation. Some of the most relevant findings include (1) Ian Manner's "theorization" of the EU's normative power as a new kind of approach towards geopolitics with "attraction" and economic influence rather than hard (military) power. (2) Ben Tonra's thoughts on the EU's identity building process both internally (as the developing identification of Europeans as EU citizens) and externally (inter-playing with the ENP) as the identification of the people outside of the EU's borders as "neighbors". (3) Sven Biscop's evaluation of the European Security Strategy (ESS) and how the ENP's operative Action Plans underline this strategy by focusing on primarily security issues. (4) Carmen Gebhard's work on the theoretical assessment of the ENP's funding idea as some kind of "overstretching enlargement", which means that the policy patterns of the EU-enlargement live further in the form of the ENP only without the "golden carrot" of EU-membership prospects.

Another important collection of essays edited by Thierry Balzacq (2009) intends to assess governance and security issues in the neighborhood of Europe and evaluate the answers given by the EU to these challenges by the implementation of the ENP. Some of the most relevant findings include (1) Julian Jeandesboz's work on how the internal "power games" of EU institutions could affect negatively the coherence of the ENP, and why these institutional power competitions can undermine the effective implementation of any kind of common European foreign policy. (2) Amelia Hadfield's long and detailed

assessment of how institutional development led the EU to form the ENP and what are the main differences between the ENP and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) and how they could complement each other. We can see also a critical comparison of the ENP to the enlargement process concluding that the same set of tools will not work in a completely different cultural environment, especially without the “carrot” of prospective EU-membership. (3) Elena Baracani's criticism of the ENP stating that the EU uses political conditionality unevenly with different countries in the neighborhood therefore making the competition for EU financial assistance unfair. (4) Shara Wolff's examination of the ENP as “external governance” of the EU deeply intervening into the domestic issues of neighbour countries by giving them strict and detailed Action Plans to execute.

In her essay Rosemary Hollis (2009) evaluates the ENP from the perspective of the Arab neighbor countries, concluding that from their point of view the “transition” from the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to the ENP as the EU's main policy tool to “deal” with the MENA region has a negative message. Instead of focusing on the region's needs, with the ENP the EU started to “form” its neighborhood according to its own needs, forcing the Arab states into an unequal system.

Furthermore, Timo Behr (2012) argues that the EU has set out an ambitious new agenda to help the Arab transitions, but has done it in a euro-centric way. To avoid this, it will have to comply with seven norms: (1) *Primum non nocere*: The EU has to shirk excessive activism and ready-made solutions, by drawing on domestic impulses and emphasizing local ownership. (2) *Broad-based Engagement*: This will require the EU to engage “illiberal society” in its neighborhood that does not share all of its core values, such as gender equality. (3) *Articulating Interests*: The EU should be forthright in setting out its own interests and how these concretely relate to the normative goals it puts forward in its strategy. (4) *Democracy*

Partnerships: When countries reject closer integration, the EU should work closely with regional organizations to provide democracy aid and assistance. (5) Effective More-for-More: When countries accept closer integration, the EU should inverse the logic of its conditionality and become more demanding and outspoken. (6) Multilateral Partnership: The EU should explore proposals for a more limited, but broadly-based multilateral framework of regional engagement and scrap the Union for the Mediterranean. (7) Multipolar Mediterranean: The EU needs to streamline governance and development issues into its strategic partnerships with new and old regional actors.

Bruno Amoroso (1998) gives a detailed analysis of Euro-Mediterranean economic issues, and lines out the most important questions of today about the region's economic future: (1) Economic co-development in the Mediterranean Basin is highly desirable and needs the active support of (at least) the southern EU-members. (2) The agro-protectionism of the EU has to come to an end, and a mutually beneficial agro-trade system must be developed making benefits for both sides. This can be based on the different climate circumstances of the two regions which allows trade in different seasonal agro-products. (3) Environmental threats and issues (like overfishing) should be dealt with on an inter-regional level. (4) A Mediterranean consensus on commodity specialization should be developed making the cooperation and coordination of these industries inter-regional. (5) Market monitoring systems should be developed to adopt production and prices to changing circumstances therefore protecting producers. (6) Specialization and cooperation in industrial development should be a priority to benefit from comparative advantages. (7) Research and development policies should be also coordinated to help advance the technology and knowledge transfer.

