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The ‘European’ ‘Neighbourhood’ ‘Policy’

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Syuzanna Vasilyan
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The ‘European’ ‘Neighbourhood’ ‘Policy’
A holistic account

Syuzanna Vasilyan

Introduction
The almost five-year-old European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) has become the European Union’s (EU) most tricky political endeavour. Fluctuating at the juncture of the EU’s internal/external policy divide, it encompasses 16 countries to the EU’s east (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova and the South Caucasian countries—Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia), and to its south (the Maghreb—Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia, excluding Mauritania—and Mashreq—Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, as well as Israel and the Palestinian Autonomous Areas).1 Devised to avoid the urge of expansion in the short or medium term, the ENP stands out as an alternative to enlargement whereby the Union has become exasperated with institutional ‘widening’ and has opted to focus on ‘deepening’, representing integration ‘with’, rather than ‘into’ the EU.

Meanwhile, the very concept of ‘European Neighbourhood Policy’ does not adequately reflect the essence of the policy. First, the term ‘European’ is misleading and it should instead be renamed EUnorean. The EU seems to have monopolized the ‘label’, while still occupied with the puzzle as to what Europeanness connotes. This runs into contradiction with the acclaimed European belonging of some neighbours—members of the Council of Europe (CoE), which comprises all the 47 member states on the European continent, except for Belarus due to its insufficient record of democracy and human rights. Second, the word ‘neighbourhood’ is an awkward choice. It has been claimed to be an ‘othering’ practice (Meloni 2007), and the policy epitomizes a deliberately selected ‘political vicinity’ since the EU’s geographical neighbourhood is much broader and some countries, like Azerbaijan, which does not border on a (potential) EU member state, or Jordan, which does not share a littoral border with the Mediterranean Sea, are included.2 Finally, the concept ‘policy’ is erroneous since the ENP seems to lack a coherent strategy (Emerson 2004). Instead, the ENP manifests a tactical external relations exercise.

This chapter analyses the ENP by unveiling its historical record; distilling the ‘policy’ stimuli; examining its texture; investigating the ‘edifice’ that the Union has put in place to deal with it; critically scrutinizing its nature; explaining it within the major theoretical/conceptual paradigms;
and making a political prognosis. This holistic account is provided by allowing reciprocal infiltration between the academic and political aspects of the ENP.

Historical background

Historically one can distinguish between two separate policy tracks devised by the EU to develop relations with the current southern and eastern neighbours. The ties between the EU and its southern neighbours are almost as old as the European Community (EC) itself; they date back to 1957 when a protocol was inserted in the Treaty of Rome providing for the conclusion of agreements between the EC and former European colonies Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. In comparison, the relations with the east are relatively new: they commenced after the collapse of the USSR at the beginning of the 1990s and the concomitant independence of Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova and the South Caucasian countries.

The Union’s policy towards the Mediterranean has blossomed from the seeds of the Association Agreements (AAs), with such a set of countries as the current member states Greece, Spain, Portugal, Cyprus, Malta, the candidate Balkan countries, potential candidate Turkey, current neighbours Israel and the Palestinian Autonomous Areas, as well as some of the Maghreb and Mashreq countries. Through the latter trade concessions and aid provisions were offered to them by the EC (Marsh and Mackenstein 2005: 184). By the end of the 1960s preferential trade agreements were signed first with Israel and afterwards with Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Malta, Cyprus and the Balkan countries. Terrorism—a consequence of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict—and the oil crisis, which highlighted the EC’s dependence on the supply from the Arab Mediterranean countries, raised the urgency for a rigorous policy towards the south (Bicchi 2002). Thus, at its 1972 Paris summit the Union considered launching a Global Mediterranean Policy (GMP), which foresaw a free trade area in industrial goods, except for textiles. As a result, throughout 1975–77 co-operation agreements were sealed, again, first with Israel and then Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Despite promising preferential treatment for 80% of each country’s agricultural exports, the EC curtailed their export and imposed quantitative restrictions on these products. Moreover, it opposed labour migration from the south. By constraining co-operation to specific issues in its own interests, the EC provoked disenchantment from the Arab Mediterranean countries (Marsh and Mackenstein 2005: 185–86).

