



The Political Economy of Governance in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

Deliverable No 8

Working Package 6

New Challenges: The impact of the EU enlargement on the Barcelona Process

Post-Enlargement Trauma of the Euro-Med Partnership: An Analysis of Member State Preferences

Go-EuroMed Working Paper 0701

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Date: 31/12/2007

The Sixth Framework Programme
Contract No. 028386



SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

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1. Introduction

The year 2004 was monumental for the future of the European Union, as it realized its largest enlargement wave, with the extension of acceptance to 10 new members, eight from the Central and Eastern European region and two from the Mediterranean (only to be followed by the accession of two more eastern European countries, Romania and Bulgaria in 2007). The enlargement not only broadened the geographical limits of the EU up to the Russian border, but also altered its demographic and economic profile¹. To nobody's surprise, these important changes brought with them new challenges, foremost of which was to restructure the institutional setting. The Treaty of Nice, for instance, signed in 2001 and ratified in 2003 introduced changes in the EU so that the institutions would be ready for the new members.²

The more conventionally named "eastern" enlargement, however, also changed the foreign policy priorities of the European Union. Now that the borders of the EU stood next to the easternmost ex-Soviet countries (Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus), it was necessary to build a stable region not only to protect the Union from external threats but also, by doing this, to prepare the newly admitted members for economic growth that would proceed mostly in terms of foreign direct investment. Of course, the realization of this goal was contingent upon the willingness of the EU15 to channel their political and economic resources towards this part of its periphery. For a coherent foreign policy stance was only possible if member states were able and willing to push for concentrating on the east.

However, just like the levers of a scale, concentrating on one part of the region carried with itself the possibility of decreased interest at the other parts. More precisely, more attention to the east for the obvious reasons of enlargement risked the attention directed at the Mediterranean. This brings us to the thesis of this working paper: that the 2004 (and the 2007³) enlargement of the European Union has negatively affected the progress of the Euro-

¹ With the accession of 10 new members, the population of the EU increased by 19,57% to ca. 460 million. Per capita GDP fell by 8,94% to \$18,394. By 2007, population increased by another 6,48% to ca. 495 million and per capita GDP decreased by 4,03% to \$25,160. (Overall GDP had increased between 2004 and 2007 but the GDP of new countries decreased the average.) Information gathered from CIA Worldbook. This meant that the EU got poorer with enlargement; although in the medium run it was able to grow back again.

² The Nice Treaty a). Increased the areas where qualified majority voting would be used, b). Rearranged the number of seats in the Commission so that each member state would have a seat in the College, adding up to 27 seats, which meant that the big members such as Germany, France or UK had to give up one of their seats and c). Increased the number of seats in the European Parliament from 700 to 732. European Commission (2001), "Treaty of Nice", *Official Journal of the European Communities*,

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/en/treaties/dat/12001C/pdf/12001C_EN.pdf

³ Because the 2007 enlargement happened only six months ago, there is not enough data yet to explain its impact on the EMP. However, given the fact that Romania and Bulgaria added to the weight of the eastern wing of the EU, one can lump the preferences of these countries to the eight who joined the EU in 2004.

Mediterranean Partnership. With the accession of the CEEC, foreign policy priorities of the EU changed and this resulted in the dilution of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership at the expense of building up a secure, democratic and prosperous eastern front. In line with the theoretical assumptions of liberal-intergovernmentalism (Moravcsik, 1993; 1997), this working paper aims to support this argument by displaying the preferences of member states, and particularly of those big states, which are perceived as the main engines of the EU integration and neighbourhood processes – France, Italy, Germany, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom.

2. Basic Principles of the EU Enlargement:

As widely embraced both by bureaucrats and scholars, enlargement has always been the most influential and effective foreign policy instrument the European Union has utilized. This is because of the generous benefits the applicants are promised to receive once they fulfil the Copenhagen Criteria and complete negotiations on each of the 35 chapters of the *acquis communautaire*. Being able to enjoy the “four freedoms”; that is, the free movement of goods, services, people and capital, as well as the structural and regional funds and investment opportunities, contributes to the ever-growing desire of countries scattered in and around the European continent to become full members.

The prospect of European Union membership, therefore, is alluring to the extent that becoming a member state increases the country’s economic capabilities significantly. Moreover, membership is also a carrot to undertake significant political reforms, which contribute to the democratic character of the country. Especially with respect to those countries of the Southern Mediterranean rim, namely Spain, Portugal and Greece, European membership was not only a window to receive substantial aid but also the most rewarding chance to move from transitory to consolidated democracies.⁴ In other words, the EU for these countries was a project of democratisation, the result of which would have significant outcomes for good governance and economic growth. Of course, the importance of democracy for the EU should be seen as a two-lane road. The European Union is just as enthusiastic to create a wider democratic region as the candidate countries are to democratise their systems to get in to “the Club”. In fact, this was the rationale behind the introduction of the Copenhagen Criteria in 1993, which dictated that one of the foremost prerequisites for becoming a member was to have a consolidated democracy that protects human and minority

⁴ Samuel P. Huntington, “Democracy’s Third Wave” in Larry Diamond and Mark F. Plattner (eds.) *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, pp. 3-26.

rights. Therefore, European Union membership was also a matter of political development, which was perceived as an asset by both sides.

Membership in the European Union also brings with it an ideational package of becoming a part of the largest continental project of the post-Second World War world. For becoming a member meant acknowledgment by the rest of the EU that the member country is a Western democracy with a free and competitive market. The EU project was also perceived to be the anti-thesis of the Soviet type of state system during the Cold War setting of 1945-90.

3. Eastern Enlargement of the European Union:

This brings us to the understanding behind the 2004 and 2007 enlargements of the European Union, which were almost exclusively limited to the central and eastern European countries (CEEC). In line with the above argument, these enlargements can be described in terms of rhetorical action – “the strategic use of norm-based arguments”⁵. That is, the fact that the European Union was a project to increase and bring together the liberal democratic states of the Continent necessitated the accession of CEEC as well, for they were fulfilling the accession criteria by 2004. This was parallel to the Cold War mindset, which made it imperative to include the ex-Soviet CEEC in the democratic Union of the West⁶. In that regard, the eastern enlargement was the declaration of the end of Soviet legacy over the CEEC and was also the manifestation of the European Union that it was open to all countries around the region that were able to fulfil the Copenhagen Criteria and adopt the *acquis*.

