



## **PRESS RELEASE OF WORKING PAPER 1.1**

### **TAKING STOCK OF RESEARCH PROJECTS ON THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY**

**January 2012**

#### **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this working paper is to provide an overview of the main research projects that examine the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in the areas of trade, migration, innovation and institutional and cultural diversity, and social capital. The goal of this overview is to illuminate the gaps in existing literature in these areas, in order to inform the empirical research of the SEARCH project. This press release will give a brief overview of the most important conclusions of working paper 1.1 of the SEARCH project. Since the goal of this working paper is only to provide an overview of existing research in order to inform the SEARCH project, policy implications of this working paper are not further explored.

#### **MAIN RESULTS**

This paper gives an overview of the empirical literature that studies the ENP and its impacts in the areas of trade, migration, innovation and education, and the institutional environment, social capital and cultural diversity. The main focus is on large research projects that have resulted in multiple publications. The majority of these research projects that study the ENP have focused on trade and foreign direct investment from a macro-economic perspective. Migration has received attention to a lesser extent, there are only a few studies on innovation in the ENP countries, and no studies explicitly examine the role of the ENP on the institutional environment, cultural diversity and social capital on innovation. Some studies do indirectly

contribute to our knowledge on these topics, because they have done research in countries that are part of the ENP, without explicitly examining the effect of the ENP. In the themes where direct empirical research on the ENP was sparse, more indirectly related research was also reviewed.

Although the research projects reviewed vary wildly in the research methods, and span a wide variety of themes, three key gaps in the literature are apparent. Firstly, most research does not examine the effect of specific policy measures, but only analyzes the change over a period of time, often in multiple countries, which can only measure the impact of all policies that have been implemented in that period in that region. No research in this review specifically isolates a policy which is predicted to have a certain effect, and measures the impact in a specific region of this policy. Secondly, almost all studies focus on a national level or regional level in their analysis, and the sub-national level is rarely considered. Although literature suggests that policies can have varying impacts on different spatial levels, and sub-national effects of policies are to be expected in most cases, there are only few studies that do examine the sub-national level. Thirdly, most of the reforms carried out due to the ENP are very recent, and they are often phased in in the same period as reforms of policies preceding the ENP are still phasing in. This means that for most studies the available data was not recent enough to evaluate the impact of these reforms, and even if data were available, it would be exceedingly difficult to tease out the effects of different reforms that are implemented simultaneously. Of course in all the themes, specific gaps are also identified.

The overview of literature as presented in this working paper is necessarily incomplete, as it encompasses a wide range of themes with a large number of publications. However, by focusing on major research projects the most important empirical results concerning the ENP have been identified, which enables this working paper to provide a sketch of the frontier in empirical research on the ENP from the perspective of different academic disciplines.