Finally, Tobias Schumacher (2015) analyzes the ongoing review of the ENP and points out the ENP's failure to respond

adequately to the challenges posed by a rapidly changing environment in the neighborhood. Showing that 12 out of 16 neighboring states are now directly exposed to unresolved conflicts, territorial occupation or even war, he concludes that the reform of the ENP is more than overdue. He states that the “original 2003 ENP and its 2011 successor fell victim to ill-informed and misleading interpretations of the underlying dynamics of the wider neighborhood”, more coherence, inter-EU coordination and differentiation amongst partners are needed.

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF EURO- MEDITERRANEAN INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

The beginnings of cooperation between the European Economic Community and the Southern Mediterranean states dates back to the foundation of the EEC. Already in 1957 the Rome Treaty of the newborn European Economic Community had references to the future forms of economic cooperation with the MENA region, and in the following years the number of treaties and agreements continued to grow. The European Economic Community made significant efforts to build prosperous economic relations between the south and north shores of the Mediterranean Sea, and the states in the south started to recognize the benefits of such cooperation as well. While at the end of the 1950s Algeria was still part of France, this country was originally part of the Rome Treaty, and the other two Maghreb states, Morocco and Tunisia expanded their bilateral post-colonial agreements with France to bilateral EEC agreements. These were the first external relations of the Community. In the 1960s the EEC continued to make bilateral agreements in the region, and as early as 1969 reached preferential trade agreements with the Maghreb countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia). As the EEC grew more regional weight in the 1960s and the number of the external agreements continued to grow, the idea of a multilateral institution for the

countries of the Mediterranean region has turned up in Europe. The main problem with the existing bilateral system was the unequal treatment of partners, which were never satisfied with their agreements when they saw that another partner country managed to reach a better agreement with the EEC in a particular field. This problem could have been eliminated only with a multilateral agreement which treated all partners equally.

The first multilateral institution of Euro-Mediterranean relations was the Global Mediterranean Policy in which Israel, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria participated. Within the Global Mediterranean Policy (GMP) formulated in 1972, the European Community negotiated a series of trade and co-operation agreements with southern Mediterranean countries with the exception of Libya. A special regime of agreements was spelt out for Greece, Turkey, Malta and Cyprus with a customs union or eventual membership in mind as well. Unfortunately, the global economic environment rapidly changed in 1973 with the first oil crisis, and this did not help the further development of the GMP as the economically challenged EEC turned inwards. The crisis prevented the EEC from deepening the economic relations with its Mediterranean Partners, and the failure of the multilateral system came clear as early as 1974. After the practical termination of the GMP, the community had to go back to the bilateral system of agreements which were ironically called GMP agreements. The EEC signed the first GMP agreement with Israel in 1975; then with Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia in 1976; and with Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria in 1977.

In 1982, the Commission articulated a new development plan for Europe's Mediterranean region (given Greece's entry in 1981 and that of Spain and Portugal in 1986) and recommended that a new policy should be adopted with regard to the southern Mediterranean states. The new policy encouraged the diversification of the agricultural production to prevent

surpluses in agricultural products, and tried to reach acceptable trade compromises for Mediterranean partners aiming to access European food markets. These cooperation agreements and financial protocols were mainly ineffective, and were renewed twice without significant change. In 1990 the EEC realized the weakness of its bilateral Mediterranean policies, and decided to revitalize the multilateral cooperation. The new „Renovated Mediterranean Policy” (RMP) heralded by the European Commission had a greater budget at its disposal for the financial protocols with somewhat narrower objectives and strategies. As it turned out later, the Renovated Mediterranean Policy appeared as a narrow precursor for the next big multilateral system, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

The most active members of the EEC in proposing deeper cooperation with Mediterranean partners were always the Mediterranean EEC member states. In 1990 Italy Spain, France and Portugal together with 4 Maghreb states formed the so called 4+5 Cooperation Network, which expanded to 5+5 when Malta joined in 1991. The 5+5 Cooperation Network agreed to deepen cooperation amongst it's states in migration, agricultural, environmental and cultural issues, and to develop a common financial institution. Unfortunately, the political developments in Algeria in 1992 halted the further development of the cooperation, but now-days we can easily see that the 5+5 Cooperation Network together with the Renovated Mediterranean Policy was a huge step towards the next level of multilateral (regional) cooperation: the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. These positive developments were further strengthened by the 1991 Madrid peace conference where the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was somewhat eased by multilateral negotiations, giving way to a possible regional cooperation.