However, this was not a consistent signal given the aftermath of the enlargement. It created what came to be known as the “enlargement fatigue”, meaning that the EU was no longer able to move forward with 27 members. The accession of 10 plus two new members in such a short period resulted in an overloaded bureaucracy, in increased demands without the necessary infrastructure, and diverse preferences about EU policies, an example of which is the divergence of preferences over the neighbourhood surrounding the enlarged Union. The result showed that enlargement was no longer a plausible method to increase the power and influence of the Union, or for that matter, to increase the number of liberal democracies and free markets around the region.

⁵ See Frank Schimmelfennig, “The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union”, *International Organization*, Vol. 55, No. 1, Winter 2001, pp. 47-80.

⁶ Indeed, some perceive the eastern enlargement as “bringing Europe back together”.

The reality of the enlargement fatigue, therefore, necessitated the introduction of a new foreign policy tool, which would have the “carrots” that the prospect of full membership used to offer but would exclude that prospect in the long run. It was such a setting that ignited the Wider Europe – European Neighbourhood Policy framework, proposed by the Commission in 2004. The rationale behind it was to control, monitor and stabilize the new neighbourhood created by the 2004 enlargement in order to prevent the EU from “importing instability” and cross-border crime. Bringing peace and stability to the region, however, would only be possible by increasing the number of democracies. Acknowledging that this is a burdensome task, the European Union offered juicy carrots such as offering a stake in the Internal Market to stimulate the neighbouring countries to undertake political (as well as economic) reforms. In other words, liberal democracy, just like in the membership process, would become a prerequisite for a beneficial partnership with the EU.

4. From Western Europe to Mittel Europa:

Regardless of the debates over the merits or perils of eastern enlargement, there was one reality to be acknowledged: that the locus of power had moved from Western Europe, spearheaded by France and (to a lesser extent) United Kingdom to what came to be called *Mittel Europa*, led by Germany and its eastern counterparts. As the geographical distribution of member states significantly shifted to the east, foreign policy priorities also changed direction. Of course, here one should mention the bargaining power of member states in the EU and particularly of those new member states.

Andrew Moravcsik’s contribution to the literature includes bargaining patterns in the EU. In a number of writings, Moravcsik argues that the balance of bargaining power between members and candidate countries changes once candidates become members. During the negotiation process, “applicant countries have consistently found themselves in a weak negotiating position vis-à-vis their EU partners, and accordingly have conceded much in exchange for membership.”⁷ This is because of the simple fact that applicant countries have much to lose if they choose to leave the table, which in return gives substantial leverage to the EU members, which try to reap the most concessions out of the applicants. Moravcsik states that this “simple logic of asymmetrical interdependence – those who benefit the most from a policy must sacrifice the most on the margin – is the most profound factor shaping the

⁷ Andrew Moravcsik and Milada Anna Vachudova, (2003), “National Interests, State Power and EU Enlargement”, *Perspectives*, Vol. 19, pp. 22.

negotiations.”⁸ However, he continues to argue that “membership effectively reverses the power relationship between core and peripheral members of the EU.”⁹ In other words, once candidates become full members, they are elevated to an equal status with the rest of their counterparts and reap the institutional benefits of membership, i.e. the right to use their veto power and the ability to form opposing blocks in the Council. As we will show in the following pages, this approach can be best observed in the execution of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Undoubtedly, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership has evolved over the years with the contributions of both Mediterranean partners and European members. However, what it has evolved into was, to a great extent, determined by the 2004 initiative of the European Commission. This literally meant a change in the European Union’s perception of its periphery, now including the region beyond the eastern border as well as that of the south and therefore looking at the region with a wider spectrum.

In the post-2007 period, of the current 27 members of the EU, almost 50%¹⁰ of them belong to the central and eastern European region. When we look at the subject through an inter-governmentalist lens, this is a significant number in terms of being able to influence decisions on regional policies, foremost of which was the European Neighbourhood Policy. Indeed, what we observe is that although the Commission proposal was aimed at coupling the Barcelona Process with a new policy tool to engage with the eastern neighbours, the preferences of member states resulted in a virtual clash between the so-called “southerners” and “easterners”, both of which continue to try to shift the focus of the ENP in line with their own priorities. In other words, although the ENP is a larger umbrella to embrace the entire neighbourhood – both east and south - member state preferences are able to blur this vision and distort the objectives of the ENP according to their positions. Moreover, the ENP becomes the battleground for the everlasting Franco-German rivalry in the Union; two core countries which try to exert the most influence over the European integration process. The rest of this work will lay down these positions and analyse their impact on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

⁸ Andrew Moravcsik, “Bargaining Among Unequals: The Future of European Integration”, *The New Presence*, Summer 2003, pp. 6.

⁹ Andrew Moravcsik and Milada Anna Vachudova, (2003), “National Interests, State Power and EU Enlargement”, *Perspectives*, Vol. 19, pp. 27.

¹⁰ Germany, Austria and Poland being the largest three, Bulgaria, Romania, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

5. The EU member states of the East: Apathy towards the South

The Mediterranean has always been an important sea for Europe – especially after the southern enlargements of the EU in 1981 (Greece) and 1986 (Spain and Portugal). With the accession of these countries, the EU became neighbours with North African countries, which were home to anti-democratic regimes, high crime rates and low economic profiles. Engaging with this part of the world was therefore a must for the EU to protect its own territory both economically and demographically. Moreover, as a country with a colonial history, France also had a stake in the region. Because of its legacy, it was almost a historical duty for France to embrace North Africa, an understanding that unintentionally coupled the country with its southern Mediterranean counterpart Spain to embark upon a policy instrument to tackle the region. This was, however, an objective to be realized only after 1991, when the Union decided to adopt a political character with the Maastricht Treaty. Indeed, France and Spain were the two countries that gave shape and direction to this neighbourhood project, starting in the early 1990s and institutionalized in 1995.