The intention to give a new impetus to the relations with the Mediterranean countries after the accession of Greece, Spain and Portugal gave birth to the New Mediterranean Policy (NMP) in 1989. By allocating more grants and loans the EC aimed to support structural adjustment, private investment, access to the European market, and economic and political dialogue. Furthermore, in 1992—a year after launching the Renewed Mediterranean Policy (RMP), which was another attempt to boost the relations with the southern countries—the Mediterranean was declared a priority area towards which the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) could be applied (Tanner 2002). In 1995 the Barcelona Process, otherwise called the Euro–Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), was launched.³ It emphasized the need for the EU’s orientation towards the south as a political ‘region’. The Feira Council held in 2000 introduced the idea of launching a Common Mediterranean Strategy (CMS); however, the latter was undermined by the deterioration in the Middle East peace process. The novelty of the CMS was the introduction of a peace-building element. Finally, the security dimension, which had been refuted by the Arab countries in the face of the Charter for Peace and Stability in the Mediterranean, was revitalized at the EU’s Valencia Ministerial Summit in 2002. The latter tied the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) to the EMP by calling for political dialogue and information exchange in the security sphere. Co-operation in the fields of justice
and home affairs, combating drugs, organized crime and terrorism, and migration was also foreseen (Marsh and Mackenstein 2005: 186). In this manner, there was a gradual increase in the number of domains in which the EU and its southern later-to-be-neighbours collaborated and crystallized their relations.

In the period 1995–99 some €3,435m. was disbursed through MEDA, the financial instrument for implementation of the EMP, and throughout 2000–06 some €5,350m. was disbursed. The southern countries have also been eligible for European Investment Bank (EIB) loans: €4,808m. was allocated in 2000–06 and €6,400m. within 2000–07. They have also received €1m. for transnational projects. Furthermore, since 2002 the Mediterranean countries have benefited from the Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership Facility (FEMIP), allocated to the private sector.

When by experiencing the collapse of the USSR all the countries on the post-Soviet terrain appeared in economic, social and political misery, the EU did not hesitate to offer help. In 1991 the Union launched the Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States—the TACIS programme—which covered the EU’s current eastern neighbours, Russia and the Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Through TACIS it provided economic assistance and humanitarian aid. In total, in the period 1991–99 some €4,226m. was offered to these countries, supplemented by €2,309m. for 2000–06.

TACIS comprised two sets of programmes, namely multilateral and bilateral, within a multilateral framework. The first set consisted of the Transport Corridor Europe–Caucasus–Asia (TRACECA) launched in 1993 and the Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe (INO-GATE) established by an Umbrella Agreement in 1999. TRACECA was directed at the establishment of economic and political relations through improvement of transportation links (highways, cargo terminals, railways), while INOGATE’s objective was three-fold: to attract private investors and financial institutions, to improve security of Europe’s energy supply, and to diversify energy sources. The second set of programmes targeted various sectors in the partner countries and envisaged reinforcement of the customs service for a market-based economy, institution-building, technical support to civil society and local actors, and education, provision of policy advice and training. It also covered small-scale projects relating to enterprise development and financial services, human resources, social protection, food production and processing, agriculture, energy, transport, telecommunications, environment, as well as nuclear power stations.

The southern and eastern neighbours were placed under the same umbrella in the Communication from the Commission: the European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper produced in 2004 (European Commission 2004c). The concomitant Action Plans (APs) were supposed to serve as the ‘backbone’ of the ‘policy’: they focused on political dialogue, conflict resolution, human rights and fundamental freedoms, economic and social reform, poverty reduction and sustainable development, trade-related issues, market and regulatory reform, justice, freedom and security, migration, transport, energy, environment, telecommunications, research and innovation, education and health, regional co-operation and people-to-people contacts. With the launching of the ENP, TACIS and MEDA were eventually merged into the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), which has constituted a budget of €12,000m. for the period 2007–13. Moreover, the Union guarantees additional assistance to the neighbours through the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and Non-State Actors and Local Authorities (NSA&LA) budget lines. The EU’s Governance Facility (with an indicative annual amount of €50m), Neighbourhood Investment Facility (with €700m. in the form of loans offered by the Commission and an equivalent contribution channelled by the member states for 2007–13) and the EIB represent complementary sources of funding. Furthermore, assistance is promised through regional instruments, such as the ENPI Eastern Regional Programme, ENPI Regional Indicative Programme for the Euro-Mediterranean
Partnership, ENPI Interregional Programme, ENPI Cross-Border Programme, as well as FEMIP. While the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) still needs to draw on additional funding, in July 2009 the Commission earmarked €40m. for multilateral programmes in the sphere of culture, civil society, small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) networks, border management, air quality control and disaster preparedness.

