

# 18 PAPERS IEMed.



## REVIEWING THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY

*Senén Florensa, Dtor.*

# IEMed.

European Institute of the Mediterranean

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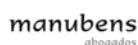
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*Senén Florensa, Dtor.*

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## Introduction

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The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) has not been able to answer effectively to the growing challenges in the Mediterranean region. Rightly so, the European Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) have launched a much-needed consultation<sup>1</sup> addressed to relevant stakeholders in the ENP. In order to prepare an appropriate answer to the consultation, the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed) has organized and consulted a Research Group<sup>2</sup> composed of top experts in the field of European external relations in the Mediterranean from the EuroMeSCo network and researchers from other think tanks and institutions, who share the same expertise.

Following this first round table, the IEMed has also launched a selective exercise of the 6<sup>th</sup> Euromed Survey of Experts and Actors<sup>3</sup> on the ENP review and has sent it to the EuroMeSCo network experts and to the participants of the Research Group, for a total of 206 people, in order to have an early opinion on the ENP review. The results of this first round of answers will be complemented at the end of the summer by the larger exercise of the 6<sup>th</sup> Euromed Survey, which will be sent to 4.900 experts and actors.

The answers given in this first round showed that the experts agree on the fact that the ENP has failed in achieving its ambitions. However the large majority of respondents (66%) thinks that the policy should be kept, but requires to be substantially reformed. In addition, even those who answered that the ENP should be wound up, see other forms of cooperation with the Neighbouring countries of the European Union as necessary.

The following pages are therefore dedicated to systematically answer the Joint Consultation Paper on the ENP review and they refer to the methodological support of the survey as much as to the assessment made by the IEMed team and their round table with the Research Group. With the aim of giving a consistent structure to the many issues addressed by the Joint Consultation Paper, this study was divided into three main chapters. The first chapter tackles the redefinition of the ENP policy framework, which is vital in order to build an instrument coherent with reality, especially in what concerns the geographical scope of the policy, the actors and interlocutors it has to involve and the balance between interests and values. The second chapter is methodological and targets

1 Please find the full text of the Joint Consultation Paper at the following link: "Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy", Brussels 4 March 2015

2 The composition of the ad hoc Research Group was as it follows: Senén Florensa, Executive President, European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed); Josep Ferré, Managing Director, European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed); Xavier Aragall, Euro-Mediterranean Policies Technical Advisor, (IEMed); Sven Biscop, Director of Europe in the World Programme, Egmont-Royal Institute for International Relations; Gabriel Busquets, Spanish Ambassador on Special Mission for Mediterranean Affairs; Silvia Colombo, Senior Fellow, Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI); Richard Youngs, Senior Associate, Democracy and Rule of Law Program, Carnegie Europe; Francesca Fabbri, Junior Research Fellow, European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed); Marc Franco, Egmont-Royal Institute for International Relations. Former EU head of delegation in Cairo; Andrea Frontini, Policy Analyst, Europe in the World Programme European Policy Centre (EPC); Florence Gaub, Senior Analyst, European Union Institute for Security Studies; Kristina Kausch, Head of Middle East Programme, FRIDE; Erwan Lannon, Professor in European Law, University of Ghent and College of Europe; Stefan Lehne, Visiting Scholar, Carnegie Europe; Ivan Martin, European University Institute, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies; Juliane Schmidt, Programme Assistant, Europe in the World Programme, European Policy Centre (EPC); Claire Spencer, Senior Research Fellow, Middle East and North Africa Programme, Chatham House.

3 To see the past editions, please consult: <http://www.iemed.org/publicacions-en/historic-de-publicacions/enquesta-euromed>



several flaws of the current policy arrangement and tools, while it proposes substantial and detailed changes for a more effective policy through the definition of priority policy areas and the combination of different tools. In the last chapter, key strategic issues on the outset and implementation of the ENP are addressed: a better coordination between Member States and the European Union and between the EEAS and the European Commission is of paramount importance in order to ensure the functioning of the policy. At the same time, the EU should seize the occasion to tackle the wider Common Foreign and Security Policy and ensuring a smoother connection with the ENP, also taking into account how the geopolitical scenario of the Mediterranean is complex and unstable.

## Defining the Policy framework

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Reviewing the European policy towards the neighbours in the Southern Mediterranean requires looking back to what has been done before, taking into account the diversity of countries with their different needs, demands and institutional development.

