

Zentrum für Europäische Integrationsforschung  
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**The European  
Neighbourhood Policy**  
Foreign Policy at the  
EU's Periphery

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*Andreas Marchetti*

## **The European Neighbourhood Policy**

### Foreign Policy at the EU's Periphery

#### **Introduction**

The French political scientist, physician, and author Jean-Christophe Rufin once stated that the “democratic civilisation cultivates the delicate privilege to know itself more mortal than all others.”<sup>1</sup> While his depiction of Western democracies as hypochondriacs appears to be somewhat far-reaching at first sight, the statement illustrates precisely one of the most prominent moods currently *en vogue* all over Europe, a Europe that does not yet seem to have overcome its identity crisis of the *fin de millénaire*. However widespread this mood might be, its assumptions are all but true. Europe, as one of the figureheads of democracy, has lived through manifold crises during the past decades but has eventually resolved all of them successfully.<sup>2</sup> Despite this strength, the European Union is only slowly adopting a more active international role, by spreading its values and influence piecemeal – but spreading them all the same.

Even when focussing on the regional setting, the European Union still seems in a process of discovery just like it has discovered the relevance of “other vicinities” in the previous past. This cognitive process has always

- 1 Jean-Christophe Rufin, *La dictature libérale: Le secret de la toute-puissance des démocraties au 20<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris: Lattès 1994, p. 10 [transl. by author].
- 2 Cf. for the European integration process in particular Ludger Kühnhardt, *European Integration: Challenge and Response: Crises as Engines of Progress in European Integration History*, Discussion Paper C 157, Bonn: ZEI 2006.

been particularly observable either in the aftermath of enlarging the Community's or later the Union's own geographic scope or as a result of developments at its periphery that had caused direct repercussions on Europe itself. Among some of the most prominent adaptations features the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. It was mainly promoted by Southern EU-members as a sort of geographic compensation for Eastern enlargement<sup>3</sup> barely a decade after Portugal and Spain had joined the European Community in 1986. Analogously, the Northern Dimension was brought to life after Sweden and Finland had joined the Union. Even the establishment of the European Security and Defence Policy is largely owed to the impact of the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia and the failure of the EU to cope with the resulting wars and "ethnic cleansings". Hence, the basic motives of the EU to establish special relations with neighbouring states can be regarded as two-fold: on the one hand, the EU endeavours to prevent developments in its geographic neighbourhood to negatively affect its security or prosperity, on the other hand, the EU and particularly the member states geographically most concerned or most present in the respective areas actively attempt to maintain or even enlarge a certain sphere of influence in these areas.<sup>4</sup>

Consequently, at the turn of the century it was only a matter of time until the EU began to formulate a new policy scheme with Eastern enlargement coming into perspective. The establishment of such a scheme follows the development of the EU's foreign policy regime over the past decades. As the European integration process has first of all involved economics – either for the sake of common welfare or for the sake of having economic integration help to create a pacified political Europe<sup>5</sup> – Europe's foreign policy *impact* has largely and foremost been an economic one. The Union

3 Cf. Jean-Pierre Chevènement, *France – Allemagne: Parlons franc*, Paris: Plon 1996, p. 49.

4 Cf. Raffaella A. Del Sarto/Tobias Schumacher, "From EMP to ENP: What's at Stake with the European Neighbourhood Policy towards the Southern Mediterranean?", in: *European Foreign Affairs Review* 10.1 (2005), p. 28.

5 Cf. the discussion of the motives for the integration process in the 1950s by Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*, London: UCL Press 1998, p. 4f.

as relevant foreign policy actor is internationally mainly recognised due to its foreign trade regime, its development co-operation and its monetary policy.<sup>6</sup> However, with the creation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy in Maastricht and the inauguration of the European Security and Defence Policy in Cologne, the Union is consistently acquiring the qualities of an increasingly multidimensional actor in contrast to its long-time role of a mainly economic actor.<sup>7</sup> This growing multidimensionality is rooted in the gradual shift in the Union's self-understanding from an economic community to a community of values. This shift has already been reflected in the approach chosen within such foreign policy frameworks as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. With the EU maturing in terms of foreign policy, this increased comprehensiveness is bound to play an even more pronounced role within the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

### ***Establishing the European Neighbourhood Policy***

#### *From "New Neighbourhood" to "European Neighbourhood"*

At the very beginning, the scheme now labelled the "European Neighbourhood Policy"<sup>8</sup> was conceptualized as policy towards the Union's "new neighbours". However natural such a terminology seemed with the latest enlargement under way it is rather astounding that more than a decade after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the emergence of new states, the specification of relations to these sovereign entities should be referred to as "new". In this sense, the initially coined term illustrates quite well the sense

6 Cf. Wolfgang Wagner, *Die Konstruktion einer europäischen Außenpolitik: Deutsche, französische und britische Ansätze im Vergleich*, Studien der Hessischen Stiftung für Friedens- und Konfliktforschung 41, Frankfurt/New York: Campus 2002, p. 18.

7 Cf. the judgment of Roy H. Ginsberg, *The European Union in International Politics: Baptism by Fire*, Lanham et al.: Rowman & Littlefield 2001, p. 9.

8 The term "European" refers to the fact that it is an EU policy concerned with countries neighbouring the EU. It does not imply that the countries dealt with are "European", cf. for example the case of Morocco: being considered non-European, its application to become member of the European Community was rejected in 1987.

of discovery on behalf of the EU<sup>9</sup> – a sense that was presumably aroused less with the profound changes in Eastern Europe, and more with the EU changing itself, i.e. with its biggest ever enlargement under way.<sup>10</sup>

The first initiatives for the formulation of the new policy were tabled in early 2002.<sup>11</sup> Whereas a British initiative only considered a policy towards Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova, a Swedish proposal already considered these countries plus Russia and the Southern Mediterranean,<sup>12</sup> an inclusive approach that was finally translated into the new policy. With the inclusion of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in the ENP in June 2004, this new policy now encompasses most of the EU's neighbouring countries either sharing a land border or – as most Mediterranean partners – a sea border with the EU.<sup>13</sup> Russia remains an exception in this respect: relations between Russia and the EU continue to be managed bilaterally. Notwithstanding this “inconsistency”,<sup>14</sup> the ENP – put on track with the Commission's Communication on Wider Europe in March 2003<sup>15</sup> – not only became the policy

9 Cf. for an analogy of the EU's foreign policy approach with the age of discoveries Ludger Kühnhardt, “Europäische Sicherheitsstrategie und Horizonterweiterung: Die EU entdeckt den Erweiterten Nahen Osten”, in: Franz Kernic/Gunther Hauser (eds.), *Handbuch zur Europäischen Sicherheitspolitik*, Frankfurt et al.: Peter Lang 2005, pp. 273-283.

10 Cf. Eckart D. Stratenschulte, “Das Brüsseler Illusionstheater – zu Gast in Osteuropa”, in: *Osteuropa* 53.6 (2003), p. 764.

11 These followed the call for a policy towards “all our neighbours” in: Commission of the European Communities, *The Commission's Work Programme for 2002*, COM(2001)620 final, [http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2001/com2001\\_0620en01.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2001/com2001_0620en01.pdf).

