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## The 'real' dimension of the ENP: dynamics of cooperation and change in the ENP framework\*

**Abstract:** The objective of this paper is to examine the development of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) during the first decade of its functioning and to assess the dynamics of the cooperation in that policy-framework. The research presents changes in the institutional and legal framework, evolution of the tools and programmes, including the financial aspect. Additionally, the article analyses current evolution of the macroeconomic and political situation in the European Union and its neighbourhood – the financial crisis 2007+, the Arab Spring, and the turbulences in the Eastern dimension. The research allows to state that the output of the ENP is positive, especially in the economic aspect, nevertheless, the cooperation in the political area, including the structural reforms, still poses a great challenge. The incentive-based approach and comprehensive programmes should expedite the fulfilment of ENP objectives.

**Keywords:** European Union, European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), Eastern Partnership, Southern Partnership, cooperation

### Introduction

The first actions towards forming the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) were conducted in the early 2000s. The main reason for introducing the ENP was the changing geopolitical situation, originating primarily from the upcoming enlargement (so called 'big bang' enlarge-

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ment) in 2004. The accession of new member states in 2004 was about to modify the landscape of the European Union (EU), changing former neighbour states, especially from Central-Eastern Europe (CEE), into members of the organisation. One of the consequences was shifting the borders of the EU, which caused substantial anxiety in various member states. Moreover, the comprehensive neighbourhood policy seemed indispensable considering the will to maintain tight relations, both economic and political, with neighbouring countries, but without making any commitments regarding their future accession.<sup>1</sup>

This paper examines the changes in the ENP during the first decade of functioning and assesses its efficiency in the context of recent changes in the global economic and political situation. The argument is structured as follows. In the first section, the article describes the reasons behind creating the ENP. The second part examines the evolution of the ENP, including the changes in the legal framework and geographical range. The third part discusses the financial instrument of the ENP, i.e. ENPI, and its influence on the development of the ENP. Conclusions follow.

## 1. The origins of the ENP

During the period before the biggest enlargement of the EU, various debates concerning future of the EU and its changing neighbourhood were conducted. The necessity to secure Eastern borders of the EU, especially in the aspect of migrations and trafficking, was the primal concern of the EU member states. In 2002 the British Foreign Minister, Jack Straw, prepared a letter to Spanish EU Presidency, outlining possible risks and challenges emerging from the enlargement and future Eastern neighbourhood of the EU. Straw suggested closer cooperation with “special neighbours” in the East, namely Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. Strengthening the relations with future

1 See: J. Ifversen, Ch. Kølvrå, *European Neighbourhood Policy as Identity Politics*, Paper presented at the USA Tenth Biennial International Conference, Montreal, Canada, 2007; M. Comelli, *The Approach of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP): Distinctive Features and Differences with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership*, Documenti IAI, Istituto Affari Internazionali, 2005; E. Tulmets, *Adapting the Experience of Enlargement to the Neighbourhood Policy: the ENP as a Substitute to Enlargement?*, [in:] P. Kratochvíl (ed.), *The European Union and Its Neighbourhood: Policies, Problems and Priorities*, Institute of International Relations, Prague 2006.

neighbouring countries was the subject of various Council meetings in 2002 (Council Conclusions 7705/02, 14183/02, 12134/02). At first, the Eastern dimension was most discussed, however also the southern aspect of neighbourhood policy appeared by the end of the year – as Presidency Conclusions from Copenhagen (15917/02) state “the enlargement will strengthen relations with Russia. The European Union also wishes to enhance its relations with Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and the southern Mediterranean countries [...]”<sup>2</sup>

In 2003, the European Commission published a communication “Wider Europe Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours” (COM (2003) 104 final),<sup>3</sup> which is considered to be the first official document shaping the ENP. In this communication, the European Commission calls for enhanced cooperation based on promotion of reforms, trade exchange and sustainable development, with a “ring of friends” – neighbouring states that “do not currently have the perspective of membership of the EU.”<sup>4</sup> The document namely mentions Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus<sup>5</sup> and the Southern Mediterranean<sup>6</sup> countries, at the same time stressing that the new policy will not apply to Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria and the Western Balkans (which were provided with Pre-Accession Assistance). The main goal of the unified neighbourhood policy was to secure stable development of the countries surrounding the EU, encouraging structural reforms, but without making steps towards another enlargement, at least in the medium-term perspective. The ongoing convergence, both in political (i.e. human rights, democracy) and economic (trade, liberalisation) dimension, should be rewarded with access to the EU Internal Market.