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EU's influence as a commercial and economic partner is considered most important, while its role as a promoter of regional integration and as a driver of governance reforms is considered of secondary importance.

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According to the 5<sup>th</sup> Euromed Survey results<sup>14</sup> the ENP review should take into account that despite the present changes in the region, the European Union is still perceived as an influential player in the Mediterranean comparing to other regional actors. Nevertheless, according to the Survey the United States and Saudi Arabia are considered to be more influential than the EU in the future of the region.

On the other hand, the EU's influence as a commercial and economic partner is considered most significant, while its role as a promoter of regional integration and as a driver of governance reforms is of secondary importance. Finally, its capacity to act as a peace broker in the region is considered less likely. Accordingly, in countries with open conflicts or unstable scenarios, such as Syria or Palestine, the EU is considered to have failed to act pro-actively and make its influence heard.

Another significant element that emerged from the 5<sup>th</sup> Survey is that the EU has to cooperate on the basis of the demands from partner countries and work in co-ownership with them rather than intervening in their internal affairs.

Against this background, Europe should review the ENP starting from the definition of its framework of application, prominently in what concerns the geographical scope of the policy, the interlocutors to be involved and the type of cooperation to be established. As a matter of fact, art. 8 of the TEU states that a special relationship should be developed with "neighbouring countries", thus defining the geographic area of applicability on the basis of proximity, which is a weak and volatile concept for the definition of a relationship which gives place to interpretation and entails several consequences<sup>5</sup>. On the other hand, the EU, in reviewing the ENP, needs to assess the specific interests it has in the region and the common values it has to defend.

### **The geographical scope of the ENP**

The ENP is a policy based on vicinity for definition, meaning that the inclusion of third

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4 Euromed Survey of experts and actors. The European Union in a transformed Mediterranean: strategies and policies. IEMed, 2014, Barcelona.

5 See also how this idea is developed in Lehne, Stefan (2014), Time to Reset the European Neighbourhood Policy, Carnegie Europe, Brussels and in Bertelsmann Stiftung (ed.) (2015), The EU neighbourhood in shambles. Some recommendations for a new European neighbourhood strategy.

countries in its scope is arbitrary and it is subject to the definition of neighbourhood and not to the nature of the relationships that are to be established. A further delineation has been created with the differentiation between eastern and southern neighbourhood in the programmes enclosed in the ENP framework. From a historical and geopolitical point of view this division makes sense and should be highlighted even more. However, it does not cover the complexity of the neighbouring regions of the EU and the countries making part of them, for which a more issue-focused and functional approach would help.

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It is important to contemplate which new countries should be included in the ENP and how to avoid ignoring developments in the regions “neighbouring the neighbourhood”.

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In the southern neighbourhood, the current definition of the ENP does not include in its scope or does not address many countries, such as those of the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, as well as Iraq and Iran, whose fates are intertwined with those already covered by the policy. This implies two layers of rethought for the ENP: on the one hand, it is important to contemplate which new countries should be included and on the other hand, how to avoid ignoring developments in the regions “neighbouring the neighbourhood” and better cooperate with the countries making part of it. According to the results obtained in the survey, the ENP should be extended in order to include by some means Iraq (53% of the respondents) and the GCC countries (53% of the respondents) and then facilitate more flexible ways of cooperation with other regional State actors (77% of the respondents), such as Iran and the Sahel countries.

This extension of the ENP geographical scope does not just respond to the need of addressing the North Africa and Middle East as a region with a complex web of relationships, but it is also necessary to address in a functional way the interests of the EU in selected policy areas. As a matter of fact, a more issue-oriented approach regarding trade, energy, counterterrorism, migration, environment, gender and youth, is seen as mandatory in order to better serve the EU's and its Member States' objectives in the region. Consequently, the geographical scope needs to be enlarged to take care of several topics of transnational nature, for example to address the issue of foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq or the migratory patterns of refugees from Eritrea to the Mediterranean.

The EU should then envisage to structure the new geographical concept in a more coherent manner and with a clearer approach. The current set of relations with the ENP

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countries is based on differentiated bilateralism, but it does not address how to deal with other partnerships in place such as the multilateral relationship enclosed in the Euro Mediterranean Partnership or the inter-regional cooperation foreseen in the EU-GCC relations. In reviewing the ENP the EU should challenge the current structure and put forward an organisational strategy, including the different layers of relationship and answering the true challenges of differentiation among ENP countries.