12 Cf. in more detail Michele Comelli, “The Challenges of the European Neighbourhood Policy”, in: *The International Spectator* 39.3 (2004), pp. 98-101.

13 Having already established closer ties to the EU than the ENP could possibly offer, the ENP does not include the current acceding or candidate countries (Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia, Turkey) nor the Western Balkan countries (considered potential candidate countries). It also does not govern relations with the Western European countries Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, nor with any of the European micro-states (Andorra, Holy See, Liechtenstein, Monaco, San Marino).

14 Further down it will be discussed that this does not really constitute an inconsistency if it comes to the logic of the ENP, cf. pp. 20ff.

15 Commission of the European Communities, *Wider Europe – Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours*, COM(2003)104 final, [http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/pdf/com03\\_104\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/pdf/com03_104_en.pdf).

scheme for the “new neighbours” but also the new framework for already established “neighbourhood” schemes such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. As a matter of transparency, these policies are now being incorporated into the ENP together with most of their specific arrangements.

### *The ENP as Policy Framework*

The basic principles and features of the EU’s neighbourhood policy are laid down in the European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper (ENPSP), issued by the Commission just a few days after enlarging the EU to 25 member states in May 2004: The EU’s relations with the neighbouring countries involved are governed by contractual agreements. On their basis and in order to address the particular needs of the different partners, the European Commission drafts individual Country Reports. The reports assess the current state of relations as well as the political, social and economic developments and identify a first set of issues that will have to be addressed. By doing so, they serve as basis for specific Action Plans that are worked out in co-operation with the respective countries. These Plans finally constitute the points of reference for concrete implementation and assistance that is accompanied by joint monitoring of developments, aimed at improving the overall efficiency of ENP-measures.<sup>16</sup> Hence, the approach described in the strategy comprises four consecutive stages:

1. Establishment of contractual relations with neighbours;
2. Draft of Country Reports;
3. Agreement and entering into force of Action Plans;
4. Implementation and monitoring.

So far, the sequence of these steps has been respected. Notwithstanding this common pattern for all ENP-partners, there exist two different types of agreements currently in place to govern relations with neighbours. This is due the fact that most of these agreements were concluded well before the

16 Cf. Commission of the European Communities, *European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper*, COM(2004)373 final, [http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/pdf/strategy/Strategy\\_Paper\\_EN.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/pdf/strategy/Strategy_Paper_EN.pdf), in particular pp. 2ff. and 7.

inauguration of the ENP: With Eastern partners, the EU had negotiated Partnership and Co-operation Agreements,<sup>17</sup> with Mediterranean Partners, Association Agreements had been put in place. Besides this difference in denominations, the conclusion of the agreements and their entering into force took place over a period of more than ten years (see Table 1). Accordingly, the contents of the agreements vary to a considerable degree, even though they all comprise basic elements such as political dialogue or economic co-operation.

The adaptation of older agreements to new circumstances and priorities is not yet on top of the agenda. Nonetheless, the ENPSP explicitly considers the later replacement of the existing agreements with European Neighbourhood Agreements<sup>18</sup> as unique contractual instruments of the ENP. This would substantially harmonise the contractual bases as well as consolidate the ENP as genuine framework.

With the Country Reports or the Action Plans so far worked out, the EU – intending “to prevent the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours”<sup>19</sup> – also seems determined to decrease the divide between Southern and Eastern neighbours, until recently treated separately. The simultaneous release of Country Reports or Action Plans for Southern and Eastern partners alike bears witness to the strong commitment to bring partners closer together.

The Action Plans under the ENP-regime are tailored along a set of central lines: Based on a commitment to shared values, they contain specific political, economic and cultural provisions, drawing on all three pillars of the EU.<sup>20</sup> By doing so, the Union remains committed to the philosophy of its earlier “neighbourhood policies” by additionally reflecting its growing

17 Besides the countries listed in Table 1, the EU also concluded PCAs with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan (in force since July 1999) as well as with Russia (in force since December 1997) and Turkmenistan (signed in May 1998, not yet in force). Between the EU and Mongolia, a Trade and Co-operation Agreement entered into force in March 1993.

18 Cf. Commission, *European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper*, as Fn. 16, p. 3.

19 Ibid.

20 Cf. in more detail *ibid.*, pp. 12-20.

## European Neighbourhood Policy

Table 1: State of the EU's relations with ENP countries.

Country	Contractual basis			Country Report	Action Plan	
	type	agreed	in force		agreed	in force
Algeria	AA	12/2001	-	-	-	-
Armenia	PCA	04/1996	07/1999	03/2005	-	-
Azerbaijan	PCA	04/1996	07/1999	03/2005	-	-
Belarus	PCA	03/1995	-	-	-	-
Egypt	AA	06/2001	06/2004	03/2005	-	-
Georgia	PCA	04/1996	07/1999	03/2005	-	-
Israel	AA	11/1995	06/2000	05/2004	12/2004	03/2005
Jordan	AA	11/1997	05/2002	05/2004	12/2004	06/2005
Lebanon	AA	06/2002	03/2003*	03/2005	-	-
Libya	-	-	-	-	-	-
Moldova	PCA	11/1994	07/1998	05/2004	12/2004	02/2005
Morocco	AA	02/1996	03/2000	05/2004	12/2004	07/2005
Palestinian Authority	AA*	02/1997*	07/1997*	05/2004	12/2004	05/2005
Syria	AA	10/2004	-	-	-	-
Tunisia	AA	07/1995	03/1998	05/2004	12/2004	07/2005
Ukraine	PCA	06/1994	03/1998	05/2004	12/2004	02/2005

Legend: AA - Association Agreement; PCA - Partnership and Co-operation Agreement.

\* Interim Agreement.

Data retrieved from <http://europa.eu.int>.

multidimensionality. Nonetheless, partners also have a substantial say in the conclusion of the Action Plans, since they are actively involved in their formulation; the EU as well as neighbours eventually need to adopt the plans before implementation can start. By doing so, partners are guaranteed an opportunity to address particular national priorities, despite the general

framework put in place.<sup>21</sup> The ENP thereby harmonises to a certain extent but avoids at the same time being too rigid by flexibly responding to neighbours' individual priorities.

One of the major innovations in the Union's relations with neighbouring countries consists in the establishment of a unique financial instrument for the ENP as a whole. The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) will replace the TACIS and MEDA programmes in 2007.<sup>22</sup> This incorporation of former "neighbourhood instruments" into the ENP-framework takes place in the overall context of harmonising the EU's foreign policy. As set out in a communication of the Commission in September 2004, the Union will – starting with the Financial Perspective 2007-2013 – reduce the foreign policy instruments at its disposal from more than thirty to six. Besides the remaining Humanitarian Aid Instrument and Macro Financial Assistance, four new instruments are being created: The Pre-Accession Instrument, the Development Co-operation and Economic Co-operation Instrument, the Instrument for Stability, and the already mentioned ENPI.<sup>23</sup>

### ***Projected Measures and Declared Motives***

The harmonisation of the Union's foreign policy regimes is one major but also very general motive underlying the establishment of the ENP. The desire to generate more coherence via harmonisation derives from the increased awareness that there is a "gap between the EU's economic weight and its political clout". Therefore, the Union attempts to increase its efficiency and to cut the costs "of a reduced Europe in the field of external re-

21 According to a first assessment of the ENP by Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner, partners seem to actively use this opportunity to set their particular agenda, cf. Commission of the European Communities, *Implementing and promoting the European Neighbourhood Policy*, SEC(2005)1521, [http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/documents/sec\\_2005\\_1521\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/documents/sec_2005_1521_en.pdf), [p. 4].