The Barcelona Process was finally launched in November 1995 by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the then 15 EU members and 12 Mediterranean partners (Turkey, Syria,

Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, the Palestinian National Authority, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Malta and Cyprus), as the framework to manage both bilateral and regional relations. Guided by the agreements of the Barcelona Declaration, it formed the basis of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership which has become a new and innovative regional alliance based on the principles of joint ownership, dialogue and co-operation, seeking to create a Mediterranean region of peace, security and shared prosperity. The partnership was organized into three main dimensions, which remain today as the broad working areas of it:

1. Political and Security Dialogue, aimed at creating a common area of peace and stability underpinned by sustainable development, rule of law, democracy and human rights.
2. Economic and Financial Partnership, including the gradual establishment of a free-trade area aimed at promoting shared economic opportunity through sustainable and balanced socio-economic development. During the Barcelona Conference, the foreign ministers of the 15 member states and the 12 Mediterranean Partners, (Maghreb and Mashrek countries including the Palestinian Authority as well as Israel, Turkey, Malta and Cyprus) officially approved the principle of the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean free-trade economic zone, planned for 2010. The Economic and Financial Partnership is financed by the European Investment Bank and a special European financial fund for the Mediterranean projects called MEDA.
3. Social, Cultural and Human Partnership, aimed at promoting understanding and intercultural dialogue between cultures, religions and people, and facilitating exchanges between civil society and ordinary citizens, particularly women and young people. This part of the

partnership is managed by the Anna Lindh Foundation through occasional project founding.

Under the umbrella of each sector, Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial meetings are being held in order to establish the political commitments which drive cooperation and activity across sectors. These meetings are accompanied by periodic meetings of Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Foreign Affairs which evaluates the state of the partnership, its priorities and the progress made on different initiatives, while the bilateral cooperation based on the previous bilateral agreements continued in the form of standardized Euro-Med Agreements coordinated by a Senior Officer and a National Coordinator in each country. To develop a deeper level of political cooperation amongst partners, the Euro-Med Parliamentary Assembly was created to bring closer the members of parliaments from each participating country. Finally, EuroMeSCo, a network of research centers based in partner countries was established to give a form of cooperation amongst policy makers and researchers of the region.

In 2008 French president Nicolas Sarkozy keeping his campaign promises of revitalizing Euro-Arab relations started a new initiative called „Mediterranean Union”, which aimed to bring together all the states of the Mediterranean basin in one union. This plan was not negotiated with EU officials and was not part of the European external policy framework. The initiative was not supported by non-Mediterranean EU member states and was threatening the unity of the European Union. After several rounds of negotiations German chancellor Angela Merkel (the main opponent of the plan) and Sarkozy reached a compromise: The Mediterranean Union will be renamed as the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), and will be built into the framework of the Barcelona Process. It will complement the BP with six new projects (as a virtual fourth basket of the EMP) supporting, but not substituting the original three baskets of

the EMP with the following six projects: (1) Depollution of the Mediterranean Sea (2) The establishment of maritime and land highways (3) Civil protection in natural and manmade disasters (4) Mediterranean Solar Energy Plan (5) The Euro-Mediterranean University (6) Mediterranean Business Development Initiative.

The three baskets of the original EMP structure remained untouched and a virtual fourth basket was added which consist of the six new projects. (These new projects can be connected to the original baskets each, therefore the „virtual” status of the fourth basket.) Since the main problem with the implementation of the EMP was the unwillingness of the Mediterranean partners to cooperate in political issues, the new projects are completely depoliticized. They are touching mainly economic and infrastructural issues, which is useful but shows the EU's admittance of failing with the political basket.

THE ORIGINS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF THE ENP

As the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership suffered a lot from the delays in the Middle-East Peace Process in the 90s, and the created institutional framework (including the EMP and the UfM) was unsuccessful in deepening the cooperation, the EU realized the need to renovate again the relations with its surrounding neighbors. The first initiative, the Wider Europe concept in 2003 was followed by a completely new system, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in 2004. This new concept (somewhat parallel with the GMP agreements) turned back to bilateral cooperation forms, and managed to reinvent Europe's foreign policy completely.