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The EU Policy towards its close or medium range neighbourhood should have three completely differentiated policy arrangements.

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This means, in fact, that the EU Policy towards its close or medium range neighbourhood should have three completely differentiated policy arrangements: one for the short number of countries for which the original policy oriented toward their “integration” into a close Euro-Mediterranean Association (Barcelona Process) or into the enlarged Euro (Mediterranean) internal market is still valid and desired by both parties. This includes only Morocco, Tunisia and possibly Lebanon and Jordan. To keep in this group Israel and Palestine is a political fiction out of place in a serious approach. The differentiation in favour of this first group has to be massive, as, on the one hand, the countries need the help to preserve their positive evolution and, on the other, it will be a clear signal of a desirable future for the others. In order to attain this first status, countries should apply for it and make the corresponding effort. The second Policy framework would apply to Mediterranean Countries that have not applied for or not received the first status. The third Policy framework would apply to the neighbours of the neighbours in the Sahel and the Gulf area, with which it would be desirable to have some kind of privileged relationship.

#### **Interlocutors and actors**

Although the basic interlocutors for the conclusion of the agreements and their implementation need to be the governments, the revised ENP should embrace a wide range of actors, in order to be able to formulate more inclusive and effective policies.

Among local actors, the priority group on which the ENP should focus on is civil society. Indeed, the emerging socio-political context after the so-called Arab Spring has created new possibilities to strengthen the role of civil society in the Mediterranean Partner Countries. In the communications issued as a response to those events, the European Commission has acknowledged the crucial role of civil society in empowering the citizens and holding the governments into account, especially where the political representation





at the Parliament is weak, thus contributing to sustainable political transitions. In order to better support the civil society, the EU has created two new financial tools - Civil Society Facility and the European Endowment for Democracy.

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The revised ENP should embrace a wide range of actors, in order to be able to formulate more inclusive and effective policies.

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Those new instruments, aiming to fill the gaps of the previous ones (mainly EIDHR), significantly contribute to the increasing capacities of the civil actors. However, they still contain some drawbacks. The latter instrument largely depends on the funds provided by the EU Member States. Currently, out of 28 Member States, 12 do not support EED financially, including such states as Italy, France and Greece. This may signify that the EED, which actually provides for a much more flexible cooperation with civil society, allowing for supporting small and unregistered non-state actors, is not considered by those states as a primary tool to support civil society in the Southern neighbourhood. With regard to the Civil Society Facility, although it disposes of a relatively stable budget, it provides funding through the Call for Proposals and the grants do not cover 100 % of costs of the proposed actions. This means that the small non-state groups, lacking capacity and adequate funds, are not in capacity to apply for funding under this instrument.

Therefore, the EU should rethink its commitment to assist and engage civil society actors in policy dialogues. One possible way would be to involve the CSOs in a process of defining priority areas for cooperation with the Mediterranean Partner Countries. This could be achieved through the establishment, in the framework of an agreement with the local government, of a group of experts in each partner country, composed of the officials from EU Delegations and local governments and civil society actors, whose role would be to help design and assess cooperation initiatives.

Another way of involving civil society would be to encourage more bottom-up initiatives. The EU should support both financially and diplomatically local initiatives, whose aim is to promote economic growth and good governance. According to the survey respondents, this measure will contribute to the greatest extent to making ENP structures more cooperative and inclusive. In order to reach small, local civil society organisations, the EU should also consider to develop more flexible sub-granting mechanisms.

At the same time, the EU should invest in increasing CSOs capacity to perform their role as independent development actors. This could be done through supporting long-term and equitable partnerships and exchange programmes among local CSOs and between local and European CSOs. Such cooperation will help to create dialogue and to exchange best practices, especially in the area of transparency, self-regulation, lobbying and advocacy towards governments. In order to do so, the EU could benefit from already existing organisations, whose main objective is to promote transnational cooperation between CSOs and NGOs, such as Anna Lindh Foundation. Also, the EU could provide local CSOs with training in EU decision-making process and programmes, either received in the EU Delegations or through visits in the EU institutions. The EU Delegations should be more actively involved in supporting local civil society by building partnerships between local CSOs and authorities and engaging them in structured dialogue on key areas of cooperation.