22 Even though not included in the ENP-framework, assistance to Russia will also take place by the means of the ENPI – just as via TACIS so far.

23 Cf. Commission of the European Communities, *On the Instruments of External Assistance under the Future Financial Perspective 2007-2013*, COM(2004)626final, pp. 7-10.

lations”<sup>24</sup>. The ENP constitutes just one piece in this puzzle. However, apart from the general aim of increased coherence within the Union’s foreign policy, there exist a variety of measures and motives specifically attached to the ENP.

As initially mentioned, the motivation of the Union to establish the ENP as special policy to govern relations with the Union’s neighbours can be seen as twofold: Protect the EU and maintain – or even gain – influence in the region. Since the threats the EU faces have changed fundamentally over the past 15 years, new approaches to manage them have been developed. In this context, the establishment of a new policy towards the EU’s neighbours was particularly deemed necessary. This increased importance attributed to the Union’s neighbours is basically reflected in four different aspects pertaining to the ENP.

1. The legal foundation envisaged for the ENP is more exclusive than for its predecessors. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership – as one of the policies translated into the ENP – is based on Title V TEU (CFSP) and particularly on Art. 133 TEC (trade and tariffs), Art. 310 TEC (Association Agreements), and Art. 308 TEC (MEDA<sup>25</sup>). Analogously, relations with Russia and countries formerly part of the Soviet Union are governed by Title V TEU as well and particularly by Art. 133 TEC, Art. 300 TEC (Partnership and Co-operation Agreements), and Art. 308 TEC (TACIS<sup>26</sup>). Most TEC articles referred to also constitute the foundation for the EU’s development policy, that is particularly based on Art. 177-181 TEC, as well as Art. 133 TEC (Generalised Scheme of Preferences and Co-operation Agreements), Art. 310 TEC (Cotonou and Association Agreements), and Art. 308 TEC (ALA<sup>27</sup>). In the Constitution for Europe (CEU), however, the neighbouring states have now been elevated to a higher level in comparison to other third countries: The “Union and its neighbours” are exclusively

24 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 3.

25 Cf. Council Regulation (EC) No 2698/2000, OJ L 311, 27 November 2000.

26 Cf. Council Regulation (EC, EURATOM) No 99/2000, OJ L 12, 29 December 1999.

27 Cf. Council Regulation (EEC) No 443/92, OJ L 52, 25 February 1992; the regulation refers to Art. 235 TEEC that was changed to Art. 308 TEC in Amsterdam.

dealt with in Art. I-57 CEU. Until now, there has been no particular mention of ENP-countries within the Treaties. The fact that this is envisioned provides strong evidence that neighbours are now considered particularly relevant. However, besides the special mention, there are no substantially new aspects introduced in the Constitution's neighbourhood article.<sup>28</sup>

2. Even though the ratification process for the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe is currently undergoing a crisis,<sup>29</sup> the special commitment to neighbours manifests itself in denominations newly introduced. The official title of the Commissioner for External Relations, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, has already been changed to "Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy", thereby attributing particular attention to neighbours.

3. The growing interest in the neighbourhood is also evident in a significant rise in funds made available to assist partners. The TACIS and MEDA programmes combined had a volume of approximately 8.5 billion € in the period 2000-2006. For the ENPI, almost 15 billion € are foreseen for 2007-2013.<sup>30</sup>

4. Development perspectives of the ENP go well beyond the prospects so far formulated in Association Agreements or Partnership and Co-operation Agreements. The Union now does not only offer preferential trade or participation in a customs union, but also "the prospect of a stake in its Internal Market and of further economic integration."<sup>31</sup> The Action Plans

28 Cf. Barbara Lippert, "Die Union und ihre Nachbarn nach dem Verfassungsvertrag", in: Mathias Jopp/Saskia Matl (eds.), *Der Vertrag über eine Verfassung für Europa: Analysen zur Konstitutionalisierung der EU*, Europäische Schriften 83, Baden-Baden: Nomos 2005, pp. 377ff.

29 A concise summary of the current discourses throughout Europe is provided by Nina Eschke/Thomas Malick (eds.), *The European Constitution and its Ratification Crisis: Constitutional Debates in the EU Member States*, Discussion Paper C 156, Bonn: ZEI 2006.

30 In addition, TACIS beneficiaries Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan then will be covered by the Development Co-operation and Economic Co-operation Instrument.

31 The phrase cited is included in all 12 Country Reports so far published, p. 3; cf. as well Commission, *Wider Europe*, as Fn. 15, p. 10 and Commission, *European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper*, as Fn. 16, p. 5.

substantiate this even more by envisaging to move “beyond co-operation to a significant degree of integration, including [...] a stake in the EU’s Internal Market, and the possibility [...] to participate progressively in key aspects of EU policies and programmes.”<sup>32</sup> As the EU at present is not officially proposing EU-membership to neighbours, these perspectives and the increase in funds made available constitute the strongest incentives the EU offers to neighbours so far.<sup>33</sup> As the individual priorities of partners are equally respected in the Action Plans, the outcome is a Neighbourhood *à la carte* that – with partial integration envisaged – is reminiscent of the all too familiar concept of Europe *à la carte* in a new context, i.e. Europe *à la carte* for non-members. This strongly resembles the concept of privileged partnership. As the notion, however, is discredited or at least too strongly associated with EU-Turkey relations, documents on ENP avoid it and rather speak of “privileged relationship”.<sup>34</sup> Still, the connotations and the affinities to “privileged partnership” remain evident.

Even though it may be argued that the incentives offered are not sufficient,<sup>35</sup> they signify quite far reaching measures on behalf of the EU. To understand why the Union does offer them, a closer look at the declared motives of the Union seems necessary.

The European Security Strategy (ESS), adopted by the European Council in December 2003, clearly identifies the external challenges the EU expects to be confronted with in the future. The awareness of an increased interdependence<sup>36</sup> is clearly visible throughout the document. Albeit large-scale aggression against any member state is estimated less likely today, the ESS identifies new, increasingly asymmetric threats like terrorism, proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, active or latent regional conflicts, state

32 The phrase can be found in all 7 Action Plans so far agreed on, p. 2.

33 Cf. Roberto Aliboni, “The Geopolitical Implications of the European Neighbourhood Policy”, in: *European Foreign Affairs Review* 10.1 (2005), p. 2.