Recently, as a result of political and academic criticism, the two strands of the ENP—the south and the east—underwent de-coupling. For the south, the UfM was initiated by the French Presidency of the EU in July 2008 in order to augment the Barcelona Process, which remains in force. Aside from the objective to adorn the Mediterranean with more political prominence, the EU has aimed at reinforcing the relations with the southern neighbours through ensuring co-ownership and conducting civic outreach. A novelty of the UfM has been the acquisition of an observer status by the League of Arab States (Arab League) upon Israel’s consent.

When it comes to the east, the Eastern Partnership (EaP)—a joint Polish-Swedish proposal—has been officially bolstered at the Prague Summit in May 2009. The innovation introduced by the EaP is the engagement of Russia as a beneficiary. Both facets supplement the ENP by reinforcing its political credence; extending its multilateral machinery, namely upgrading the ‘policy’; and intensifying its institutional mechanisms, notably updating its structures. Having depicted the history of the evolution of the ENP, it is worth disentangling what motives led to its materialization.

‘Policy’ stimuli

A few internal and external factors can be claimed to have contributed to the gestation of the ENP. Internally, the Union’s pending 2004 enlargement, which would grant membership to Central and Eastern European countries, served as an important motive. With these countries entering the club, the Union would obtain new neighbours, which were much less politically stable, much more economically fragile and some of which featured security-related problems. Moreover, a significant pressure for the inception of the ENP was generated by the expiration of the term in office of the then President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi.

Externally, within the prospective ‘neighbourhood’ the Rose Revolution in Georgia, which took place in November 2003, was a crucial stimulus directing the EU’s gaze towards the South Caucasus. In its turn, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in November 2004 reinforced the pro-Western and, specifically, pro-European orientation of these former Soviet countries and injected further conviction into the Union to boost its relations with its eastern neighbours. In the south, in 2003 Libya’s renouncement of its nuclear weapons programme and the agreement to pay compensation to the families of the Scottish victims of the 1988 airliner bombing by a Libyan agent contributed to a reconsideration of EU-Libya relations. In 2003–04 Israel also manifested unprecedented behaviour towards resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: it embarked on unilateral withdrawal from and reversal of settlement arrangements in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. With these political events stimulating the drawing of a new ‘policy’, the next section will delve into the texture of the ENP.

The ENP’s texture

In terms of technicalities, TACIS and EMP relied on a similar policy design: Country Strategy Papers drawn up for a seven-year period and three-year National Indicative Programmes. The former comprised tactical guidelines and the latter specified the technicalities. They were complemented by the Annual Programmes and Regional Indicative Papers. Drawn up by the directorate-general (DG) for external relations (RELEX) and managed by EuropeAid, these
documents designated the annual appropriations for financial commitments as authorized by the European Council and Parliament on a proposal from the Commission.

The bonding between the EU and its current neighbours started with the production of the ENP Country Reports, which were written throughout 2004–05. Afterwards, an ENP Action Plan (AP) with a three- to five-year life-span was developed. Representing a political roadmap for implementation of reforms, the APs have coexisted with the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements and AAs, which still define the legal background of the relations between the EU and its neighbours. Meanwhile, within a period of two years Progress Reports were written to make qualitative assessments of progress in the field and ponder the nature of future relations.8

Now, this chapter will turn to uncovering the architectural design of the ENP.