The new geopolitical reality after the 2004 enlargement of the EU brought politically unstable and low-income countries directly to the EU's external borders, and the development of the ENP can be interpreted as an institutional answer to the

new situation as well. The ENP has a wider geopolitical coverage than the previous cooperation forms: it includes 10 Mediterranean partner states (Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, the Palestinian National Authority, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania), 3 East-European states (Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova), and 3 Caucasian states (Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan) therefore it can be considered as the umbrella organization for Europe's external policy. The states with EU-membership prospects (Turkey, Albania and the ex-Yugoslavian states) are not involved in the policy, because -as a strict criteria- the ENP gives no EU accession prospect to its partners.

The implementation of the ENP works through the bilateral Action Plans, which are set out for periods between 3 and 5 years. The Action Plans (APs) are designed differently for each country, although they have a common structure. The implementation of APs is evaluated in Progress Reports indicating the development of the partner states in each field of cooperation. The core structure of the ENP can be identified as the „enlargement template”. This means that after the EU's successful enlargement in 2004 it seemed to be appealing to „stretch” the enlargement template further to the EU's new neighbors and to the Mediterranean partner states, hoping that this policy will be as successful later as the enlargement itself was. One contradiction of the ENP already rises here: the same conditionality is used in the ENP as was used during the accession negotiations with the new EU members, but without the perspective of accession this time. In order to have a deeper understanding of the ENP, it's necessary to analyze its two funding documents and extract the overall fundamental values of the policy before turning our attention to the ongoing ENP review procedure.

The „Wider Europe” Commission Communication (EC, 2003) describes the necessity and sets out the Commission's plans to deal with the new geopolitical reality of Europe after

the EU's enlargement in the coming year. The paper acknowledges the interdependence of the 450 million people living within the EU's borders (the world's biggest single market) and the 385 million people living in its surrounding area (neighborhood). The EU realizes and accepts the challenge of taking responsibility of the well-being of people in its surroundings and develops this new policy to eliminate the possible emergence new dividing lines after the enlargement.

The communication proposes that „the EU should aim to develop a zone of prosperity and a friendly neighborhood -a 'ring of friends'- with whom the EU enjoys close, peaceful and co-operative relations” and realizes that „all countries in the new neighborhood are confronted by the opportunities and challenges surrounding Proximity, Prosperity and Poverty.”

But what are the tools/methods in the hands of the EU to provide answers to the challenges of the neighborhood's proximity, prosperity and poverty? The most the EU can do is to offer its neighbors the prospect of a stake in the EU's Internal Market and in different European (infrastructural) networks while making efforts to intensify security related cooperation and financial assistance as well. Some of the most important concrete EU-offers for the neighbors include: (1) Preferential trading relations and market opening, (2) Perspectives for lawful migration and movement of persons (3) Intensified cooperation to prevent and confront common security threats (4) Greater EU involvement in conflict prevention and crisis management (5) New sources of finance.

Overall, this very early list of „offers” shows already the core policy mechanism of the ENP: economic incentives for political reforms and stability in exchange. The EU is ready to spend more on its neighbors and give them market access but only if they comply with its security and human rights-related expectations.

The other main funding document is the European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper (EC, 2004). This

communication was issued right after the EU's eastern enlargement in 2004 with its aim stated as: „We have acquired new neighbors and have come closer to old ones. These circumstances have created both opportunities and challenges. The European Neighbourhood Policy is a response to this new situation.”

This paper represents a much more crystallized idea of the new policy setting out details, mechanics and concrete aims of the ENP. Keeping most of the founding ideas from the Wider Europe concept, the document identifies the main aim of the policy as creating a European Union which is able to act coherently and efficiently in the world, and names the Action Plans system the main tool in achieving this goal. It sets out the final geographic coverage of the policy as well: Eastern-Europe, The Caucasus and the Mediterranean. (Originally the Caucasus have not been included as having no direct border with the EU.) After describing how the ENP will complement (and not substitute) the existing institutions and their financial sources, it sets out the policy's main driving principles: Joint Ownership, Differentiation and Added Value. Joint ownership is proposed on two levels: initially the EU draws in the partners from the very beginning of the process by offering co-ownership of the Action Plans which are developed and agreed by a commission including members from both the EU and the partner country. Second, the monitoring and evaluation of the process (AP implementation) is also done by this hybrid committee. This means to ensure co-ownership and commonly agreed implementation of the policy. Differentiation is ensured by the tailor-made APs as all of them contains special measurements for each country adopting to the differences in partner's aims and capabilities. Added value is ensured by the additionality of the ENP: it runs parallel to other forms of cooperation, and tries to fill the gaps amongst previous policies. The paper also identifies the main „priorities of action” which will form the backbone of the cooperation with all of the

neighbors. The most important of these are: (1) Commitment to shared values and a more effective political dialogue (2) Economic and social development policy via trade and internal market access, (3) Justice and Home Affairs cooperation.