The European Commission, in the communication *Paving the way for a New Neighbourhood Instrument* (COM (2003) 393 final) states

- 2 Presidency Conclusions – Copenhagen, 12 and 13 December 2002, (15917/02), [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/73842.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/73842.pdf), access 20.11.2014.
- 3 Commission of the European Communities, 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*, Brussels, 11.3.2003, COM (2003) 104 final, access 17.11.2014.
- 4 Ibidem, p. 4.
- 5 Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine are referred to as WNIS – Western Newly Independent States. Ibidem.
- 6 Namely: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia. Ibidem.

that existing instruments aiming to promote cooperation with neighbouring states are governed by different procedures and regulations, which weakens their effectiveness. Therefore, the ENP should prepare a new instrument, which would provide a comprehensive approach to all aspects of transnational cooperation with neighbouring states. The instruments that preceded the ENP were: INTERREG Community Initiative, PHARE CBC, TACIS CBC, CARDS and MEDA Programme. In order to secure a smooth introduction of the ENP instruments, the European Commission established the two-phase approach. In the first, initial phase, up to 2006, all the actions were taken basing on existing legal framework, and the creation of a new instrument was postponed until 2007.

## 2. Tracing the evolution of the ENP

As it was mentioned above, the idea of enhanced neighbourhood policy was created concerning the relations of the EU with its Eastern neighbours. During the political debates within the EU, the Southern dimension was also taken into consideration. This can be explained both by the desire to maintain a balance between the Southern and the Eastern dimension of the EU's external policy, as well as political interests of the Southern EU member states which have always cared for the EU-Mediterranean relations.

In May 2004, Commission prepared *Strategy Paper* on the European Neighbourhood Policy (COM (2004) 373 final). According to this document, the geographical scope of the ENP included Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova in Europe, and all countries involved in the Barcelona process (the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership), excluding Turkey, that is Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, and the Palestinian Authority. The Commission recommended including also Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in the scope of the ENP.<sup>7</sup> Most of the countries included in the ENP

<sup>7</sup> The Council decided to include these countries into the ENP framework due to the changes in the political landscape caused by the Rose Revolution in Georgia, in reaction to recommendations from the European Parliament, Commission, High Representative and the EU Spe-

had previously signed the Association Agreement or the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with the EU, and Belarus, Libya and Syria were asked to conduct reforms allowing them to sign adequate agreements. The relationship with Russia was agreed to develop in the form of EU-Russia strategic partnership.<sup>8</sup> Currently, 16 EU neighbours are included in the ENP – Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine.<sup>9</sup>

The *Strategy Paper* prepared by the European Commission, described the functioning of bilateral Action Plans which form the basis of the functioning of ENP. The priorities of Action Plans, differentiated for each neighbour country, include shared values and specific objectives of foreign and security policy as well as actions towards tightening the relations in the priority fields, such as trade relations, social development or justice. The ENP aims to deepen the liberalisation of trade relations (especially elimination of non-tariff barriers), develop regional integration and enhance legislative convergence. The *Strategy Paper* stressed the role of improving the functioning of public institutions, in order to properly respond to challenges related to migration, trafficking and terrorism. Among other priorities, the European Commission states the energy and transport network, the environmental issues, research and innovation, but also cultural and educational relations. The ENP aims also to enhance regional cooperation.<sup>10</sup>

The *Strategy Papers* sets the following priorities for regional cooperation in the Eastern dimension: economy, business, employment, social policy, trade, infrastructure; environment, nuclear safety and natural resources; justice and home affairs and people-to-people issues. In the Mediterranean aspect, the strategic priorities included South-South integration, sub-regional cooperation and harmonisation of the regulatory and legislative environment. Cooperation should affect the issues of infrastructure, environment, justice and home af-

cial Representative for the Southern Caucasus; Council of the European Union, *Press Release 10189/04 (Presse 195)*, 2004.