34 Commission, *European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper*, as Fn. 16, p. 3.

35 Cf. Katarzyna Wolczuk, *Ukraine’s European choice*, Policy Brief, London: CER 2004, pp. 3f.

36 The document even speaks of “increased European dependence“, *A secure Europe in a better world: European Security Strategy*, <http://www.iss-eu.org/solana/solanae.pdf>, p. 5.

failure, and organized crime.<sup>37</sup> Comparing the ESS to unique ENP-documents, the EU's assessment remains consistent and the multi-faceted diagnosis persists, nonetheless there exists a difference in rhetoric and interpretations of the various phenomena. In general, the ESS is less partner-oriented and more focused on the EU's own interests. At least partially, it even seems to regard neighbouring states as problematic themselves, whereas the ENPSP stresses particularly the interests of partners. Some examples might be fit to illustrate this difference: Whereas the ESS stresses the potential "problems for Europe"<sup>38</sup> if it comes to the neighbourhood, the ENPSP rather highlights the "common interests" and underlines the concept of "joint ownership"<sup>39</sup>. What appears primarily as threats to the EU in the ESS like e.g. "violent conflict, [...] organised crime [...], dysfunctional societies or exploding population growth"<sup>40</sup>, is also included but rephrased in the ENPSP as "increased challenges" that "[p]artners are facing"<sup>41</sup>; the threats are addressed just as if the ones named would not be among the major concerns of the EU as well. In addition, the ENPSP promises "enormous *gains to all involved* in terms of increased stability, security and well being."<sup>42</sup>

If it comes to the neighbours as political entities themselves, the ESS speaks of the need of a "ring of well governed countries to the East of the European Union and on the borders of the Mediterranean with whom we can enjoy close and cooperative relations."<sup>43</sup> The repeated emphasis on the need to be surrounded by "well-governed"<sup>44</sup> countries implies a clear concept of how the EU expects partners to act and to organise themselves in-

37 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 5-9.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 12.

39 Commission, *European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper*, as Fn. 16, p. 8.

40 *European Security Strategy*, as Fn. 36, p. 12.

41 Commission, *European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper*, as Fn. 16, p. 16 particularly refers to „migration pressure from third countries, trafficking in human beings and terrorism.”

42 *Ibid.*, p. 5 [italics added].

43 *European Security Strategy*, as Fn. 36, p. 13.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 12.

ternally.<sup>45</sup> In contrast to this quite demanding conception of the neighbourhood in the ESS, most ENP-statements clearly prefer terms like “ring of friends”<sup>46</sup> to describe the aspired relationship with ENP-partners, implying that the EU and partners are on equal footing. However, what holds true for the policies so far in place, holds true for the ENP as well: being funded by the EU and distribution of funds being mainly dependent on EU-satisfaction with the process, the equality exists rather on a rhetorical basis. Even an ENP-document, the Commission’s Wider Europe Communication, expresses this hierarchy in relations by clearly pointing out that conditions – formulated by the EU – need to be met in order to benefit from the new policy:

The extension of the benefits [...], including increased financial assistance, should be conducted so as to encourage and reward reform – reforms which existing EU policies and incentives have so far not managed to elicit in all cases. Engagement should therefore be introduced **progressively**, and be **conditional on meeting agreed targets for reform**. New benefits should only be offered to reflect the progress made by the partner countries in political and economic reform. In the absence of progress, partners will not be offered these opportunities.<sup>47</sup>

This particular passage contains a certain contradiction to other ENP-documents in which the Union stresses that the “EU does not seek to impose priorities or conditions on its partners” and presents the ENP foremost as “an offer made by the EU to its partners”.<sup>48</sup> It is certainly important, even crucial, to stress the merits for partners, however, in central ENP-documents, the gains seem somewhat exaggerated and other aspects appear to be suppressed to a certain extent. Nonetheless, it looks as if there is an

45 Karen E. Smith, “The outsiders: the European neighbourhood policy”, in: *International Affairs* 81.4 (2005), p. 763 rightly identifies a will “to create good neighbours”.

46 Cf. e.g. Benita Ferrero-Waldner, *Europe’s Neighbours – Towards Closer Integration*, Speech held in Brussels, 22 April 2005, [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/news/ferrero/2005/sp05\\_253.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/news/ferrero/2005/sp05_253.htm).

47 Commission, *Wider Europe*, as Fn. 15, p. 16 [bold type in original].

48 Commission, *European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper*, as Fn. 16, p. 8.

increasing awareness that without conditionality, the ENP will face the same shortcomings as its predecessors.<sup>49</sup>

All in all, central EU-documents suggest that however ambitious, co-operative, and well-meant the ENP is designed, it certainly is far from altruistic. On the contrary, the logic behind the EU's increasing commitment towards its neighbours seems to follow a very concise geopolitical logic.<sup>50</sup> In order to grasp the characteristics of this logic, an argument will be elaborated in the next section, deemed fit to explain at least some of the particularities so far mentioned. After all, some questions that arise with regard to the conception of the ENP cannot yet be answered satisfactorily. For example: Why are the Western Balkan countries considered potential EU-candidates, whereas Moldova, Ukraine or Georgia – with comparable aspirations – are treated as neighbours for the time being? How come that Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, up to date taking part in TACIS, are not transferred to the ENP scheme but shifted to development policy?

## ***The Logic Behind it all: Centre – Periphery Revisited***

### ***The Argument***

The discrepancies between the Union's official language and the undertone in its own documents suggest that at the core of the ENP concept lie geopolitical considerations. More precisely, it will be argued that the ENP can be understood as a manifestation of the EU's will to create a ring of states in its vicinity to serve its purposes of protecting itself and of exercising influence. To put it differently, the EU in its function as regional centre<sup>51</sup> in-

49 Cf. in more detail on the aspect of conditionality Michael Emerson/Gergana Noutcheva, *From Barcelona Process to Neighbourhood Policy: Assessments and Open Issues*, Working Document 220, Brussels: CEPS 2005, pp. 13-16.

50 With regard to the Wider Europe Communication of March 2003, Ulrike Guérot/Andrea Witt, "Europas neue Geostrategie", in: *APuZ* 54.17 (2004), p. 11 even speak of the "first geo-strategic document" the Commission has issued [transl. by author].

51 Or "regional power", cf. Antonio Missiroli, "The EU and its changing neighbourhood: Stabilization, integration and partnership, in: Roland Dannreuther (ed.),

tends to create – or maintain – a functioning semi-periphery (via its neighbours) in order to create a buffer-zone to the periphery (i.e. the neighbours' neighbours and beyond).<sup>52</sup> As a matter of distinction, the neighbours' neighbours will be labelled “close periphery”, in contrast to even more peripheral countries that – for the purpose of the argument – will be referred to as “far periphery”. It should be kept in mind, though, that both together constitute the periphery, i.e. the argument does not establish a functional or qualitative distinction between the two; the only distinction made is geographical.

