



ABSTRACT WORKING PAPER 5.24

Report on Approximation of Laws under the European Neighbourhood Policy: A Typology of the Challenges and Obstacles that Lie Ahead

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The completion of the two waves of enlargement of 2004 and of 2007 obliged the EU to redefine its relations with those neighbours who will not join it as Member States, at least in the short and medium term. This vision underlies the basic objective of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). In return for enhanced trade and investment relations, with resultant improved access to the Internal Market, the ENP requires, *inter alia*, the EU's neighbouring countries (NCs) to align their legislation and regulatory regimes, to an extent to be negotiated, with the EU's *acquis communautaire*. The purpose of this Working Paper is to offer a typology and an analysis of the various factors that adversely affect or render it more difficult to attain this strategic objective of the ENP. The typology classifies these factors according to whether they pertain to the ENP itself (*e.g.*, lack of meaningful incentives, lack of definitiveness and weak mechanisms of conditionality), to the EU (*e.g.*, expectation-capacity gap, weakening trade prominence), to the NCs (*e.g.*, local perceptions, veto players, institutional weakness and high adaptation costs) or to the interface between the EU and its NCs (institutional and normative mismatch). The analysis focuses at times on the case study of the State of Israel, yet its findings are applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, unless otherwise stated, to the relations of the EU with all other NCs. The typology and analysis offered add to the work of Work Package 5, which is focused on the socio-cultural and institutional environment in the NCs and the manner in which such environment affects the transformative role of the ENP.