8 See: E. Wasselink, R. Boschma, *Overview of the European Neighbourhood Policy: Its History, Structure, and Implemented Policy Measures*, WP1/04 Search Working Paper, January 2012.

9 [http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/about-us/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/about-us/index_en.htm), access 25.11.2014

10 Communication from the Commission, *European Neighbourhood Policy. Strategy Paper*, COM (2004) 373 final.

fairs as well as trade and socio-economic development (COM (2004) 373 final; COM (2004) 795 final).

The first progress report on the ENP functioning (COM (2006) 726 final) confirmed positive effects of the policy. Major progress was achieved in the areas of economic cooperation: trade liberalisation and customs,<sup>11</sup> but also energy sector, environment, and research and development. However, the progress report stresses difficulties in creating legal proximity, enhancing democracy and human rights reforms. The ENP was not able to provide enough incentives to enhance long-term reforms; the conditions that had to be met by neighbouring states in order to access the EU's Internal Market were not clear enough, thus the motivation to fully apply Action Plans was not sufficient.<sup>12</sup>

In response to some difficulties stressed out in the progress report, the European Commission prepared *Communication on strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy* (COM (2006) 726 final). The main changes included enhancing trade, investment and economic integration, including "deep and comprehensive free trade agreements" stronger support for reforms and closer cooperation. In the area of mobility and migration, the Communication suggested liberalisation of the visa regime for partner-countries' citizens. The European Commission outlined the necessity to improve cooperation in the fields of people-to-people exchanges, political cooperation, regional cooperation, financial cooperation and thematic aspects, which included enhanced multilateral and bilateral dialogue in key sectors.<sup>13</sup>

In order to provide better implementation of the ENP objectives, the European Commission stresses the role of three key features of the policy – differentiation, which applies to country-specific approach; joint ownership, which means that both sides of cooperation, the EU and the neighbouring state, have the same influence on crea-

11 Including negotiations with the Southern Mediterranean neighbours, preparations for deep Free Trade Agreement with Ukraine as well as the Agadir agreement (free trade zone among Mediterranean nations).

12 See: E. Wasselink, R. Boschma, *Overview of the European Neighbourhood Policy*, p. 17.

13 Communication from the Commission, *Communication on strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy*, COM (2006) 726 final.

tion of Action Plans, and finally interlinks between bilateral solutions of ENP with sub-regional integration.<sup>14</sup>

In 2008, the European Commission overviewed the implementation of the ENP (COM (2008) 164). This document shows substantial progress, especially concerning trade relations with Ukraine, but significant advances were also visible in the case of Moldova and Israel. Till 2007, 12 countries decided to present Action Plans and therefore participate in the ENP. The Commission outlined a visible shift towards more democratic institutions and improvement in the area of justice in Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, but also Morocco, Egypt and Jordan. Most of the neighbouring countries improved their economic situation; nevertheless, the Commission stressed the necessity to improve in numerous areas, i.e. economic governance, labour market situation and the role of women in the economy.<sup>15</sup>

Another important document is the evaluation of the functioning of the ENP by the European Commission published in 2010 – *Taking stock of the European Neighbourhood Policy* (COM (2010) 207). The communication summarises the first period of the ENP functioning (2004-2009) and outlines main challenges ahead – the need to encourage good governance, enhance conflict resolutions, improve mobility of persons, further develop trade exchange, promote business-friendly environment, shape social agenda, improve environmental standards, especially concerning the climate change and strengthen cooperation in the area of energy efficiency.