The outline of the argument with its differentiation between “centre”, “periphery” and “semi-periphery” is particularly present in neo-Marxist thought and especially the works of Immanuel Wallerstein with his concept of world-economy.<sup>53</sup> However fit the designations and underlying geopolitical assumptions are considered, the neo-Marxist interpretations are believed to be problematic for two reasons:

1. Even though the concept of world-economy claims to be universal, the supporting argument is purely economic: All phenomena are regarded as function of the established world-economy.<sup>54</sup> By doing so, the argument remains one-dimensional. Certainly, economy does play an important role, however, it is far from dominating all other relevant factors.
2. The concept of world-economy draws on dependency-theories and accordingly argues that the centre dominates the periphery and tries to keep it in a state of dependency for the better of the centre and the worse of the

*European Union Foreign and Security Policy: Towards a neighbourhood strategy*, London/New York: Routledge 2004, p. 23.

52 Del Sarto/Schumacher, “From EMP to ENP”, as Fn. 4, pp. 26f. also identify a “buffering logic” and a “centre-periphery approach” in the ENP.

53 Cf. Immanuel Wallerstein, “Tendances et perspectives d’avenir de l’économie-monde”, in: Bahgat Korany (ed.), *Analyse des relations internationales: Approches, concepts et données*, Montréal: G. Morin 1987, p. 109. A summary of Wallerstein’s and other periphery-concepts is provided by Klaus Bürger, *Die Euro-Mediterrane Partnerschaft als Aufbau einer geopolitischen Semiperipherie? Die Mittelmeerregion im Kontext der regionalen Blockbildung*, Berlin 2004, unpublished diploma thesis, FU Berlin.

54 Cf. Wallerstein, “Tendances“, as Fn. 53, p. 108.

periphery.<sup>55</sup> However, with the collapse of the bipolar world order and globalisation spreading, international politics seem to be less and less structured by dependencies, but rather by *interdependencies*: Even though there exists a gap between centre and periphery, the periphery also exercises a considerable influence on the centre – even if this might primarily be in terms of security.<sup>56</sup>

Therefore, the state of relations between centre and periphery can be regarded as interdependent *and* asymmetric. They are interdependent because of reciprocal influences exercised and asymmetric because of the different levels of development – politically as well as economically.

Even though the EU is believed to actively build up a semi-periphery, the argument developed here does not imply that the EU's approach is intended to impair the semi-periphery as Wallerstein would surely argue. To the contrary, under the conditions of interdependency and asymmetry the establishment of the ENP might eventually create a win-win-situation for both sides in the mid-term: In some part because of the EU's policy – acting selfish in the sense Adam Smith would have used the term – the semi-periphery is considerably strengthened and gains additional options for action.<sup>57</sup> This might even apply to the periphery in the long-run since more stable semi-peripheral zones will be likely to try to stabilize their neighbourhood respectively.

### *Supporting evidence*

Over the past years, the EU has accorded increased attention to its neighbours, or, to phrase it differently, the EU has developed an increased interest in a more effective policy towards neighbouring countries. Accordingly, with regard to the ENP, the EU now seems to believe less in the tedious logic of political spill-over from economic advancement and more in

55 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 111.

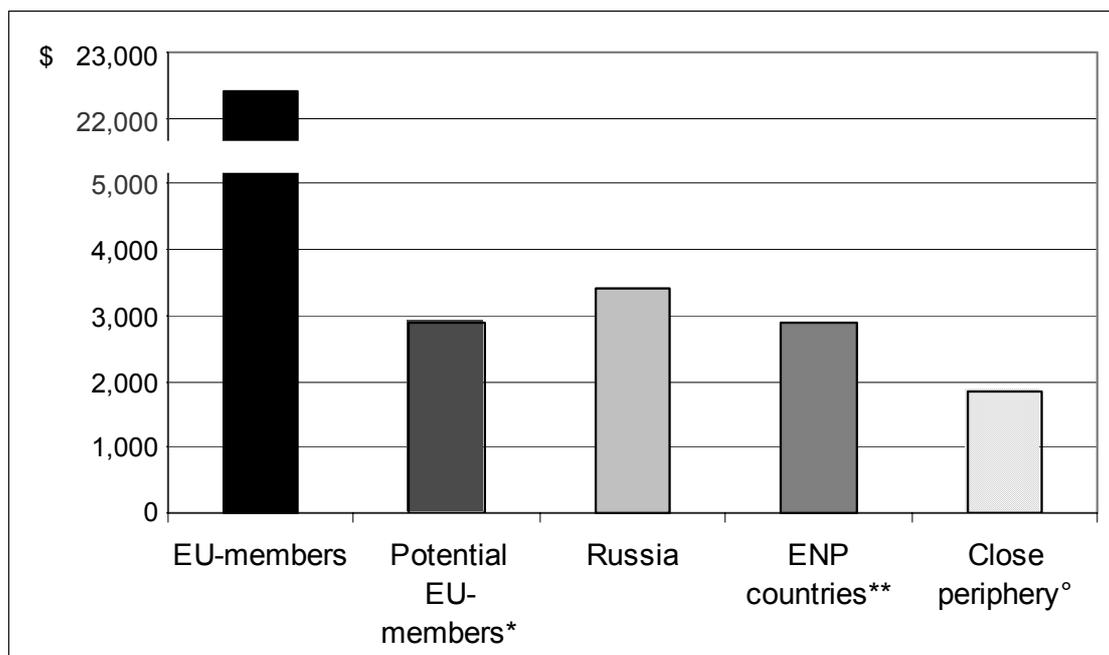
56 Cf. Thomas Jäger, *Isolation in der internationalen Politik*, Baden-Baden: Nomos 1996, p. 27.

57 Cf. Benita Ferrero-Waldner, *The European Neighbourhood Policy: helping ourselves through helping our neighbours*, Speech held in London, 31 October 2005, [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/news/ferrero/2005/sp05\\_31-10-05.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/news/ferrero/2005/sp05_31-10-05.htm).

the measurable *quid pro quo* of trade-offs. The addressee of this policy is a clearly identifiable ring of neighbours that is defined by socio-economical and geographical factors.

The socio-economic evidence for the semi-periphery assumption lies in basic characteristics of the neighbours in relation to their international environment. Taking the Gross National Income (GNI) per capita as indicator to compare certain groups of countries socio-economically, neighbours are located in between the EU and the close periphery (see Graph 1). Since the potential candidates – displaying comparable data as neighbours – are esteemed to eventually join the Union, the neighbours will remain the only group, socio-economically located between the EU and the close periphery.

Graph 1: Average GNI per capita for different groups of countries (current USD), 2004.



\* Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Turkey.

\*\* Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine, West Bank and Gaza (data for 2003).

° Chad, Iran, Iraq (no data available), Kazakhstan, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, West Sahara (no data available).

Based on WDI 2005 data, <http://devdata.worldbank.org/data-query>.

As today's potential candidates will progress socio-economically with accession, there is also a need for the EU to increase its assistance to neighbours considerably so that they – from a European standpoint – can effectively fit in their role as semi-periphery, i.e. serve as a buffer if it comes to economic migration or other phenomena. If the gap between neighbours and the EU became too large in comparison to the gap existing between neighbours and the periphery, the buffer-function would inevitably decrease. Therefore, the projected rise in assistance to neighbours from 8.5 billion € to 15 billion € supports the semi-periphery and thereby assures its function for the EU.