‘Policy’ architecture

The ENP is not a completely idiosyncratic ‘policy’: a large part of its toolkit has been inherited from the enlargement policy, which it was supposed to replace at least in the short-to-medium term. This mimicking is verified not only through the fact that the Commission staff dealing with the enlargement policy were transferred to the ENP Task Force but also the fact that the procedures of negotiation, monitoring and reporting (with all their advantages and disadvantages) have resembled those practised with respect to the candidate countries. As a result, despite the differing end results of the two policies the approach has not been adequately altered. The actors responsible for the day-to-day management of the ‘policy’ within the Commission are DG RELEX, the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), DG Trade, DG Transport and Energy (TREN), AidCo and the EuropeAid Co-operation Office. Yet, DG RELEX preserves a dominant position through co-ordination of the other agents via its Deputy Director-General. The country desks liaise with the ‘partners’ in order to manage the ‘policy’ output, while the delegations on the ground retain close contact with the neighbours and assure input.

While the Council offers general guidance and direction, the European Council, Council of Ministers and the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) are the essential players when it comes to the ENP. The Parliament’s role rests with co-decision in budgetary matters and ‘policy’ innovation and emboldening. In this institution, the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET), the Sub-Committees on Security and Defence (SEDE) and Human Rights (DROI), the political groups, such as the European People’s Party (EPP-ED), Alliance of Liberals and Democrats in Europe (ALDE), and Party of European Socialists (PES) and the inter-parliamentary delegations are the most engaged parties. Whereas in the initial stage the Committee of Regions and the Economic and Social Committee offered their opinions and presented reports on the ENP, their role decreased after the ‘policy’ was launched. Meanwhile, it is crucial to analyse how the ENP fits within the major theoretical and conceptual parameters.

Theoretical and conceptual framing

The ENP’s ambitious and comprehensive nature opens up a large horizon for theoretical interpretation (Khasson, Vasilyan and Vos 2008). While the ENP can be potentially wrapped in each of the large theoretical paradigms, only a few academic attempts have been made to test their veracity and/or use the case to augment their explanatory potential. This section will bridge the ‘policy’ within the existing theoretical and conceptual frames suggesting further avenues for research.

Neo-functionalism—as an EU-intrinsic theory—can be suggested to be equally feasible for understanding the Union’s relations with its neighbours because of the gradualist implications it
entails (Haas 1958). The consolidation of the EU’s supranational machinery with the Commission as its legislator/executor, has enabled the Union to come up with such an external relations ‘policy’ as the ENP. The implicit influence of lobbies both in the EU and ‘neighbourhood’ (namely, the European oil and gas companies and supply states) in fostering the ‘policy’ towards the ‘neighbourhood’ should also be recognized.9 Overall, the historical track of the EU’s relations with its neighbours, as narrated above, has proceeded along a linear trajectory. This underscores the validity of the ‘spill-over’ effect from areas of lower political importance, such as transport, to such ‘high’ political sectors as security.

Historical institutionalism offers another useful paradigm for comprehending the ‘policy’. It magnifies the fact that the ENP has evolved as a result of ‘unintended consequences’: the identified stimuli can be claimed to have led the EU to make a particular choice. With ‘path dependence’ ingrained in its ‘heart’ the theory elucidates the importance of continuity along the undertaken trail predicting progress—in the neutral sense. In this respect, the regular upgrade of the ENP, not least, through reinforced institutionalization via the UfM and EaP, confirms the vibe of historical institutionalism.

As the EU’s discourse confirms its aspiration to carve out a place for itself on the global scene ‘by operating simultaneously as a continental power and as a global economic and political player’ (European Commission 2006b: 7), neo-realism ‘dearly embraces’ the ENP. The Union confesses its vital interests, otherwise called ‘most pressing concerns’, by uttering its wish to tackle such issues as energy supply, migration, security and stability with the help of the ENP (Ferrero-Waldner 2006: 140). Meanwhile, when seeking energy resources in the ‘neighbourhood’, the EU cannot avoid competition with other world players, such as the USA, which is also seeking them, or Russia, which is trying to challenge them.10 Consequently, ‘balancing’ occurs whereby the big actors try to win allies—in this case, the ENP countries—and shape the conditions of the international environment to their advantage. Meanwhile, the ambition of countries like Ukraine and Georgia to integrate with the EU, primarily because of perceived hard security threats emanating from Russia, represents a ‘bandwagoning’ move (Waltz 2000). Therefore, whether willingly or reluctantly, the orderly regional ‘post-modern’ Union becomes entangled in the ‘modern’ world wherein anarchy reigns (Cooper 2000).