In 2011, the ENP had to face consequences of political problems in the neighbouring countries. The Communication of the Commission *A new response to a changing Neighbourhood* (COM (2011) 303) is focused on the consequences of the overthrow of regimes in Egypt and Tunisia, conflicts in Libya and Syria and the ongoing repressions in Belarus for the ENP functioning. In reaction to these events, the European Commission called for a new approach allowing to strengthen the cooperation with the neighbouring partners – providing support for the neighbours who build deep democracy, support sustainable

14 Communication from the Commission, *A Strong European Neighbourhood Policy*, COM (2007) 774 final, access 25.11.2014.

15 Communication from the Commission, *Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2007*, COM (2008) 164, access 26.11.2014.

economic and social development, build effective regional partnerships, within the ENP framework, and simplify policy and programmes framework.

After the revision of the ENP in 2011, there were two more Communications shaping the new ENP – *European Neighbourhood Policy: Working towards a Stronger Partnership* (JOIN (2013) 4 final) and *Neighbourhood at the Crossroads: Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2013* (JOIN (2014) 12 final). These documents outline the role of establishing instruments encouraging democratisation as well as economic development. The revamped ENP focuses on political and economic integration, mobility, enhanced financial assistance, closer partnership with society and cooperation on sector policies. The revamped ENP is incentive-based, introducing a new “more for more” principle. This means that the EU’s support is conditional, and depends on the progress of the neighbouring country, especially in the area of internal reforms.

### **3. The financial aspect of the ENP: the ENPI (ENI) and its development**

During the first years of the ENP functioning, it was conducted simultaneously with previously incorporated regional programmes. Since 2007, the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) has been created.<sup>16</sup> The ENPI was developed in order to support the attainment of the ENP objectives. The ENPI includes neighbouring countries involved in the ENP and Russia. This financial instrument can be used especially to provide assistance during political reforms (i.e. good governance, human rights, civil society, multicultural dialogue, fight against fraud, corruption, terrorism or organised crime), economic reforms (market economy, trade development, gradual economic integration with the Internal Market of the EU), social reforms (labour market, fight against discrimination

<sup>16</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, access 25.11.2014.



and poverty), sectoral cooperation (especially sectors like environment, sustainable development, energy, transport, health, education, R&D), regional and local development and regional integration and participation in Community programmes and agencies. This instrument can also be used in the case of electoral observation, post-crisis missions and disaster preparedness.<sup>17</sup>

The ENPI was created as a “strategic continuity with enlarged objectives” of the previous programmes – TACIS and MEDA.<sup>18</sup> The amount of funding available via the ENPI in comparison to TACIS and MEDA combined represents a 32% increase.<sup>19</sup> The ENPI functioned between 2007 and 2013; currently, it has been replaced with a new instrument, ENI – European Neighbourhood Instrument.

In order to provide a more effective use of the ENPI, a strict programming process was introduced. The programmes implemented in the field can be based on multiannual programming papers in the case of national, multi-country, cross-border strategies, and multiannual indicative programmes, or annual action programmes and joint programmes for cross-border cooperation. Annual action programmes and joint programmes for cross-border cooperation provide details on timetable and financial allocation.

The ENPI can be used to finance investments, micro-projects, but also in order to support participation in the capital of international financial institutions. Projects can be co-financed by ENPI and other donors. The Council maintains the right to suspend assistance, in the case of violation of basic values of the EU and its relations with partners.<sup>20</sup> Management can be decentralised, but usually it is ensured by the Commission assisted by a committee. In order to secure proper use of the ENPI funds, the Commission has the right to evaluate the results of geographical and cross-border policies and programmes, as well as sectoral policies.

17 Ibidem; [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/external\\_relations/relations\\_with\\_third\\_countries/eastern\\_europe\\_and\\_central\\_asia/r17101\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/external_relations/relations_with_third_countries/eastern_europe_and_central_asia/r17101_en.htm)

18 [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/european-neighbourhood-and-partnership-instrument-enpi\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/european-neighbourhood-and-partnership-instrument-enpi_en), access 29.11.2014.