Geographically, the countries now included in the ENP literally provide for a ring around the EU. They form a continuous band of countries<sup>58</sup> from the Maghreb to the Mashrek, via Turkey<sup>59</sup> and the Southern Caucasus over the Black Sea to the Western CIS-countries to finally touch back on today's EU in the East (see map). Politically speaking, there are concrete indications that the neighbouring countries are indeed perceived as buffers that shall prevent negative developments to reach the EU: Renewed plans to establish refugee camps on the soil of ENP-countries<sup>60</sup> fit into this logic and provide strong evidence for the assumed semi-periphery logic.

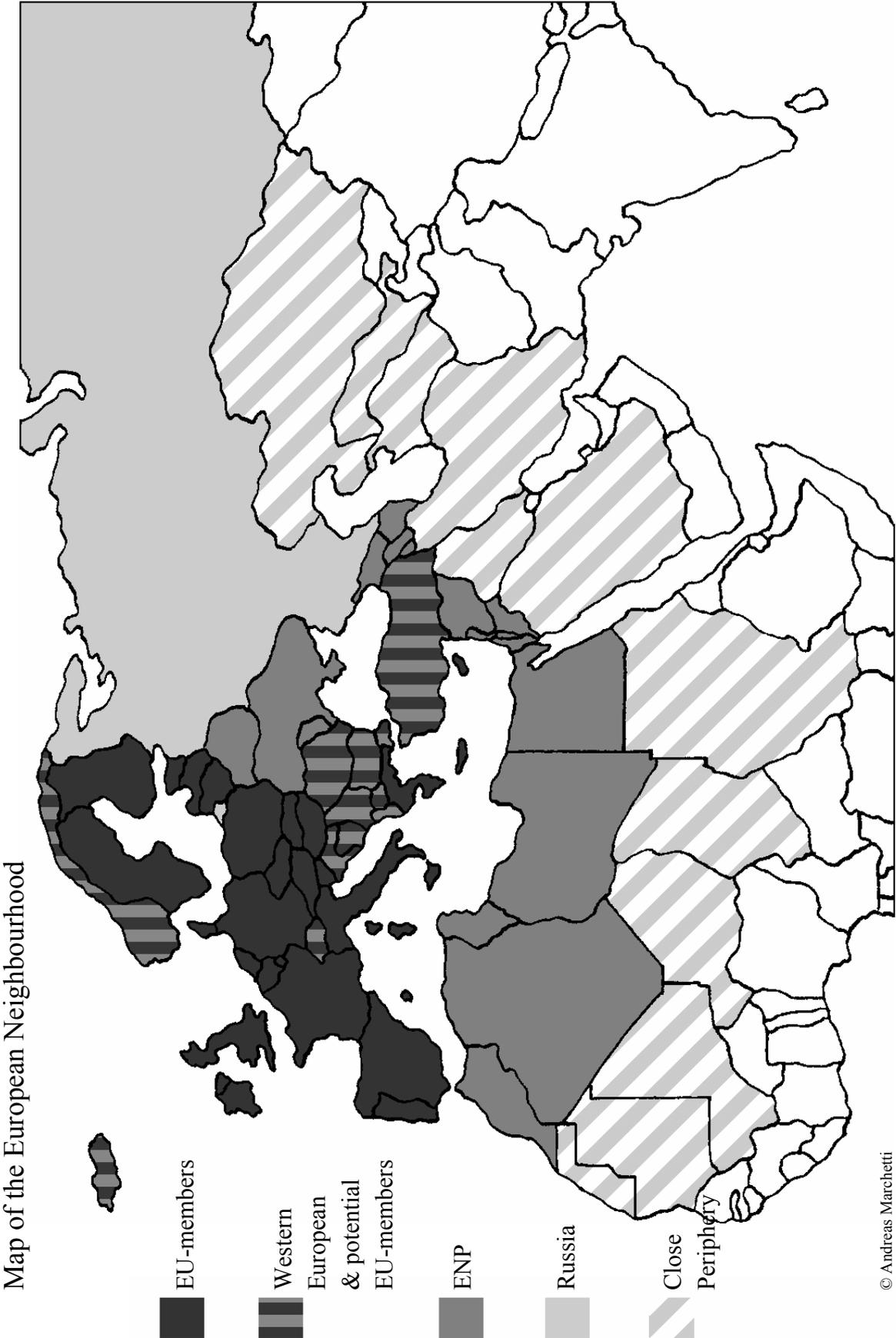
Russia constitutes a special case. It does not fit into the concept of semi-periphery because of the genesis of some neighbours and its own geographic location. Some neighbours were formerly part of the Soviet Union and have explicitly oriented themselves towards the EU in the meantime. Bearing this in mind, they would probably consider it an affront if they were put in one category together with their former "hegemon". On the other hand, Russia's regional importance, as well as its political and economic weight, necessitate preferential treatment. In a certain sense, Russia can be regarded as semi-centre, as it does take over most of the functions of a semi-peripheral state but at the same time displays more features of a

58 Aliboni, "Geopolitical Implications", as Fn. 33, speaks of a "geopolitical arc", Michael Emerson, *The Wider Europe as the European Union's Friendly Monroe Doctrine*, Policy Brief 27, Brussels: CEPS 2002, p. 13 speaks of a continuous "chain".

59 On Turkey's special position in this context see p. 23.

60 Cf. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 December 2005, p. 5.

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centre than any other semi-peripheral country. Last but not least, considering Russia as buffer would mean the establishment of countries like Mongolia, China or even North Korea as close periphery; countries rather considered far peripheral or – as in the case of China – regional centres themselves. Therefore, it makes sense that Russia is not included in the ENP not only because Russia itself prefers a preferential treatment<sup>61</sup> but also because it would not smoothly fit into the semi-periphery the EU establishes.

These considerations might well explain why none of the Central Asian CIS countries – sharing no border with the EU – are included in the ENP. EU-assistance to these countries will be transferred from TACIS – and thereby from the ENP – to Development Co-operation and Economic Co-operation.<sup>62</sup> By doing so, it is clearly expressed that they are now considered peripheral.

On the other hand, many countries geographically neighbouring the EU are not included in the ENP.<sup>63</sup> Western European non-EU-members have already established special relations to the EU and – more importantly – do not fulfil the function of buffers, neither socio-economically, nor geographically. Economically, they are even better off than most EU-members and geographically, they do not touch on the periphery. Consequently, they do not take part in the ENP. The same holds true for the countries that are currently candidates or at least potentially considered as such. Their acknowledged eligibility for membership – even though their joining the Union might still take more than a decade – makes them unfit to serve as buffers in the meantime. Therefore, the semi-periphery is already designed around them. This certainly implies that the EU, by making clear distinctions between those regarded as future members and those considered neighbours, has somehow already pre-decided – at least for the moment – on the ins and outs, i.e. on the *finalité géographique* of the EU. Consequently, Turkey – a long-time member of the EMP – is no longer included

61 Cf. Comelli, “Challenges“, as Fn. 12, p. 101.

62 In addition, Mongolia, TACIS beneficiary from 1991 to 2003, is already covered by ALA.

63 See Fn. 13.

in the ENP. However, there prevail some problematic aspects with regard to the semi-periphery concept if it comes to Turkey or to other ENP countries.