The document closes with the short introduction of the legal and financial background of the new policy, identifying the new main financial instrument, the ENPI (originally ENI) and its budget for the period 2007-2013. Finally, the work on the Action Plans gets a kick-start: „On this basis, the Commission, with the Presidency and the High Representative, will take contact with the partner countries concerned, with a view to completing Actions Plans with them before the end of July 2004. Member States will be kept fully informed of the development of these consultations.”

The already introduced Action Plans (APs) are the main vehicles of „value and interest transport” between the EU and its neighbors. As already stated, APs are tailor made for each partner including offers for help and conditions to these offers by the EU. These plans are co-developed by the EU and the neighbors, therefore co-ownership is present at the process of implementation which is carried out and monitored by mixed committees including members from both sides.

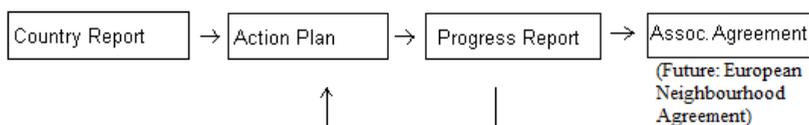
The work flow of the ENP via the APs includes three stages through which the progress towards EU values can be monitored and evaluated in the case of each partner country. These are the following:

(1) The first stage is the examination of each partner’s current status: The Commission prepares Country Reports assessing the political and economic situation as well as institutional and sectoral aspects to evaluate when and how it is possible to deepen relations with the given country. Twelve Country Reports were published between 2004 and 2005. Country Reports are then submitted to the Council which decides whether to proceed to the next stage of relations.

(2) The next stage is the development of Action Plans with each country. These documents are negotiated with and tailor-made for each country, based on the country's needs and capacities, as well as their and the EU's interests. They jointly define an agenda of political and economic reforms by means of short and medium-term (3-5 years) priorities. They cover political dialogue and reform, economic and social cooperation and development, trade-related issues and market regulatory reform, cooperation in justice and home affairs and a human dimension. In exchange for reforms the EU provides greater integration into European programs and networks, increased financial assistance and enhanced market access.

(3) The third stage is when the implementation of the mutual commitments and objectives contained in the Action Plans are examined through sub-committees with each country, and the outcomes are summarized in periodic reports on progress (Progress Reports). The Commission has already evaluated the overall progress of the ENP's first period (2004-2009), and twelve Progress Reports were adopted on 12 May 2009.

The findings of the Progress Reports are then effecting the new generation of Action Plans, which describe the outputs that the given country still has to deliver, while the already accomplished ones get to be integrated to the bilateral Association Agreements, therefore they become parts of the legal relations between the EU and the given country:



The 2016 review process of the ENP

The ENP (although it's only 12 years "old") went through already one major review in 2011. This first review can mainly be understood as the EU's reaction to the 2010-2011 Arab

upheavals (“Arab Spring”), and can be tracked well in the major “reform document” that was issued by the EC in 2011. As the current study focuses mainly on the second ENP review - ongoing in 2016-, it gives only a short summary of the first one. This first ENP review, titled “A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood” (EC 2011), can be summarized briefly via the following points: (1) Greater support to partners engaged in building deep democracy (2) Support inclusive economic development (3) Strengthen the regional dimensions of the European Neighbourhood Policy (4) Provide the mechanisms and instruments fit to deliver these objectives. As visible from these points, this early reform initiative is focused mainly on democracy building (which reflects the developments of the “Arab Spring”), by supporting economic development and providing financial instruments. This reflects well the original logic of the ENP: economic incentives for political reforms and stability in exchange. However, after the “Arab Spring” turned into “winter” and the democratization illusions were lost, this ENP reform initiative also became somewhat outdated.