19 European Commission, *European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument 2007-2013, Overview of Activities and Results*, [http://www.enpi-info.eu/files/publications/ENPI%20report%202007-2013-edit\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.enpi-info.eu/files/publications/ENPI%20report%202007-2013-edit_ENG.pdf), access 28.11.2014.

20 Ibidem.

In the period 2007-2013, the ENPI budget amounted to nearly 12 million Euro. 95% of these funds was dedicated for national and multi-country programmes, and the remaining 5% – for cross-border cooperation programmes. In the total period 2007-2013, the Eastern Partnership countries and Russia received funding in the amount of 3,884.6 million Euro (out of which Russia 66,5 million Euro). The total amount of help for the Mediterranean countries amounted to 9,051.2 million. ENPI's contribution to cross-border cooperation in the analysed period was 463.1 million Euro.

The period of ENPI functioning was particularly difficult. The geopolitical situation was changing because of the Arab Spring, and the scope of cooperation with neighbouring countries was also dynamic – in 2009 the Eastern Partnership (EaP) was created. In reaction to those changes, two new programmes came into life under the ENPI – the EaP integration and cooperation (EaPIC) programme, and the SPRING programme. One of the most important challenges for the ENPI was the global financial crisis. Despite all these difficulties, the ENPI can be considered a success.<sup>21</sup>

In 2014, the new instrument of financial cooperation in the EU neighbourhood was introduced. The ENI<sup>22</sup> is to provide financial support to neighbouring EU countries during the period 2014-2020. Its budget exceeds 15 million Euro, which should allow to fully meet needs of all 16 neighbouring countries (and Russia).

The ENI, in accordance with the reformed shape of the whole ENP, is designed to enforce the differentiation and incentive-based approach towards cooperation with the neighbouring countries. In comparison to ENPI, the ENI possesses two new mechanisms, which aim to develop an incentive-based approach. The first of them are the umbrella programmes, which allow to allocate up to 10% of ENI budget to partner countries. This allocation will be based on the progress achieved by the partner country towards deepening democracy or implementing reforms that stimulate democracy. This type of programmes will replace the SPRING and EaPIC programmes. The second mecha-

21 Ibidem.

22 Legal basis: Regulation (EU) No 232/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing a European Neighbourhood Instrument, access 22.11.2014.

nism allows to vary multiannual bilateral allocations within the range of maximum 20%.

There are four main types of programmes that can be supported by the ENI. These are: bilateral programmes for the neighbourhood countries, regional programs for both East and South, ENP-wide programme (funding Erasmus for All, Neighbourhood Investment Facility and Umbrella programmes) and cross-border cooperation programmes, including neighbouring countries and EU member states.<sup>23</sup> TAIEX, SIGMA, and Twinning remain an important part of the ENP framework under the ENI.

The neighbourhood countries involved in the ENP, can benefit also from other programmes and instruments, not only the ENPI/ENI. Among the most important, there are programmes under the Development Co-operation Instrument, European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, Instrument for Stability as well as the instruments under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).<sup>24</sup>

## **4. The dynamics of cooperation in the ENP**

● Since the introduction of the ENP the dynamics of cooperation has been rising. At first, the ENP was meant to complement the actions taken via different regional programmes of the EU. Nowadays, the ENP has a variety of tools and instruments that allow to enhance positive changes in the partner countries.

The most important documents shaping bilateral relations in the framework of the ENP are Action Plans (or Association Agendas, in the case of eastern partners), which are the basis for bilateral programmes. These documents set an agenda of planned reforms in medium-term. The neighbouring states can also take part in most of the EU programmes and agencies. Some of the programmes are fully open for the neighbouring states, while others allow only participation in certain actions.