### *Delicate Features*

The semi-periphery logic as organising principle of the ENP becomes also evident *ex negativo* in the ongoing discussions on Turkey's eligibility for EU-membership because one of the frequently used arguments against Turkish membership implicitly draws back on this logic: With Turkey entering, the EU would have a common border with Iran or even Iraq. One of the obstacles to Turkey's aspirations therefore is just that its membership would thwart the concept of a continuous semi-periphery, designed to "protect" the EU from "problematic countries", since it would interrupt the "ring of friends" by breaking up the semi-peripheral cordon and establish a direct geographical link to the periphery.<sup>64</sup> On the other hand, this might likewise be considered an asset as former enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen expressed it: "at the latest with the accession of Turkey the EU will become a world wide player"<sup>65</sup> because the Union would finally enter into a new geographic arena with high international relevance.

While the Central Asian CIS-countries are degraded from neighbours to development countries, even some Eastern ENP-partners have reason to feel degraded by their current classification. Despite the positive aspects stressed by the EU, in partners' perceptions there are strong negative connotations as well: The Wider Europe Communication<sup>66</sup>, as well as the ENPSP<sup>67</sup>, do not grant ENP-partners an EU-membership perspective and exclude them from the provisions of Art. 49 TEU governing accession – at least in the medium-term.<sup>68</sup> The EU merely "acknowledges" the "European

64 Cf. Aliboni, "Geopolitical Implications", as Fn. 33, p. 6.

65 Günter Verheugen, "Das Kuschel-Europa ist von gestern: Ein Beitritt der Türkei würde die Europäische Union stärken und sie zum weltpolitischen Akteur machen", in: *Die Zeit*, 7 October 2004, <http://www.zeit.de/2004/42/Erbe?page=all>.

66 Cf. Commission, *Wider Europe*, as Fn. 15, p. 5.

67 Cf. Commission; *European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper*, as Fn. 16, p. 3.

68 Cf. Commission, *Wider Europe*, as Fn. 15, p. 5.

aspirations”<sup>69</sup> of ENP-countries expressing the wish to join but does not support them as in the case of the Balkans.<sup>70</sup> However, Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova as well as Georgia might eventually have a chance to enter, because, geographically speaking, the membership of the former three would not really destroy the concept of a semi-periphery since Russia as semi-centre overtakes these functions just as well. Georgia appears to be a somewhat more delicate case in this respect since it can be argued that a Georgian EU-membership might a) foster similar aspirations in Armenia and Azerbaijan, b) weaken the buffer zone in the Caucasus as Armenia and Azerbaijan may not be regarded sufficient to effectively exercise the function of a semi-periphery and c) geographically be considered too far reaching since Georgia is not directly linked to the EU.<sup>71</sup>

Additional evidence that the EU considers the Eastern ENP countries more as semi-periphery rather than as potential candidates lies in the equal inclusion of Mediterranean countries in the ENP, generally not regarded eligible for EU-membership.<sup>72</sup> All this is at least problematic in the sense that most Eastern partners regard the ENP as a first step towards membership. From their standpoint, the transfer of the “open-ended” TACIS into the ENP framework is disillusioning.<sup>73</sup> The EU will eventually have to make a choice: either destroy expectancies that facilitate partners’ participation in the ENP or continue to nourish hopes that the EU evidently is not willing to fulfil.

69 *Proposed EU/Moldova Action Plan*, [http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/pdf/action\\_plans/Proposed\\_Action\\_Plan\\_EU-Moldova.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/Proposed_Action_Plan_EU-Moldova.pdf), p. 1; *Proposed EU/Ukraine Action Plan*, [http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/pdf/action\\_plans/Proposed\\_Action\\_Plan\\_EU-Ukraine.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/Proposed_Action_Plan_EU-Ukraine.pdf), p. 1.

70 Cf. *European Security Strategy*, p. 13.

71 Only Turkey – candidate itself – could eventually serve as a “bridge”.

72 Cf. e.g. the case of Morocco referred to in Fn. 8 as well as Commission, *Wider Europe*, as Fn. 15, p. 5.

73 Cf. Smith, “The outsiders”, as Fn. 45, p. 768f.

### *Consequences and Implications*

The ENP as one of the Union's most recent policy schemes is fashioned to adapt the EU's foreign policy to the already mentioned dominant phenomena of globalisation:

1. The increased *interdependency* is often mainly perceived in negative terms since it becomes most evident in the growing vulnerability of the centre, leading to an eventual dissolution of the distinction between domestic and external security.<sup>74</sup> Hence, security has become a very complex issue and former security concepts no longer apply because they have become ineffective.<sup>75</sup>
2. The centre's vulnerability becomes even more concrete due to the *asymmetries* existing between the centre and the periphery, generating tensions and threats. Albeit asymmetry can also generate incentives for innovation and progress, this seems only to be true up to a certain level. If asymmetries become too pronounced, tensions eventually rise.

Under these conditions of interdependency and asymmetry, the EU faces the dilemma to maintain an open and prosperous society while doing the utmost to protect it effectively. The ENP constitutes part of the solution to this dilemma because its underlying logic incorporates both aspects:

1. In the short-term, the establishment of a semi-periphery via the ENP will create a buffer to the periphery that will eventually enhance the EU's protection;
2. In the medium-term, the ENP, by strengthening neighbours, will contribute to a decrease in asymmetries and therefore enable the EU to maintain a certain level of openness and enhance its security and prosperity further.

The combination of the two aspects is crucial for the ENP's success because only opting for short-term security might merely postpone negative

74 Cf. Guérot/Witt, "Europas neue Geostrategie", as Fn. 50, p. 7.

75 Cf. Andreas Jacobs/Carlo Masala, "Vom Mare Nostrum zum Mare Securum: Sicherheitspolitische Entwicklungen im Mittelmeerraum und die Reaktionen von EU und NATO", in: *APuZ*. 49.17 (1999), pp. 29f.

effects but not diminish them since tensions would eventually rise.<sup>76</sup> It is to hope that these short-term effects do not encourage politically motivated windfall gains. A comprehensive policy has to combine protective and cooperative measures, i.e. it needs to apply *co-operative constraint*. One of the reasons for doing so in the ENP is that the EU cannot have an interest in growing asymmetries because the costs of assuring the own benefits increase with a rise in asymmetries. The higher the differences are, the higher are the costs to maintain just these differences – the lesser the differences, the smaller the costs. Therefore, the EU has a vital interest in lessening the differences. This will, however, not lead to equalling out the differences but lead to an equilibrium between profits and costs: adjustment takes place until the maintenance costs are equal to or less than the – perceived – gains.

In order to prevent the emergence of long-time negative effects that might fall back on the centre, the centre eventually needs to offer *sustainable positive effects* to the semi-periphery. Dependency concepts tend to ignore this part of the equation, i.e. they neglect the semi-periphery's projected *lasting* profits or see them merely negatively as function of the centre's will to dominate.