This was not an easy task, however, for there were already diverging opinions within the Union. Germany was the foremost member state that objected to such a foreign policy initiative. Indeed, as early as 1996, the Nordic governments of the EU, including Germany, addressed the Barcelona Process, saying, “The Baltic Sea is just as European as the Mediterranean Sea.”¹¹ This was an important juncture for the then-nascent political Union, for it revealed that it was impossible for it to have a united stance on foreign policy matters. Indeed, this was manifest when the Baltic States Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden gathered in May 1996 “to strengthen regional cooperation and stimulate regional trade,”¹² around a common document entitled the Visby Charter. Here, one should note that it was this historical cooperation between the then eastern “candidates” and Germany that survived until and beyond 2004. In fact, the ratification of the Barcelona Process was contingent upon satisfying German preferences by promising the prospect of membership for its eastern clients.¹³ Therefore, our inter-governmentalist assumptions on package deals in the EU hold with respect to the

¹¹ “Towards a New Ostpolitik? Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia”, speech by Minister of State Erler at Georgetown University in Washington, Washington DC, 7 February 2007. Retrieved from <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de>

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Michael Dauderstaedt (2003), “The impact of EU Enlargement on the Euro-Mediterranean partnership”, *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Paper*, pp. 6.

Barcelona Process – to pass the Barcelona Declaration, the proponent countries had to negotiate with Germany. To gain Germany’s consent, they assured the country that the eastern enlargement process would move swiftly.

By 2004, when the EU embarked upon the Wider Europe initiative, it was almost self-evident that such a foreign policy tool was designed specifically to handle the eastern dimension of European neighbourhood, since the Barcelona Process was already in working condition. For this reason, it was a golden opportunity for Germany to exert its influence over the region. As the country with the highest population and GDP, the second largest foreign affairs service and the third largest military structure, Germany was certainly one of the largest countries of the EU, which gave it a very high level of action capacity.¹⁴ This characteristic of Germany, coupled with its historical role as the patron of ex-Soviet states, would make the country the perfect locomotive to tailor the ENP in such a way that this foreign policy tool would have a preferential position towards the east.

This understanding soon became an apparent policy direction, as in 2006 German Minister for Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier stated that there was a “need for a new approach towards the EU’s eastern neighbours.”¹⁵ However, given the progress of the countries that are included in the ENP, this proposal is highly biased. Many of Germany’s immediate neighbours such as Moldova and Ukraine had already adopted their Action Plans as early as 2005¹⁶, whereas many of the EMP countries such as Lebanon still wait for the European Union to adopt the Action Plans agreed in 2004. As of July 2007, Algeria is still waiting for the ENP country report that would be transformed into its Action Plan; Egypt is still framing its own Action Plan with the EU and Syria is way behind, trying to ratify the Association Agreement inherited from the 1995 Barcelona Declaration. Table 1 below shows the progress of EU neighbours in adopting these frameworks.

¹⁴ Baldur Thorhallsson, “The Size of States in the European Union: Theoretical and Conceptual Perspectives”, *European Integration*, March 2006, Vol. 28, No. 1, pp. 7-31.

¹⁵ “German foreign minister calls for a new EU approach towards the East”, *EurActiv*, 4 September 2006.

¹⁶ Except for Belarus, which severely suffers from anti-democratic governance.

Table 1: The Progress of Enacting Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements and European Neighborhood Policy Action Plans by 2007

Country	Contractual relations	ENP country report	ENP Action Plan	Adoption by EU	Adoption by partner country
Algeria	AA 2005	<i>Under development</i>	-	-	-
Armenia	PCA 1999	March 2005	Agreed 2006	-	-
Azerbaijan	PCA 1999	March 2005	Agreed 2006	-	-
Belarus	-	-	-	-	-
Egypt	AA 2004	March 2005	<i>Under development</i>	-	-
Georgia	PCA 1999	March 2005	Agreed 2006	-	-
Israel	AA 2000	May 2004	Agreed 2004	21 Feb 2005	11 Apr 2005
Jordan	AA 2002	May 2004	Agreed 2004	21 Feb 2005	11 Jan 2005
Lebanon	AA 2002	March 2005	Agreed 2006	-	-
Libya	-	-	-	-	-
Moldova	PCA 1998	May 2004	Agreed 2004	21 Feb 2005	22 Feb 2005
Morocco	AA 2000	May 2004	Agreed 2004	21 Feb 2005	27 Jul 2005
Palestinian Authority	Interim AA 1997	May 2004	Agreed 2004	21 Feb 2005	4 May 2005
Syria	<i>AA pending ratification</i>	-	-	-	-
Tunisia	AA 1998	May 2004	Agreed 2004	21 Feb 2005	4 Jul 2005
Ukraine	PCA 1998	May 2004	Agreed 2004	21 Feb 2005	21 Feb 2005

Source: "The European Neighborhood Policy", *EurActiv*, 6 July 2007.

This is an important picture to analyse, since whereas the Mediterranean countries have been engaging with the European Union for the past 12 years, many of them fall behind the new neighbours introduced by the ENP just three years ago. The new neighbours of the European Union were able to draft and sign their APs by 2005, that is, only one year after their acknowledgment as "new members", whereas the Mediterranean neighbours are still at the stage of framing their APs, such as Egypt. In other words, the time span devoted to bringing the eastern neighbours into the EU neighbourhood framework is much shorter than that of the Mediterranean neighbours. What this illuminates is that the EU devotes significant attention

and political will to the east at the expense of the south. To flourish and legitimize the ENP, therefore, it has to pay even more attention, both politically and economically, to bring the Mediterranean partners back on track. The Union has to provide the EMP with the necessary willingness to encourage its MPCs to continue with political and economic reforms. Germany, on the other hand, begs to differ.

Traditionally, the member state that holds the presidency frames the policy priorities of the entire Union, and these priorities often overlap with the individual priorities of that president member state. To nobody's surprise, therefore, Germany's EU Presidency signalled an increased willingness and power to push for the eastern dimension of the ENP at the expense of the south. Indeed, in one of her interviews the Commissioner for External Relations, Benito Ferrero-Waldner stated, that "Brussels will thrust to boost the eastern wing of the ENP in line with the upcoming German EU presidency's policy priorities."¹⁷ Similarly, in a CER Briefing Note, Barysch underlines that "Berlin will try to direct EU foreign policy towards the EU's eastern neighbourhood."¹⁸ In fact, the Merkel administration was eager enough to propose an ENP-plus¹⁹ that would be framed by the Commission, particularly designed for Germany's priority neighbours, Georgia, Moldova, "and lately even Belarus" as well as Ukraine, with the latter having an apparent membership prospect that is supported by Germany. ENP-plus argues that the states which are more willing than others should enjoy greater benefits as well as juicier carrots.²⁰ Of course, the argument of willingness here is a subjective one, depending on whose eyes one looks at the neighbouring countries. Moreover, such a policy proposal clearly ranks ENP states among each other, causing discontent and competition. Because of its inherent and clear subjectivity, Mediterranean countries of the Union and most notably Spain disagreed with the proposal, which removed the proposal from Berlin's agenda.²¹

¹⁷ "EU swings focus onto ex-Soviet neighbors", *EUObserver*, 4 December 2006.

