



PRESS RELEASE OF DELIVERABLE 1.2

REPORT ON ENP POLICY CONCERNING ITS OBJECTIVES AND POLICY MEASURES OVER TIME

January 2012

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this report of deliverable 1.2 is to offer an overview of the history, structure and institutional instruments of the ENP and the policies that have been implemented due to the ENP, and a review of the political and political economy literature on the ENP. Together with the report from deliverable 1.1, which gives an overview of the literature that has evaluated these policies, this report will support and inform further research of the SEARCH project. This press release will give a brief overview of the most important conclusions of the working papers in this report. Since the goal of this report is only to provide an overview of existing research in order to inform the SEARCH project, policy implications of this report are not further explored.

MAIN RESULTS

The report consists of two working papers, WP1.4 and WP1.5. Working paper 1.5 develops a reference work that provides a factual background on the history, institutional structure, and implemented policy measures of the ENP. The ENP has its roots in a 2003 European Commission communication and over the last seven years it has developed to the multifaceted policy that it is today, by gradually developing new institutional structures for specific gaps in policy. The ENP replaces or subsumes a number of previous regional and thematic policies and funding instruments, which are further detailed in the working paper. The ENP has an interregional element, a

southern and an eastern regional elements, and bilateral elements for all the ENP countries, except for a few which do not fulfill basic requirements for democracy and human rights. The most important policies and reforms that have been carried out in these elements are discussed in the working paper. This overview clearly shows that the regional and interregional aspects of the ENP are weakly developed, judging from the low amount of activity in these elements of the ENP. The bilateral elements have various amounts of activity, with some countries being extremely active and reform-minded, and other countries who have witnessed practically no progress in the reforms that are proposed by the ENP.

Working paper 1.5 deals with the political dimension of the ENP. It analyses the rationale and motives behind the establishment of the ENP and the historical and political-economic dynamics that have shaped its structure, priorities and instruments. Through a critical review of the political and international relations literature on the topic, it discusses how the ENP reflects the functioning of the EU as a normative power seeking to shape institutional and political-economic structures in its external periphery and to what extent it represents a projection of EU-centred interests to this periphery seeking to guarantee political and economic stability inside and across its borders. Issues of path dependence are central in this analysis, as the ENP is considered to exhibit strong continuities from the process of accession conditionality applied during the so-called Eastern Enlargement. In turn, this poses a number of limitations to the policy. Conditionality without accession, what in the literature is referred to as "all but institutions" or "conditionality-lite", weakens the transformative power of the EU and its ability to instigate policy and institutional convergence across its borders. Added to this is an inherent tension between the wider normative objectives of the EU as a democratising force and narrower interests relating to security and economic integration / access to markets (including access to energy resources).

The ambiguity of the process, the reluctance of the EU to commit to a specific status/destination for its neighbouring countries and the internal fragmentation of the ENP along bilateral ('advanced status', 'special relations', etc) and regional lines (Union for the Mediterranean, Eastern Partnerships, Black Sea Synergy, etc), despite

its seemingly unified framework, is also seen as a double-edged sword: on the one hand allowing the EU to adapt its policy approach to country-specific circumstances but on the other hand weakening the internal coherence and external consistence and credibility of the policy and of the neighbourhood process at large – also allowing recipient countries to engage in the process on a selective a-la carte fashion. Within this context, the ability of the ENP to stimulate economic development and convergence in its external periphery becomes questionable, as the process of economic integration becomes fragmented and commitment to reforms that may be deemed necessary for economic development to become balanced and sustainable becomes weaker and subject to domestic, for the neighbourhood countries, political and political-economic contingencies.