Whereas the EU has confessed that through the ENP it is promoting its values and interests (European Commission 2006b), Hettne and Söderbaum (2005) have referred to the Union’s ‘imposition or strategic use of norms and conditionalities enforced for reasons of self-interest’. Therefore, the lenses of the rational choice theory offer a convenient perspective for investigating the role of the Union as a profit-maximizer in the ‘neighbourhood’. Indeed, game-theoretical models enshrine the ENP as a co-operation exercise whereby a win-win situation is engendered making both the EU and the neighbours better off in the short and medium term. To specify, co-operation with a ‘ring of friends’ would decrease the costs of engagement and generate a predictable beneficial outcome in the form of a ‘Nash equilibrium’ (Prodi 2002). In tandem, ‘sharing everything with the Union but institutions’ would result in a ‘Pareto optimal’ leaning against absolute gains desired both by the EU and its ‘partners’ (ibid.).

By building on rational choice theory, liberal intergovernmentalism offers another positivist basis on which the ENP can safely land. On the EU side, the ‘policy’ was largely a product driven by its member states via inter-state bargaining (Moravcsik 1993). Specifically, Spain—by forming a coalition with France and Italy—directed the EU’s attention towards the south, while Poland—by finding sympathizers primarily in the form of Germany and Lithuania—induced the Union’s orientation towards the east (Natorski 2007). On the neighbours’ part, the negotiation over the APs has been the privilege of the governments (Khasson, Vasilyan and Vos 2008).
Given its applicability across disciplines and its philosophical underpinnings, constructivism puts stress on discourse as a conscious attempt to shape politics (Jupille, Caporaso and Checkel 2003). Tulmets (2007) has claimed that the process of the fabrication of the ENP has relied on the careful use of speech-acts. Subsequently, ‘deliberation and persuasion’ have been used as mechanisms for the transfer of the EU’s practices to its neighbours (Gstohl 2007). Policy-wise, the ENP flows through the co-constitutive process of institutionalization and socialization of the parties. As all the theoretical veils suit the ENP, at this point one might wonder how the ‘policy’ can be precisely classified.

**Branding the ENP**

In the circumstances of the EU lacking a fully fledged foreign policy and with the latter being more humbly called ‘external relations’, the ENP is the Union’s most ardent practice of foreign affairs (Khasson, Vasilyan and Vos 2008). While the semi-internal, semi-external enlargement policy is external solely in its temporal dimension, the ENP, which falls at the external edge of this continuum, comprises a territorial dimension as it depends on the ambivalent issue of Europe’s borders. In addition, the fact that the EU offers financial assistance to the ‘partners’ without obliging political adaptation through negative conditionality, makes it also a development policy (Vasilyan 2007). Another niche where the ENP can be positioned is the governance approach, obliging political adaptation through negative conditionality, makes it also a development policy (Vasilyan 2007). Another niche where the ENP can be positioned is the governance approach, be it in terms of legislative, regulatory and technical approximation of the EU’s security zone (Kirchner 2006). Meanwhile, the ENP allegedly differs from the EU’s other policies, its previous relations with its neighbours and policies of other players. The section below will aim at revealing the distinguishing features of the ‘policy’ and assessing them in a critical manner.

**‘Policy’ appraisal**

The acclaimed features of the ENP have been stated to be ‘joint ownership’, ‘differentiation’, ‘partnership’, ‘shared values’ and ‘conditionality’. While ‘joint ownership’ presumes equal stakes in the relationship, in practice it did not imply engagement of all the concerned actors: on the EU side the Commission handled the APs single-handedly, while on behalf of the neighbours the governments played the main role. This made the ownership **limited** until the establishment of the UfM and EaP, which introduced a civic dimension into the ‘policy’. Moreover, the APs were primarily presented in the form of templates drafted by the Commission and amended slightly in the aftermath during the three-stage negotiations. While ‘differentiation’ is widely believed to be another crucial attribute of the ENP, the APs contain generic and little case-sensitive wording: the variations relate to the ranking of the Priorities for Action (which does not imply their implementation in this order) and/or presence of some issues in some APs and absence in others (which does not impose or preclude co-operation beyond them, respectively). When it comes to the criterion of ‘partnership’ the Union mostly preserves a superior role through an ‘asymmetric form of dialogue’ (Hettne and Söderbaum 2005). The relationship is, therefore, more hierarchical than horizontal even if the neighbours have succumbed to the Union’s position voluntarily.