¹⁸ Katinka Barysch, "What To Expect from the German Presidency?", *CER Briefing Note*, January 2007, pp. 4.

¹⁹ The commission's ENP-plus will suggest a second new fund of €700 million to help neighbourhood states co-fund borrowing from the European Investment Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, with Brussels hoping member states will top up its €700 million to €7 billion.

Brussels is also set to propose a new multilateral diplomatic structure for the six ex-Soviet states covered by the ENP on the model of the Barcelona Process, which has tried to improve relations with Mediterranean rim states as a group since it was put in place in 1995. Source: Andrew Rettman, "Morocco and Jordan lead EU 'neighborhood' pack", *EUObserver*, 21 November 2006.

²⁰ Michael Emerson, Gergana Noutcheva, Nicu Popescu, "European Neighborhood Policy Two Years On: Time indeed for an 'ENP plus'", *CEPS Policy Brief*, March 2006, No. 126, pp 1.

²¹ Dauderstaedt, Michael. (2003) "The impact of EU Enlargement on the Euro-Mediterranean partnership", Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Paper.

Nevertheless, these disagreements did not stop Germany from clearly pronouncing its own perception of the ENP. Soon after the country took the presidency in January 1, 2007, a speech the Minister of State Gernot Erler gave at Georgetown University states that “the regional priority of the German EU Presidency is to expand the European area of security and stability. To this end, we intend to devote particular attention to the EU’s relations with its neighbours to the east.”²² Controlling migration as well as transforming and modernizing the post-Soviet region, Erler says, are the components of their agenda of “strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy.”²³

This is an immensely important example to show the German administration’s perception of the ENP. As we mentioned earlier, although the ENP was introduced to bring the southern and eastern (and northern, for that matter) dimensions of European neighbourhood under a common umbrella, developments taking place since 2004 created a false illusion that the ENP was specific to the eastern neighbourhood. Erler’s statement of “strengthening the ENP”, therefore, points to that illusion – throughout his speech, he does not mention the Mediterranean dimension of the ENP.

Nevertheless, the German Presidency did tackle the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership by preparing a ministerial level conference on higher education and scientific research. Convened in June 2007 – just two weeks prior to handing the seat to Portugal – the meeting embarked upon a project towards a Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education and Research Area. The final document of this meeting, the so-called Cairo Declaration, stated that it was necessary to increase the standards in education and research across the MENA region by approximating the system to that of the EU’s as well as modernizing research and development policies in the MPCs.²⁴ In addition to the Cairo meeting, in May and June 2007 Berlin hosted the first rounds of Euro-Med Youth Parliament, as well as preparing a conference on Employment and Social Dialogue, which is aimed at strengthening the civil society aspect of the EMP²⁵.

²² “Towards a New Ostpolitik? Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia”, speech by Minister of State Erler at Georgetown University in Washington, Washington DC, 7 February 2007. Retrieved from <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de>

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ “Towards a Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education and Research Area” (Cairo Declaration), *First Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Higher Education and Scientific Research*, Cairo, 18 June 2007. Retrieved from the German Presidency website <http://www.bmbf.de>

²⁵ “Strengthening the European Neighborhood Policy: Presidency Progress Report”, *General Affairs and External Relations Council*, 18 and 19 June 2007, pp. 5.

Although Germany should be given credit for such initiatives, the timing and the substance of them generate questions about the political and material willingness of the country toward boosting the relations with the Euro-Med partners. This becomes an even more critical point given the fact that it was a fellow member state, Spain, whose enclaves along the Moroccan coastline Ceuta and Melilla were raided by illegal migrants less than a year ago. News reveals that in 2005 alone “more than 12,000 have attempted to enter Melilla in the hope of getting that foothold in Spain.”²⁶

This reality points toward a significant failure of the EMP in terms of securing the borders of the European Union and managing good neighbourly relations with close countries in the south. Given the fact that Frontex, the EU’s Border Control Agency established in 2005, is located in Warsaw contributes to this failure. Analysts rightly argue that there is “concern about whether guards from one part of Europe would really be fit to tell another country’s border guards.”²⁷ This is yet another important signal for how the EU conceptualizes its “neighbourhood” – evidently for securing borders, priority is given to the east. Unfortunately, the German Presidency followed this trend of keeping aloof from Mediterranean problems as the preceding two other disinterested countries – Austria and Finland – did. On the other hand, Germany’s ‘Strengthening the European Neighbourhood: Presidency Progress Report’ reveals that the presidency has held many rounds with Ukraine on the negotiations over an Enhanced Agreement, “which should be considered as a flagship project for the enhanced ENP.”²⁸ Moreover, during the German Presidency Action Plans with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia were being implemented, and they concluded negotiations for visa facilitation and readmission agreements with Ukraine and Moldova.²⁹ As these examples show, given the migratory pressures directed to the EU from its southern borders, the tightened relations with the eastern neighbours can only be explained by the policy priorities of the German Presidency. This is, without a doubt, the by-product of the country being one of the foremost engines of the European integration project.

It should be noted, however, that Germany was certainly not alone in supporting the eastern dimension of the ENP. Many of the new members, notably Poland, supported the ENP, once again falsely perceiving that the ENP was solely an eastern-oriented neighbourhood

²⁶ “EU Outposts turn into fortresses”, *BBC News*, 29 September 2005.

²⁷ “Migrant clashes expose EU shortcomings”, *EUObserver*, 4 October 2005.

²⁸ “Strengthening the European Neighborhood Policy: Presidency Progress Report”, *General Affairs and External Relations Council*, 18 and 19 June 2007, pp. 3.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

initiative.³⁰ The reason behind Poland's support to the ENP, however, is more ideational than material. It is the post-Cold War rationale, namely to pull "Christian nations into the EU away from the Russian sphere of influence"³¹, that formulates the Polish preference. Here, one can point out two ideational factors. First, there is a clear statement that Poland prefers the patronage of the EU to that of Russia. Secondly, and more importantly for our purposes, there is a religious preference in it. This is a very critical point in terms of handling the Barcelona Process, simply because the MPCs are predominantly Muslim. Put differently, a Christian approach towards the ENP distorts the objectives behind the policy and paves the way for discrimination against the Muslim-populated countries of the Mediterranean.