The second ENP review process was started by the EC with a public consultation in 2015, and the results of this consultation were summarized in the EC joint communication of 2016 titled “Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy” (EC, 2016) The document can be summarized briefly as follows:

1. The EU recognizes that during the recent years “there have been radical changes in a large number of the countries that surround the EU”, which changes need a proper EU response.
2. The EU also recognizes that it has a strong interdependence with its neighbors as proven by the refugee flows, energy supplies, and terror-related security threats.
3. Together, these factors points to the direction that the ENP needs to be re-focused towards stabilization as the main future focal point.

As compared to the previous review, which can be seen only an “Arab Spring generated top-up” of the original ENP, this second review promises a complete refocus of the policy towards stabilization. Compared to the original “economic incentives for political reforms” ENP agenda, this time the entire policy is refocused on the urgent task of stabilization, including security sector reforms, conflict prevention, counter-terrorism and anti-radicalization policies, while putting the control of migration flows also on the top of the priorities.

Beyond the focus area, there are also some changes proposed for the institutional setup: more engagement is expected from both of the partner states and the EU member states in order to enhance co-ownership and instead of the previous one-fits-all approach, there will be different patterns of relations developed with the different partner countries. Instead of the single set of progress reports there will be separate progress monitoring instruments, tailor made for each partner. Economic development, market access and mobility will however stay in the ENP focus areas, but only with a secondary importance after stabilization.

This stronger focus on stability and security are further elaborated in a few points: security sector reforms, better migration management, development of circular mobility opportunities like the EU blue card, provision of re-entry possibilities for irregular migrants and fight against the smuggling of people, better engagement beyond the neighborhood, especially with Russia, Turkey and the Sahel region.

The economic arm of the review mentions the provision of 15 billion euros for the ENP in the 2014-2020 implementation period, strengthened by economic missions to ENP partners. A Smart (economic) Specialization strategy for the partners is also planned to be implemented, which is an interesting outcome, since this was suggested by authors like Amoroso (1998) already a long time ago.

CONCLUSIONS: THE REVIEW OF THE ENP FROM A HISTORICAL-COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Overall, the historical development of institutional cooperation between the EU and the Southern Mediterranean states shows a steady progress from the very beginnings to the contemporary complex institutional setup. However, as the historical examination showed, this progress is full of bumps and U-turns: as the multilateral initiative of the 70s Global Mediterranean Policy was replaced later with bilateral agreements, the multilateral Euro-Mediterranean Partnership of the 90s was also partially replaced by the bilateral ENP in 2004.

The latest turn in this institutional evolution came with the 2016 review of the ENP, which aims to replace the original “economic incentives for political reforms” ENP workflow with a mainly stabilization-focused agenda. Although keeping the original goals of economic development, market access creation and mobility, the new ENP will focus mainly on security issues. This “new wind” came out of a long due reality check for the ENP: an internally crumbling EU cannot power-project (even economically) into its neighborhood, especially now, when the neighborhood is rather a “ring of fire” instead of “ring of friends”. The ENP review can even be read as a panic reaction from the EU to the fact that “there have been radical changes in a large number of the countries that surround the EU”. Accordingly, re-focusing on stability is a logical step, but as shown, Behr (2012) and Schumacher (2015) (amongst others) have already several other ideas to make stability possible on the long term. More coherence, inter-EU policy coordination and differentiation amongst partners are needed in order to make the short term stabilization efforts last on the long term.

Moreover, parallel to the stabilization efforts, there should be also an economic agenda in order to make the neighborhood more prosperous and therefore more stable on the

long term. Here again, several ideas are already on table by different experts, one of which (Amoroso, 1998) is the development of a Mediterranean consensus on commodity and industrial specialization in order to avoid competing and rather develop economic cooperation in the region. This idea seems to take roots in the new ENP with the Smart Specialization strategy, which is an important development.

The final aim of the ENP (and the whole concept of the Euro-Mediterranean institutional cooperation) is to build a prosperous and peaceful neighborhood at the EU's immediate borders. The current situation could not be much further from this ideal end-goal, as most of the neighbors experience economic difficulties and a weakening security environment. However, building on the experience of more than 50 years of institution building, the EC could be capable of improving the situation at least marginally on the short term. On the other hand, if it will be capable of making a positive impact on the long term as well depends on the success of the currently ongoing ENP review and the implementation of the renewed policy during the coming years.

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