On the EU side, ‘shared values’ have not been pursued rigorously (Bosse 2007). When it comes to the neighbours, ‘shared values’ do not apply to the same extent and/or to all the neighbours in the same way: some are more keen on adopting European values, others are less so. Moreover, some values, like democracy, are more amenable to the ‘partners’ than others, like secularism or minority rights (Vasilyan 2010a). Above all, there is no negative or full positive conditionality in the ENP but, merely, *partial positive* conditionality. The bulk of the EU’s
financial assistance is initially endowed to the neighbours *unconditionally* with the expectation that the reforms spelled out in the APs will be carried out. This funding can be augmented with additional resources via the myriad instruments mentioned above. Although a monitoring procedure is instituted to ensure compliance, there are neither specific measures employed to drive progress nor quantitative benchmarks applied to determine achievements. This makes the ENP’s conditionality ‘lite’ (Sasse 2008).

Besides, the dilemmas posed by the ENP, namely bilateralism versus regionalism/multilateralism and inclusion versus exclusion, imperil its soundness (K. Smith 2005). While the ENP disposes of a large number of regional instruments both for the eastern and southern ‘peripheries’, the bilateral APs prevail in terms of their political weight. Therefore, in case of a clash, such as the reluctance of Azerbaijan to co-operate with Armenia or Israel to come to terms with the Palestinian authorities, regionalism loses to bilateralism (Vasilyan 2009). Meanwhile, the capacity of the UfM and EaP to ‘heal’ this ‘wound’ remains questionable. The inclusion versus exclusion dilemma renders ambiguity since, on the one hand, the neighbours are offered more than other third states, but, on the other, there is no clarity regarding their final destination, which discourages some neighbours from maintaining the positive reform-prone momentum. Whereas the EU eliminated the issues of Morocco’s possible membership by ‘one strike of a sword’ indicating its non-European status, the eastern ‘partners’, especially Ukraine and Georgia, nurture the hope that the relationship will result in a ‘marriage’, namely, full accession. Does political prognosis allow room for cherishing such a hope, though?

**Political forecast**

Article 7a of the Treaty of Lisbon states that:

1. The Union shall develop a special relationship with neighbouring countries, aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness, founded on the values of the Union and characterized by close and peaceful relations based on co-operation.
2. For the purposes of paragraph 1, the Union may conclude specific agreements with the countries concerned. These agreements may contain reciprocal rights and obligations as well as the possibility of undertaking activities jointly. Their implementation shall be the subject of periodic consultation.

This means that the EU is determined to have a neighbouring area of one sort or another, most likely as a buffer zone whereby the Union will retain the ‘driver’s seat’. The construction of the ENP as a ‘work in progress’ will, thus, proceed. The question is, however, who will remain a neighbour and who will take a further step.

The ‘flair’ gained by the UfM and EaP might be decisive for determining the success of the ENP. In the south, the EU’s ambivalence vis-à-vis the resumed Israeli–Palestinian conflict is a big ‘thorn’ in the ‘hip’ of the ‘policy’ ‘trimming’ its declaratory ‘wings’ and marring its image. In the east, the Union’s wariness towards Russia restrains its leverage as a moral power (Vasilyan 2010b). The Union’s moral ‘handicap’ manifests the limits of the ENP and makes its potential to contribute to security, stability and prosperity in the ‘neighbourhood’ questionable.

**Conclusion**

The ENP, complemented by the UfM and EaP, stands out as a political and theoretical enigma raising an appetite for an inquisitive but non-finite mental exercise. It is because of this that a
holistic account of the ‘policy’ cannot but provoke aspirations for more profound research. Given the scope of its constitutive sector-based ‘ingredients’, the ENP can be called ‘a “policy” of all policies’. Given the diversity of countries involved, it has different spices. With its vast latitude, the ENP is both a fully fledged static ‘policy’ and a constantly developing dynamic one. Even though the ENP’s highly watery content does not allow satiation, a mélange of flavours can be detected in it. Eventually, this richness will make the ‘policy’ the most ‘delicious’ political venture ever ‘tasted’.