This approach is not peculiar to Poland, though. The Lithuanians, the Slovaks and the Hungarians, "the countries with minorities in the Eastern countries, and stronger cultural and historical roots with the Eastern neighbours"³² display a strong Christian identity, which contribute to the Polish position and tie back to the German policy of prioritisation within the Wider Europe Framework. Lithuania in particular, for instance, is yet another example of how the ENP is misperceived. Prior to the visit of the US President to Brussels in 2005, ten EU members were chosen to address ten big policy issues to the President to avoid the meeting become a shouting match. In this arrangement, Lithuania was left out of the club of ten. Resenting the arrangement, a Lithuanian diplomat stated that they were still planning to raise the EU's neighbourhood policy. Ironically, Spain *was* in the chosen ten, which was assigned to address the Barcelona Process!³³ Although we do not have clear information about who assigned these topics to member states (was it the Commission or the free will of member state diplomats themselves? – If the former was the planner, then there is an even larger problem with the communication of the ENP to the EU), it is apparent that the ENP falls short of explaining its *raison d'être* to the constituency of the European Union, therefore weakening the possibility of strengthening the Euro-Med partnership. For the misrepresentation and therefore the misperception of the ENP causes member states, and mostly those situated in the east, to decouple its southern dimension from its eastern counterpart.

³⁰ Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2003), "The New Neighbors – A Framework for Relations, Proposals from Poland", cited in Madalena Meyer-Resende, "The Impact of Eastern Enlargement on the Barcelona Process", *EuroMeSCo Paper*, No. 38, November 2004, pp. 5.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 5.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 5.

³³ "EU prepares carefully managed summit with US", *EUObserver*, 17 February 2005.

The reason why we concentrate on these minor powers of the EU such as Slovakia, Hungary or Lithuania should be traced to Moravcsik's bargaining explanation, which, as mentioned earlier, argues that these smaller countries increase their bargaining power against other members once they become members themselves. In line with this argument, the fact that these countries support the "easternisation" of the ENP vis-à-vis its Mediterranean dimension contributes to Polish and ultimately to German positions, albeit for different reasons. In other words, these countries, although minor in themselves, bolster Germany's position and therefore make Germany even more powerful against other member states, which support a more even-handed approach towards the EU's neighbourhood.

Of course, it should be acknowledged that the geographical and historical distances between *Mittel Europa* and the Mediterranean cause such a lack of association across the member states and partner countries. As one Polish observer of the EU says: "The Mediterranean, seen from most of the EU's new member states is a distant sea ... It is a struggle to get our domestic politicians to take an interest in salient EU related issues let alone something they consider to be esoteric as a policy aimed at creating 'a region of peace, stability and prosperity' in the Mediterranean."³⁴ This, however, should not distort the definition and principles of the ENP, which tries to reach all neighbours, regardless of their geographical position. Unfortunately this is not yet achieved, causing the eastern members to push for the ENP, although what they are really doing is to push its eastern dimension at the expense of diluting that of the south. Establishing Frontex in Warsaw, for example, is a clear demonstration of this perception. The proponents of the Mediterranean dimension, that is the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, on the other hand, try to counterbalance this misperception that is produced and reproduced by the eastern camp. Spearheaded by France, this brings back the historical Franco-German axis in the process of European integration. Whereas "traditionally, the motor of EU initiatives has been the bilateral relationship between France and Germany,"³⁵ it is observed that on the subject of foreign policy the "core" EU countries significantly diverge from each other, therefore weakening the EU at large.

³⁴ Krzysztof Bobinski, (2004), "European Enlargement and the Barcelona Process" in Andreas Jacobs (ed.), *Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation: enlarging and widening the perspective*, Zentrum für Europäeische Integrationforschung Discussion Paper No. 131, cited in Kaczynski et. al., "Political Scenarios for the EU and Its Neighborhood – Views from Selected Southern Mediterranean Countries and Eastern European Countries", *EuroMeCSO Paper* No. 60, October 2006, pp.12.

³⁵ Heather Grabbe and Ulrike Guerot, "Could a Hard Core Run the Enlarged EU?", *CER Briefing Note*, February 2004, pp. 1.

6. The EU member states of the south: Pulling the EMP back in?

Although the Barcelona Process is a genuine Spanish initiative, it received significant political support from France, which, as mentioned earlier, has historical ties with the MENA countries. Using this foreign policy initiative to bolster its own position in the EU – supporting the EMP would mean attracting the entire Mediterranean rim of the EU to its side – France became a natural opponent of Germany, which was simultaneously lobbying for the ex-Soviet candidate countries of the east. Indeed, soon after the 2005 events in Ceuta and Melilla and only a few weeks before the tenth anniversary of the Barcelona Declaration, the French and Spanish presidents came together in a meeting, where President Chirac stated that “illegal immigration...it’s not a Spanish problem, nor moreover is it a Moroccan one, it’s a European one.”³⁶ During the meeting, President Chirac declared: “We are wholeheartedly supporting our Spanish friends’ initiative and effort in this Euro-Mediterranean area, particularly at a time when the new European budget is going to come in with the neighbourhood initiative taking over.”³⁷ This was a most apparent reply to the rather disinterested EU Presidency at the time but also to those countries in the east, first and foremost Germany, which turned a blind eye to the Mediterranean neighbourhood that became prey to massive illegal migratory pressures. It was also the re-manifestation of the Franco-Spanish collaboration for the strengthening of Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Moreover, the French President underlined the necessity of keeping the budgetary balance by putting relatively more emphasis on the Mediterranean – that the two thirds of the ENP budget should be devoted to the Mediterranean and the rest to the former Soviet Union countries.³⁸ This warning, however, did not find enough support in the EU: for the 2007-2013 budgetary period, €3,64 per capita is to be spent for the eastern countries of the ENP whereas the amount drops to €3,34 per capita for its Mediterranean counterparts.³⁹ One should not be confused by such a small gap, though: the difference on the whole becomes ca. €150 million, which is more than three times the financial assistance given to Lebanon between 1995-

³⁶ “Statements made by M. Jacques Chirac, President of the Republic, during his joint press conference with Mr Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, President of the Government of Spain”, *18th Franco-Spanish Summit*, Paris, 10 November 2005. Retrieved from <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr>.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ “EU swings focus onto ex-Soviet neighbors”, *EUObserver*, 4 December 2006.

2003⁴⁰. Numbers do not lie – the economic bias towards the eastern dimension constrains the MENA countries, which try to survive in a region that gets messier by the day.