23 [http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/how-is-it-financed/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/how-is-it-financed/index_en.htm), access 23.11.2014

24 Ibidem; E. Wasselink, R. Boschma, *Overview of the European Neighbourhood Policy*.

TAIEX and SIGMA, but also Twinning are among the most important programmes providing technical assistance for the neighbouring states. TAIEX (Technical Assistance and Information Exchange) was first designed to help the CEE countries which were about to join the EU in 2004, in adopting EU legislation. Nowadays, TAIEX aims to assist the neighbouring countries. This instrument provides rather short-term assistance, while Twinning is designed to help in the long term. SIGMA (Support for the Improvement of Government and Management) aims to strengthen governance and management structures. It provides both short and medium term assistance.<sup>25</sup>

In order to fully develop cooperation in the ENP framework, several measures were undertaken. In *Communication A Strong European Neighbourhood Policy* (COM (2007) 774 final) the Commission called for introducing “tailor-made deep and comprehensive free trade agreements (DFTAs)”, which should include all trade in goods and services between the EU and neighbour partners. These agreements are crucial for the future of trade relations between EU and neighbourhood partners.

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA) or Association Agreements (AA) are among important tools shaping the ENP. These instruments aim to support democracy, human rights, economic development (transition towards liberal market economy), as well as encouraging trade exchange and investment. Signing the PCA allows the partner country to fully benefit from all the tools provided by the ENP.<sup>26</sup>

The financial support is not only provided by ENPI (ENI) and associated instruments, but also by the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, via loans. The Civil Society Facility also plays a role in encouraging democratic changes in the neighbouring countries.

The dynamics of cooperation in the ENP can be easily proved by showing the growing amount of financial support that partner countries receive from the ENPI. In 2007, Ukraine received 142 million Euro,

<sup>25</sup> E. Wasselink, R. Boschma, *Overview of the European Neighbourhood Policy*.

<sup>26</sup> A. Kalicka-Mikołajczyk, *Ramy prawne i zasady unijnej Europejskiej Polityki Sąsiedztwa wobec partnerów wschodnich (Legal Framework and Principles of European Neighbourhood Policy towards Eastern Partners)*, Prawnicza i Ekonomiczna Biblioteka Cyfrowa, Wrocław 2013.

while in 2013 the sum amounted to 199 million. Moldova started with 40 million, and in 2013 received 135 million. This progress is visible even in the case of Belarus, which receives the least financial support – in 2004 this country obtained 6 million, and in 2013 – 23,8 million. The same pattern is noticeable in the Mediterranean countries, although there have been some changes in funding levels in the recent years, due to political turmoil – for example, Egypt received 137 million Euro from the ENPI in 2007, 250 million in 2012, but only 47 million in 2013. Morocco obtained 190 million Euro in 2007, whereas in 2013 the financial support for this country amounted to 334.9 million.<sup>27</sup>

The fast development of the ENP is visible. Changes introduced in 2011 and later years should be able to produce further improvement in cooperation and convergence dynamics. The introduction of EEAS (European External Action Service) is also a milestone in the process of the ENP development.

## **5. The dimensions of the ENP**

There are three main dimensions of the ENP in the geographical context. The EaP was launched in Prague in May 2009. It aims to strengthen political and economic integration. It is formed by the EU and six Eastern neighbouring countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

The EaP consists of bilateral and multilateral dimensions. The first one aims to support integration with the EU both economically and politically, encourage sector cooperation and facilitate mobility of citizens: the visa-free travel is one of the long-term goals. The multilateral dimension consists of thematic platforms which allow exchanging best practices on good governance, economic policy, energy, transportation and social issues. The second part of the multilateral dimension is formed by the flagship initiatives – regional cooperation programs

<sup>27</sup> European Commission, *European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument 2007-2013. Overview of Activities and Results*, [http://www.enpi-info.eu/files/publications/ENPI%20report%202007-2013-edit\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.enpi-info.eu/files/publications/ENPI%20report%202007-2013-edit_ENG.pdf), access 29.11.2014.

in fields considered most important. The multi-country cooperation via regional cooperation programmes allows addressing problems and challenges in the trans-boundary aspect. Priorities for this kind of actions are described in Regional East programming document.<sup>28</sup>