Notes

1 This list is diverse: it ranges from the demographically most populous Egypt to the least populous Armenia, from the richest Israel to the poorest Moldova, from Tunisia with the highest export rate to the EU to the Palestinian Autonomous Areas with the lowest (European Commission 2007h). Moreover, the EU’s disposition is not invariable to all its ‘neighbours’: some reservations apply. To substantiate, although the Commission has been negotiating a Framework Agreement with Libya since November 2008, the latter still has to become a part of the Barcelona Process. The Association Agreement (AA) with Syria was initialled in December 2008 but the document has not been ratified yet. Belarus has to establish a democratic form of government in order to benefit from the ENP. As for Mauritania, which benefits from the European Development Fund, it is a member of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).

2 The other geographic neighbours of the EU are Norway, Iceland and Switzerland, which are members of the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) and the Nordic Passport Area; the Balkan countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo, which benefit from the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) and Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilization (CARDS); Russia, which has preferred to base its relations with the EU on an equal footing through the Four Common Spaces (economic; freedom, security and justice; external security; and research and education); as well as Iran and Iraq, with which the EU has bilateral relations.

3 The EMP covered not only Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Autonomous Areas, Syria and Tunisia, but also Albania, Turkey and Mauritania. Meanwhile, Libya has held an observer status since 1999.

4 Whereas TRACECA covers the current EU member states Bulgaria and Romania, potential candidate Turkey, Ukraine and Moldova, South Caucasian and Central Asian countries, the membership of INOGATE is much broader. Its partners are all the EU’s eastern ‘neighbours’ and the Central Asian states, Turkey, and Russia as an observer. INOGATE Oil network additionally includes resource providers, like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran and Iraq. and INOGATE Gas includes suppliers like Nigeria, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Oman, United Arab Emirates and Qatar. Meanwhile, both INOGATE Oil and Gas consider all the southern ‘neighbours’ as prospective ‘partners’.

5 While the Central Asian countries benefited from TACIS, today they are covered by the Development Co-operation Instrument (DCI).

6 Beyond the determination to create a deep Free Trade Area by 2010, such issues as arms control and non-proliferation, commitment to democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms, eradication of terrorism, support to the Israeli–Palestinian peace process, and prevention of illegal migration are underlined. The institutional update entails a biennial summit of heads of government, establishment of a co-presidency, a joint secretariat in Barcelona, and a Joint Permanent Committee based in Brussels. These new institutions are supposed to complement the strengthened Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly and meetings of senior officials, Joint Permanent Committee representatives and experts.

7 Although comprising all the sectors, the EaP stresses institution-building, visa facilitation and energy security as important for deeper co-operation. It foresees codification of the bilateral relations with the eastern ‘neighbours’ through Association Agreements, which may include establishment of deep and comprehensive free trade areas (with Ukraine, Georgia and Armenia as forerunners). Although, unlike the UfM, no secretariat is envisaged, institutionalization will be pursued via biennial meetings of heads of state, annual meetings of ministers of foreign affairs, as well as meetings of senior officials to be held twice a year.
The APs of Ukraine, Moldova and Israel ranged to three years; those of Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian Autonomous Areas and Tunisia ranged from three to five years; the ones for Lebanon, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia ranged to five years. Despite Georgia’s appeal to receive a three-year AP, the Commission objected.

Countries like Algeria, Libya, Egypt and Syria in the south and Azerbaijan in the east are hydrocarbon repositories, while others are transit states. The European companies British Petroleum, French Total-FinaElf, ENI Italy, Italian Agip and Dutch Shell have been the major stakeholders in hydrocarbon extraction in and transfer from the ‘neighbouring’ countries.

The projections show that the EU’s gas import dependency will rise to 80%, while its dependence on oil will increase to as much as 90%, both by 2030 (EurActiv 2005). Meanwhile, the CIS, Middle East and Latin America have been identified as the nests of roughly 50% of oil and 70% of gas reserves. Whereas Latin America is seen as a US periphery, through the ENP the Union has tried to ‘grab’ at least a share of the repositories in the two other ‘regions’ (European Commission 2003b).