Spain, on the other hand, stands out as the admiral of the EMP but was not reluctant to show how worrisome it was soon after the 2004 enlargement. The fact that the country stands the closest to North Africa and has territory, albeit small, in the region makes it the most sensitive member in the EU with respect to the Union's attitude towards its backyard, especially at a time when the EU massively enlarged to the east. Indeed, it was with this rationale in mind that in November 2005, that is only six months after the enlargement, by a joint declaration with France, Portugal and Italy, Spain underlined the necessity of strengthening the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and its Foreign Minister; Miguel Angel Moratinos stated that “the Mediterranean should not be a forgotten sea.”⁴¹

This position was supported by Italy, when one of the country's MEP, Pasqualina Napolitano said in 2005 “the Mediterranean represents for Europe, even more today than before, an absolute priority.”⁴²

Napolitano's statement was pre-emptively complemented in 2003 by those of George Papandreou, Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs, who said in the EMP Midterm Conference: “Europe's development cannot be completed only with the deepening and the enlargement towards the East and the North. We need to have a close link with the Mediterranean area and safeguard values such as peace, safety, human rights in the wider area.”⁴³ During the Midterm Conference jointly organized with Italy, Greece underlined the necessity of focusing on the Middle East and reviving the Barcelona Process, which is “a priority for enlarged Europe.”⁴⁴

As one can see, until here, therefore, Mediterranean countries showed a determined commitment towards the EMP, which brings them next to their core partner, i.e. France, and simultaneously puts them against the eastern members of the EU, spearheaded by Germany and to a lesser extent, Poland. In the end, however, such a polarisation within the Union on foreign policy preferences is translated into a weakened and forgotten EMP first by the

⁴⁰ Retrieved from the European Commission Website on Lebanon, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/projects/med/bilateral/lebanon_en.htm.

⁴¹ “EU-four call for focus on Mediterranean”, *EUObserver*, 4 October 2004.

⁴² “Helping Europe's southern neighbors take a leap forward”, *European Voice*, 12 May 2005, Vol. 11, No. 18.

⁴³ “Greek FM Papandreou speaks on Euro-Mediterranean Partnership”, Midterm Conference of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, Crete, 26 May 2003. Retrieved from European Union Website.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Commission's proposal for establishing a Wider European area which had a strong eastern essence in it and then by the preferences of subsequent President countries – Ireland, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Britain, Austria, Finland and Germany – most of which did not have stakes in a common Mediterranean policy. We hope to see a change in this trend by the current Presidency to be held by the Portuguese until January 2008.

Indeed, the Portuguese road map does concentrate on the southern dimension of the ENP. In his program presentation address in the European Parliament, Portuguese Prime Minister Socrates underlines how Portugal will prioritise relations with the Mediterranean in order to “overcome some of the blockages in fundamental areas such as the management of migratory flows.”⁴⁵ Nevertheless, it should still be realized that presidencies come and go, but policies stay intact – to revive the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the EU has to have a political agenda that exists beyond the short-term preferences of president countries. The Commission, in that regard, plays a key role: it should be able to set an agenda that will not only be accepted by the member states but also propose policies in such a way that they will have their own dynamics in the future once they are implemented and will be able to work rather independently from the rotating presidencies.

7. Britain: the Outsider:

In this dichotomous setting that divides the EU along the Franco-German axis; Britain stands out as a critical case, not least because it is historically a rather low-profile player in the Union. Although it is one of the strongest member states, it is noticeable that Britain mostly preferred to stay on the margins of the EU integration process. This trend did not change with the EU foreign policy either. With respect to the EMP, Britain did support the Spanish initiative in 1995 and it also took part in the organisation of the Euro-Med Partnership's tenth anniversary, but nothing concrete went beyond these acts of good will. In fact, the reason why the country pays particular attention to the MENA might be traced to its “dangerous liaisons” with its Atlantic ally, the United States. As the flagship of the Atlantic alliance in the Continent, Britain prioritises its regional preferences to the south, since building up good relations contributes to the democratisation and stability in the region, which is in and of itself an important policy priority for the United States administration. In other words, British support seems to be contingent upon its own bilateral relations with the US administration,

⁴⁵ Speech by Prime Minister Jose Socrates, *Presentation of the Programme of the Portuguese Presidency*, Strasbourg, 11 July 2007.

which blurs the country's unbiased, impartial commitment to the Union's own policy agenda for the region.

Evidence seems to concur: in a 2005 speech, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Jack Straw stated that the region needs special attention to spread democracy and reduce poverty as well as threat. However, the route he chooses brings in the country's transatlantic links: "I am determined that the United Kingdom play our full part in uniting Europe and the United States in a single common purpose, supporting modernization and reform in the Middle East,"⁴⁶ putting Britain farther away from its Continental counterparts, who have already expressed their disappointment in Britain for aligning with the US unilaterally in the 2003 Iraqi operation. Therefore, Britain's commitment to its transatlantic partner dilutes the political will it directs to the Spanish initiative, which dampens the presently weakened Euro-Med partnership. From a European perspective, this might be translated into Britain's historical preference to sustain a calm relationship with the French as well.

Nevertheless, the individual initiative of Britain should be alarming for the entire European Union community, for it concentrates a specific effort on the Middle East. When we look at the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, we observe that its Middle Eastern dimension is missing, in spite of the fact that the EMP is the only platform where Israel and the Palestinian Authority are brought together. In fact, this might well be the most important weakness of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership – losing a historical chance to bring the crisis to an end by building economic, political and cultural ties with these partner countries. Despite the Barcelona Declaration's ambitious principles agreed in 1995, the EU member states act reluctantly when it comes to working for the Middle East – except for Britain, which has its own reasons in line with its bilateral relations with the third countries. Following the collapse of the Middle East Peace Process, the *sine die* deferral of the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Stability in 2000⁴⁷, which might have been a monumental document to drive the EMP forward by generating confidence and trust across the region, shows how the lack of political will dampens the long term objectives of the EMP. Rather than utilizing the EMP to promote peace in the Middle East, putting it aside until peace is brought by a *deus ex machina* undoubtedly decreases the relatively good reputation the EU enjoys in the region.

⁴⁶ "Straw democracy speech in full", *BBC News*, 10 March 2005.

⁴⁷ "Presidency's formal conclusions", *Fourth Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers*, Marseilles, 15 and 16 November 2000. Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/euromed/conf/marseilles/conclusions_en.pdf.