Another layer of society, which should be actively engaged in the implementation of ENP initiatives is the private sector, with a special focus on small and medium enterprises. Considering the relatively scarce resources the EU has to offer to the partner countries, the partnership with private sector is, on the other hand, crucial for developing costly and large-scale initiatives in the area of energy, climate and transport. It will also contribute to sustainable economic growth by advancing innovation and fostering job creation. Therefore, the EU should consider engaging in public-private partnerships with all types of private sector, especially in the field of sectoral policies and economic development. On the other hand, the EU should assist partner countries in creating conducive environment for private sector, by helping to make administration more transparent, efficient and business-friendly. The EU could also provide training for SMEs on how to attract and apply for funding and support networking between SMEs on regional and European level to share best practices.

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The EU should consider engaging in public-private partnerships  
in large-scale initiatives for specific sectors.

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### Interests and values

The main aim behind the establishment of the ENP was to create an area of prosperity, stability and security. The framework for cooperation revised in 2011 set as a main objective to build deep and sustainable democracies. Four years after the ENP revision, only Tunisia and, following its own reformist way Morocco, has engaged in a comprehensive reform agenda, leading the country towards democratic transformation.



Other states are struggling with the implementation of announced reforms or are facing considerable challenges, which divert their attention from long-term objectives. A third group of countries simply do not share the goals mentioned both in the launching document of the ENP and two EC Communications on the revised framework of cooperation.

Against this backdrop, it is of utmost importance for the EU to redefine the goals behind its cooperation with the Southern Mediterranean Partner Countries. The core long-term objectives of developing relations with the neighbouring countries should remain the promotion of the commonly shared values. The short-term objectives should be however much more detailed. The previous ones have been quite vague, which has obstructed the definition of concrete steps to achieve them. Therefore, the more specific the short-term goals are, the easier will be to adopt the methods to accomplish them and the milestones to reach.

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Also, in order to effectively engage partner countries in cooperation, the short-term objectives should be shared and should bring equal benefits to both parties. This kind of common objectives include areas as fostering economic growth and enhancing security, in the sense of hard security, but also energy security, water security and food security.

## Methodology

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The revision of the ENP should also involve the assessment and improvement of current toolbox and instruments the EU has been using to attain its objectives. The policy goals and areas on which to cooperate with the partner countries should be commonly agreed and clearly defined. While the EU should pursue bilateral cooperation, it should not forget about multilateral relations, by relying on already existing frameworks of collaboration. The Union for the Mediterranean and Secretariat should play a much more active role with enhanced means in defining and implementing regional projects of Euromed cooperation. The set of tools should be more flexible and include wide range of incentives offered more generously to the most committed partner countries. The EU should focus on those incentives which in the long term could significantly outweigh the costs of necessary reforms, which is integration to the EU Internal Market, comprehensive trade agreements, including access to EU Agricultural Market and increased cooperation in the area of mobility.

### Defining policy areas

In order to design a coherent and effective policy, which will lead to enhanced relations with the Mediterranean Partner Countries, the EU should clearly define the policy objectives and areas in which the cooperation could be promoted. The current Action Plans specify the priorities for cooperation with each partner country. Nonetheless, the actions proposed to achieve them should include more specific targets and benchmarks. Also, Action Plans contain a vast number of priority areas. This diverts attention from the policy areas, where resources should be allocated in order to improve political, economic and security situation in a given country.

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The EU should adapt a differentiated approach and prioritise a small number of policy areas for cooperation on a country by country basis.

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Thus, the EU should revise this approach and focus on a small number of policy areas. Considering that political, security and economic challenges varies significantly from country to country, the EU should adapt a differentiated approach and prioritise policy areas for cooperation on a country by country basis. The priority areas for cooperation shall be defined on the basis of thorough assessment of the situation in a particular country by a group of experts composed of officials from the EU Delegation, the local government and local independent actors, such as members of CSOs and NGOs. Currently, the areas for cooperation specified in the Association Agreements and Action Plans are defined jointly by the EU and the Government of the partner country. This





composition very often leads to the avoidance of cooperation in the policy areas uncomfortable for the government.

In order to decide on which policy areas to cooperate with the Mediterranean Partner Countries, the EU should first focus on the most urgent issues. Therefore, where the situation in a given country requires stabilisation, in order to be able to successfully develop cooperation in other spheres, the EU should support a Security Sector Reform. Nevertheless, it should not forget to establish long-term goals to support sustainable stability in its close neighbourhood, meaning equal access to basic services and equal opportunity to participate in the political process.