The Southern dimension of the ENP includes Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia. This cooperation seems to be more challenging than in the EaP. In 2011, the changes in the Southern Mediterranean, caused by the Arab Spring, encouraged the EU to run two assistance programmes designed especially to deal with the current situation – the SPRING programme and also the Civil Society Facility. The first programme offered financial support that amounted to 540 million Euro, while the second one – 34 million (in the period 2011-2013).<sup>29</sup>

As in the case of the EaP, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership consists of several dimensions. Regional projects aim to improve the institutions and governance, as well as support economic and social development. Human rights and democracy are also among primal concerns. One of the interesting interregional programmes is Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF). NIF aims to acquire additional funding in order to satisfy investment needs of the region. Other interregional programmes are, obviously, TAIEX, SIGMA and Twinning. In the southern region, there are also two ongoing cross-border cooperation programmes, namely “The Mediterranean Sea Programme” and “The Italy-Tunisia Programme.”<sup>30</sup>

The problems of Eastern and Southern partner-countries are different. The members of both Eastern and Southern Partnership form very diverse groups. The relations of the EU with Ukraine were very close until the outbreak of the conflict with Russia. On the other hand, the partnership with Belarus is underdeveloped, due to lack of political reforms in this country. Both Eastern and Southern neighbours need to implement deep structural reforms. Moreover, the Mediterranean neighbours still suffer the macroeconomic consequences of the Arab

28 [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/eu-neighbourhood-region-and-russia/introduction\\_o\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/eu-neighbourhood-region-and-russia/introduction_o_en), access 29.11.2014

29 [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/regional-cooperation/enpi-south/people\\_en.htm\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/regional-cooperation/enpi-south/people_en.htm_en), access 29.11.2014

30 *Ibidem*.

Spring.<sup>31</sup> The ENP was first created in order to secure the Eastern neighbourhood. Nevertheless, it is the Southern Partnership that receives more funding from the ENPI. During the period 2007-2013, the East obtained 2,491.7 million (including Russia), while the South achieved 6,940 million Euro.<sup>32</sup> In the case of Balkans, there is no comprehensive partnership programme. In February 2008, the Black Sea Synergy (BSS) was launched, the EU is also trying to tighten relations with Western Balkans but, at the moment, all these initiatives do not form a new dimension of the ENP.

## Conclusions

The ENP has been functioning for a decade already. At the beginning, the new policy was conducted simultaneously with the previous tools providing regional cooperation and development. In 2007-2013, the ENP had to face several challenges that affected its effectiveness.

The Arab Spring, conflicts in some of the partner – countries and the crisis 2008+ have hampered the functioning of the ENP. Nevertheless, the final output from the first years of the ENP in action, is positive. The improvement is especially visible in the economic aspects, but in the area of structural reforms and deepening the democracy in partner countries, there is still much to accomplish. The major shift in the ENP in 2011, towards incentive-based policy, will probably facilitate accomplishment of the ENP objectives. Currently, it is too early to assess the output of this change in the ENP framework. Despite all the difficulties, deepening the integration and convergence between EU member states and neighbouring countries is beneficial for both parties.

In the future, the ENP will develop and new complex and comprehensive programmes of cooperation will be launched. Nevertheless, the ENP cannot be regarded as a substitute for enlargement, or

31 European Commission, *The EU's neighbouring economies: managing policies in a challenging global environment*, Occasional Papers 160, August 2013.

32 Including Regional and Interregional programmes and Sub-total bilateral programmes, [http://www.enpi-info.eu/files/publications/ENPI%20report%202007-2013-edit\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.enpi-info.eu/files/publications/ENPI%20report%202007-2013-edit_ENG.pdf)

as a phase before the enlargement.<sup>33</sup> In the first documents shaping the ENP, the European Commission precisely ruled out this possibility. The form of cooperation, which should be applied for the specific country/region, should be, according to the ENP principles, tailor-made and country-specific. This means that there is no ideal form of cooperation, and the final version of bilateral regulation should be prepared individually for each partner country.

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33 See: D. Cadier, *Is the European Neighbourhood Policy a substitute for enlargement?*, [http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR018/Cadier\\_D.pdf](http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR018/Cadier_D.pdf)



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