Moreover, how the Israelis and the Palestinians perceive the EU efforts add up to its weakness as an impartial policy instrument. “According to 60% of the Israelis, Europe rarely or never condemns Palestinian violence. Israel also has repeatedly accused the EU of funding Palestinian terrorism.”⁴⁸ Similarly, Palestinians also resent the EU, for it turned a blind eye to Israel’s manipulation of custom accounts and fell short of deterring them.⁴⁹ Such accusations from both sides show that the EU is unable to build up an impartial reputation in the eye of its Middle Eastern partners, which might indirectly alter its perception by its Arab partners in the Mediterranean, ultimately causing a lack of confidence in the EMP.

Today, the main EU contribution to the recovery of the Middle East is done through the Quartet⁵⁰, where it takes part with the US, the UN and Russia. This also reveals that the EMP cannot become an in-depth foreign policy tool for the European Union and at best stands as an individualistic, minor and naïve attempt to embrace the region as a whole. To nobody’s surprise, given the 2004 enlargement and the positions of the new member states towards it, there is even a smaller possibility for the EMP to play a significant role in the region.

Is this the end of the road for the EMP, then? This work has explained so far the black clouds the new member states brought over the Barcelona Process; the meagre efforts of Western / Southern European members of the EU which did not go beyond rhetoric; the outlier cases in the EU such as Britain that undermines the Franco-Spanish efforts to boost the Mediterranean dimension of the ENP by unilaterally focusing on the Middle East; and that the EMP is already at a disadvantage for it has been unable to have a well-established Middle Eastern policy agenda in the first place. The rest of this working paper will tackle the recent developments taking place in the EU and try to reach some conclusions about the future of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

⁴⁸ Nathalie Tocci, “The Widening Gap between Rhetoric and Reality in EU Policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict”, *CEPS Working Documents*, January 2005, No. 217, pp.13.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.14.

⁵⁰ Also known as the Diplomatic Quartet (on the Middle East), the four parties released a common statement in July 2002 to reach a two-state solution in the Middle East by 2005. The Quartet’s 2003 road map aims to reach a viable, lasting solution to end the Arab-Israeli crisis and thus bring stability to the region, although this road map has not been realized yet. The Quartet, whose Special Envoy is the recently resigned British PM Tony Blair, meets regularly at senior levels to discuss the situation in the region. It can be argued that the four adds visibility and credibility to the efforts to resolve the crisis in the Middle East. See the United Nations website www.un.org and www.state.gov/p/nea/rt/c9963.htm to read the statements made by the Quartet between 2002-2007.

8. Recent Developments, Policy Suggestions:

What we have observed so far is that the European Union's Mediterranean policy has greatly suffered from the 2004 enlargement and, consequently, from the domination of the east. Complementing that ongoing trend in the Union, the year 2007 witnessed the completion of the foreseeable eastern enlargement of the European Union by extending accession to Bulgaria and Romania. Moreover, this latest wave of enlargement brought the EU to the shores of the Black Sea, which is yet another region that needs special attention because of its natural resources and critical countries surrounding it such as Russia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. In other words, there emerged another dimension for the ENP to tackle, which in return carries the possibility of devoting a lesser amount of effort to the south. On the other hand, however, 2007 also saw the emergence of a much stronger and more determined France with the arrival of Nicolas Sarkozy in the presidential post in May. The purpose of this part of the working paper is to understand his idea of a "Union of the Mediterranean" he proposed recently. Our aim will be to evaluate whether France can really put the Mediterranean dimension back on the agenda or not.

President Sarkozy first uttered his idea of creating a Mediterranean Union during a campaign speech in February 2007. Although it was just one of the proposals he made during his candidacy, this project of a "Club-Med" immediately became a top item in his European agenda. Of course, there are many obvious reasons for such a groundbreaking proposal. First, it is the tacit manifestation of the country's discontent with the European Neighbourhood Policy that has virtually forgotten its Mediterranean commitments since 2004. As we have pointed out earlier, France has a clear policy priority with respect to the southern neighbours due to its historical legacy in the region. Indeed, the fact that the current policy arrangements ignore that part of the neighbourhood forced the French to come up with their own policy.

This brings us to the second reason, which is the explicit distrust of the French towards the EU's present foreign policy instruments. Although the country was the backbone of European integration for many decades, Mr. Sarkozy believed and convinced his constituency that the European foreign policy was unresponsive to its preferences, which signals a deep crack in the EU's deepening process among its very own members. Rather than improving the present structure, trying to establish its own policy instrument signals that distrust between members.

Furthermore, the fact that this proposal was made at a time when Germany was framing its ENP-plus⁵¹ signalled that France was ready to confront Germany.

Thirdly, the Club-Med initiative was a way of bringing France back into the *Kerneuropa*. Indeed, Mr. Sarkozy revealed the new French position quite clearly, when he stated during his victory speech that “tonight, France is back in Europe.”⁵² In other words, by establishing its own foreign policy tool the French would not only have the opportunity to leave the ENP scheme, but would also show that the EU was “unable” and that it would be the French which could make it stand up again. In short, the French proposal hit many birds with one stone.

Simply put, what the Club-Med project aims at is to create an enhanced Barcelona Process – just like the German ENP-plus – that would bolster the EU commitments in the south, notably in the area of illegal migration. “The ‘Club-Med’ countries would form a council and hold regular summits under a rotating presidency. Mr. Sarkozy’s aides talked of setting up a Mediterranean investment bank modelled on the European one.”⁵³ As one can see, the proposal is still a loose project, but it introduces concrete novelties such as the investment bank, which would release the southern neighbourhood from its ENP chains if it were implemented.

The Club-Med proposal soon received attention by other pro-south members as well as the partners of the EMP, such as Spain, Italy and Israel.⁵⁴ Although it is quite a positive development for the future of EU-Mediterranean relations, it still raises questions as to whether this can really be the initiative the Euro-Med partnership so desperately needs.

First of all, as mentioned earlier, Mr. Sarkozy’s Union of the Mediterranean is still a vaguely defined proposal. It gives one the feeling that it was uttered in a matter of moments, without thinking about the background conditions upon which such an initiative will be contingent. For instance, if Mr. Sarkozy wants to establish the Union within the EU framework, then he will need to search for a rather large consensus base. Is this possible? Germany, for instance, recently stated: “We must be careful not to inject competition between the one and the other

⁵¹ Michael Emerson and Nathalie Tocci, “A little clarification, please, on the ‘Union of the Mediterranean’”, *CEPS Commentary*, 8 June 2007.