Besides, the costs of exclusion arise on *both* sides. Accordingly, the semi-periphery itself is interested in a privileged relationship to the centre. If the centre's costs for exclusion are high, the semi-periphery's costs to get access to the centre are also high.<sup>77</sup> The ENP, especially by offering partners to participate in the EU's internal market, enables the semi-periphery to cut their access costs. This will grant partners more opportunities to develop, helping them to better cope with the effects of globalisation themselves. In the long-run, the semi-periphery itself might acquire an ability to develop its own neighbours, because the deadweight losses in relations to them are likely to become too pronounced as well. This is not to argue that there will

76 Besides, only opting for protection by establishing a “fortress Europe” would not correspond to the EU's founding principles; practising such a policy large-scale would probably not be accepted within the EU, as can be guessed of public reactions to the problems Spain was particularly confronted with in its African exclaves Melilla and Ceuta in 2005.

77 In practical terms: the costs for market access, movement of people etc.

be a snowball-effect, but rather a balance of efforts to maintain or increase security and prosperity by *exclusion* and to maintain or increase them by *participation*.

### **Outlook**

The European Neighbourhood Policy is designed to establish a semi-periphery around the European Union. This functionalisation of neighbours has the advantage of buffering and protecting by at the same time allowing for an increased exchange between the entities involved. The ENP as foreign policy scheme therefore functions in two directions: As the EU creates firmer links to its semi-periphery in order to stabilise it, it actively supports and strengthens it. The application of this sort of co-operative constraint is in the vital interest of the EU, because it enables the Union to acquire security and maintain or even gain a certain level of regional influence. But it is also in the interest of partners. They profit considerably of their geographic proximity. The Union is therefore right to stress the positive points but it should not shy away from revealing its own interests as it currently does. The EU shall particularly acknowledge how far it is willing to go, especially if it comes to concrete membership aspirations of ENP-partners. An all too altruistic-looking policy seems unrealistic and therefore not trustworthy. Regardless of how tempting it might appear to the EU, promising or even just implying more than it wants to deliver might prove counter-productive in the end.<sup>78</sup> This is evidently a difficult task, especially as under the conditions of asymmetry partners tend to feel deprived when it comes to the allocation of benefits from co-operation.<sup>79</sup> A substantial increase in these benefits for partners could be generated by 1) strengthening inter-neighbour co-operation and 2) increasing consistency in the EU's foreign policy.

78 Cf. also Guérot/Witt, "Europas neue Geostrategie", as Fn. 50, p. 12.

79 Cf. Andreas Jacobs, "Interregionale Kooperation: Ein systemorientiertes Analysemodell", in: Carlo Masala/Ralf Roloff (eds.), *Herausforderungen der Realpolitik: Beiträge zur Theoriedebatte in der Internationalen Politik*, Kölner Arbeiten zur Internationalen Politik 8, Cologne: SH-Verlag 1998, p. 122.

1. With a perspective of participation in the common market, intra-regional co-operation will have to be reinforced since the various bilateral links of partners to the EU alone will not be sufficient for realisation. However, the regional dimension within the ENP is underdeveloped.<sup>80</sup> The major obstacle lies in the heterogeneity of ENP-partners.<sup>81</sup> Thus, the EU should increasingly support intra-regional efforts, as for example the Black Sea Economic Co-operation or the Agadir Process. Even focussing only on the regional dimension would correspond to Europe's approach in other regions.<sup>82</sup> However, as the neighbours are geopolitically more relevant, the EU cannot afford to have non-relations with any of the countries surrounding it,<sup>83</sup> even if these might not intend to strengthen inter-neighbour ties. Nonetheless, for a raise in profits of the ENP to occur, the partners have to live up to expectations and things are not only up to Europe.

2. As the ENP only constitutes a small portion of the EU's foreign policy, it has to be placed in a broader context. Obviously, it is merely a policy that governs relations *at* the periphery of the Union. There exist other schemes that operate *in* the periphery. Under the conditions of interdependency and asymmetry, the pressure continuously rises to also abolish contradictions in EU-policies related to these schemes in due course. For example, the EU's development co-operation can only become efficient if the Union fundamentally alters its Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) that ruins development efforts manifold. Fortunately, one might say, the antagonisms are beginning to break up within the EU: With new financial exigencies or EU-candidate Turkey potentially zeroing in on participating in CAP, demands run high to substantially reform this expensive policy, i.e. to cut subsidies and to reduce protectionism. Thereby, the Union could strengthen the ef-

80 Most of the funds made available via the ENPI will be dispersed on a bilateral basis.

81 Cf. Aliboni, "Geopolitical Implications", as Fn. 33, p. 2.

82 In Latin America, for example, the EU envisages to negotiate Association Agreements only with the regional bodies (i.e. SICA and CAN) and not bilaterally with their respective member states, cf. Martin Zimmek, *Integrationsprozesse in Lateinamerika: Aktuelle Herausforderungen in Mittelamerika und der Andenregion*, Discussion Paper C 153, Bonn: ZEI 2005, p. 20.

83 Thus the "differentiated bilateralism" on behalf of the EU as described by Del Sarto/Schumacher, "From EMP to ENP", as Fn. 4, pp. 21f.

fects of its development policy as part of its foreign policy since “many developing countries enjoy a comparative advantage in agricultural production.”<sup>84</sup> With liberalisation, this advantage could be exploited and then be translated into an overall increase in prosperity,<sup>85</sup> resulting in a reduction of the differences between centre and periphery.

The EU needs to further elaborate an overall strategy. The ENP seems to be a step in the right direction, however, in the long run, this will not be sufficient. For example, the ENP will not fundamentally change the situation of asylum seekers or refugees in Northern Africa who want to enter the EU. The EU must in fact strive for a policy that “involves getting rid of the problems at its source”<sup>86</sup>. A change in the EU’s development policy and in its CAP-regime are therefore needed. First, albeit small, steps can already be identified: CAP-expenditures have at least already been limited. From discussions on a cut in e.g. milk-subsidies, it can be anticipated that a substantial reform of CAP – or likewise structural policies – will certainly make up for future crises the EU will inevitably have to go through.

Focussing one more time on the ENP, the discussion of this policy has revealed an EU continuously maturing in terms of foreign policy: Although the EU currently “discovers” its neighbours, it seems to know quite well how to treat these “discoveries”. The establishment of the ENP as European semi-periphery with active involvement of neighbours proves once more the strength and the attractiveness of the all too often underestimated European Union. After all, it is one of the only players creating such an attractive force. Hence, with over fifty years of integration and crisis management experience, the European Union seems to be one of the regions best prepared for the coming decades – the ENP is just an expression of the Union’s ability and determination to play an ever more important role.

84 Klaus Froberg/Ulrich Hiemenz, *Agricultural Trade Liberalization: Stumbling Block of the “Doha Round”?*, Policy Brief 4, Bonn: ZEF 2005, p. 3.

85 Along the mechanism described by L. Alan Winters/Neil McCulloch/Andrew McKay, *Trade Liberalisation and Poverty: The Empirical Evidence*, Discussion Papers in Economics 88, Brighton: University of Sussex 2002, p. 5.

86 Ashkaan Rahimi, *The Evolution of EU Asylum Policy*, Discussion Paper C 142, Bonn: ZEI 2005, p. 35.

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