⁵² “Sarkozy: ‘France is back in Europe’”, *EurActiv*, 7 May 2007.

⁵³ “Sarko’s ‘Club Med’ makes regional waves”, *Times Online*, 20 May 2007.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* See also the statements made by M. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic, during his joint press briefing with Mr Romano Prodi, Italian Prime Minister following their meeting, 28 May 2007. Retrieved from <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr>.

with our policies of neighbourliness.”⁵⁵ Given the eastern position and the British reluctance toward the possibility of an all-powerful France, it seems unlikely that such a heroic proposal will receive enough support.

Secondly, as some analysts also point out, Mr. Sarkozy’s plan does not mention its good old predecessor, the Barcelona Process.⁵⁶ Even though his idea is to do exactly what the Barcelona Summit in 1995 set out to do (but could not), only with more attractive carrots this time, him turning a blind eye to the previous efforts signal that Mr. Sarkozy might not be all-benevolent in his endeavours. In other words, the real intention behind the French plan might be to make France a more central and dominant player in the EU even by kicking Spain to the side, rather than a selfless one that tries to channel resources to create an area of “peace, stability and prosperity.” Given Mr. Sarkozy’s previous statements on France, it is highly likely that the country stands on the former line.⁵⁷

Third, there is the everlasting dilemma of the Middle East – should the Mediterranean Union include the countries of the Middle East or simply turn its back on them? This is, without a doubt, contingent upon the amount of political and economic effort that France is willing to spend in the foreseeable future. Given the state of the French economy today, it seems likely that France will choose to divert its resources to its own population, which suffers from high levels of unemployment, rather than a distant region with which Britain and the United States have been engaged actively. Consequently, however, this reduces the Club Med’s probability of success: as mentioned earlier, it is the inability and unwillingness of the Europeans to include the Middle East in their Mediterranean efforts that contribute to their failure. In other words, any initiative on the Mediterranean that excludes the Middle East is bound to failure. In that sense, the Sarkozy plan will either need to be revised or simply erased off the agenda for it will not add a marginal benefit towards the EU-Mediterranean relations, unless it incorporates a Middle Eastern dimension. In short, although Sarkozy’s ambitious proposal stole the ENP’s thunder and brought it back on Southern and Western Europe again, it seems to be that it will not be the golden instrument that will make France the flagship of Europe –

⁵⁵ “Germany cautious on Sarkozy’s Mediterranean bloc plan”, *EUbusiness*, 5 July 2007.

⁵⁶ Michael Emerson and Nathalie Tocci, “A little clarification, please, on the ‘Union of the Mediterranean’”, *CEPS Commentary*, 8 June 2007.

⁵⁷ In a speech given in July 2007, Sarkozy says: “From time immemorial, France has been herself, France has been great, and France has been strong only when she stood at Europe’s centre of gravity...” Nicolas Sarkozy, *Future of Europe*, Strasbourg, 2 July 2007.

Retrieved from http://www.info-france-usa.org/news/statmnts/2007/sarkozy_eu_070207.asp

nor will it be that instrument to miraculously change the course of the EU's relations with its southern neighbours.

“There are fears amongst the Mediterranean countries that our expansion will create new dividing lines to the detriment of relations between us. On the contrary, we believe that enlargement will translate into a renewed European contribution to peace, stability, and prosperity along our common borders”⁵⁸, stated Chris Patten, the then Commissioner for External Relations in his 2003 speech during the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Ministers. In a nutshell, this work has defended that Mr. Patten was wrong. The eastern enlargement has eroded the Barcelona Process first by putting substantial emphasis on the European Neighbourhood Policy, thereby leaving the EMP alone and second, by shifting the focus of power in the EU to the east, where the member states are simply not interested in a distant sea. However, we have stated above that a possible French attempt to establish a brand new Mediterranean Union does not help the EMP to grow from its ashes either.

What does the EMP need, then? As several experts argue⁵⁹, the EMP needs the differentiation of the ENP. In other words, an EMP that is almost forcefully integrated to the pro-eastern ENP does not, and cannot, work in the context of neighbourliness; for the EU is not only home to diverse policy priorities but also different regions which have different problems to tackle. In exchange for insisting on such an “all inclusive” umbrella, therefore, the EU can have different baskets of instruments to be used for different geographical areas under the ENP setting. This kind of a “diversified umbrella” would contribute greatly to the European Neighbourhood Policy, for it would pave the way for a “multi-speed Europe” that the enlarged Union desperately needs in terms of dealing with external relations with third parties. While all neighbouring countries would be classified as the building blocks of a Wider Europe, they would still get special treatment from the EU – from those according to their capabilities to those according to their needs.

In line with this, the EU has to allocate time, political will and economic benefits even-handedly between the east and the south. As we have mentioned earlier, the amount of funds allocated to the eastern neighbours is significantly higher than that of the southern neighbours. If the EU wants to increase the legitimacy of the ENP in the eyes of its Mediterranean

⁵⁸ “The EU, the Mediterranean and the Middle East: A longstanding partnership”, *EUFocus*, May 2004, No. 1, Vol. 1.

⁵⁹ For some examples, see Michael Emerson, Gergana Noutcheva, Nicu Popescu, “European Neighborhood Policy Two Years On: Time indeed for an ‘ENP plus’”, *CEPS Policy Brief*, March 2006, No. 126. Richard Youngs, “Europe’s flawed approach to Arab democracy”, *CER Essays*, October 2006. Heather Grabbe, “How the EU should help its neighbours”, *CER Policy Brief*, June 2004.

partners, first it has to show that it is economically able and willing to cooperate with them. Furthermore, the fact that the eastern neighbours' institutional integration to the ENP, (i.e. the adoption of their APs) was much faster than that of the Mediterranean partners also undermines the sustainability and credibility of the ENP. Therefore, what the EU should do is to boost the Mediterranean dimension by engaging intensely with the MPCs to speed up the process for their adoption of the Action Plans. We expect the Portuguese Presidency in the second half of 2007 to initiate such a project. It should be noted, however, that the Mediterranean dimension of the ENP can only be sustainable if the EU takes a united position to bring in the region as a top item in its foreign policy agenda.

Whatever the course of action it chooses to remedy discontent, only time will show whether the EU will be able to become an impartial neighbour to the non-members in question.

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