While defining the policy areas of cooperation, the EU should not only be guided by the priorities in the region, but also choose those policy fields in which it has been most successful and experienced elsewhere and in which it has significant incentives and leverage. Such areas include governance and institution building, security sector reform, economic and trade cooperation, as well as sectoral policies, such as energy or transport. Also, while the EU should continue bilateral cooperation, it should not abandon a broader framework of relations in case of problems of regional scale, such as high level of unemployment, especially among youth. Involving all the willing countries from the region in the same sectorial policy framework may contribute to their enhanced integration. In order to foster cooperation on regional level, as has been said, the revised ENP could build upon the already existing framework for multilateral relations - the Union for the Mediterranean.

Finally, the EU should not impose the policy areas of cooperation to the partner countries. The areas of cooperation should be of common interest to both sides. The enhanced contacts may lead to the gradual socialisation and trust-building and have a spill over of cooperation to other policy areas.

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multilateral relations - the Union for the Mediterranean.

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### **Combine different tools**

In order to ensure fruitful cooperation, the EU tool-box should be more flexible and include a wide array of instruments and means, which could be adopted in differentiated, targeted and faster way. To do so, the EU initiatives should be less bureaucratic. The EU should

also revise the current process of decision-making regarding the ENP. The current system, which requires consultation and agreement of all the Commission Directorate Generals involved significantly retards the implementation of policies. Thus, the EU Delegations should be given more autonomy in adopting the measures in order to adequately and quickly respond to the situation on the ground.

### Differentiation

The EU should clearly differentiate between the countries willing to cooperate and those who do not, by applying, as said before, three different approaches. The first one should include countries willing to integrate in the Euro-Mediterranean Association. The second framework should involve “slacker” countries, which have not applied for or have not received the special status of cooperation. The third framework would be based on special partnership with the neighbours of the neighbours in the Sahel and the Gulf area.

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The EU Delegations should be given more autonomy  
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The countries, not willing to engage in reforms should be dealt with outside the first level of the ENP framework. At the same time EU should try as far as possible to support financially and diplomatically NGOs and CSOs, which develop local projects, aiming to strengthen the role of civil society in those countries. Only strong civil society with adequate means and capacities may lead to changes in political systems.

With the countries willing to engage on a reform agenda and conform to the *acquis communautaire*, the EU should sign bilateral comprehensive and detailed agreements. Current Association Agreements signed with partner countries are necessarily broad but do not set specific objectives for cooperation, as Action Plans should do. Until now, this has allowed partner countries a large room for manoeuvre and a loose interpretation of set goals. Nevertheless, more than a half of respondents still consider these instruments important. Therefore, the EU should keep those tools, but it could concretise them by setting concrete, quantitative and qualitative goals to be achieved every year. The goals and targets, as well as the policy and sectorial areas in which they should be achieved should be defined by the mixed group of government and experts mentioned previously. The EU could also consider to adapt issue-oriented cooperation agreements on an ad hoc basis, an opinion shared by over 90% of respondents.



### Conditionality

The cooperation should be intensified according to the progress in reforms undertaken by the partner countries. This progress should be measured according to quantitative and qualitative indicators, previously agreed for every year and compared to the milestones set in the agreement signed with a partner country. In assessing the progress, the external factors, which prevent the government from acting should be taken into account and should not impede the EU from continuing the cooperation. The ENP Progress Reports should be published, as currently, on an annual basis. However, the groups of experts responsible for writing the Reports should not be composed only of the officials from EEAS and the European Commission, but it should also include local independent experts.

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The benefits offered by the EU should be realistic and should significantly outweigh the short-term costs of introducing necessary reforms.

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The countries that successfully reached the set of objectives should count on a greater commitment of the EU. The “more for more” approach, if applied consistently, will lead to increasing EU credibility and will ensure other countries in the region that once they engage in reforms, they can count on the EU firm support. The benefits offered by the EU should be realistic, that is to say that they should be agreed and supported by all the EU Member States. In addition, they should significantly outweigh the short-term costs of introducing necessary reforms. This will help to convince the partner governments and to get support from the local society for the changes required.

### Incentives

In view of the seriousness of the situation in the partner countries, it is not acceptable to lock-up the provision of funding to the concrete breakdown foreseen in the Multiannual Financial Framework. Europe should be ready and able to take quick and effective actions at the necessary scale when the situation requires it. Therefore, in order to have more impact, the EU should drastically increase all the resources at its disposal. Even then, a solution to the relatively low financial support would be a better and more effective management of available resources: on the one hand, the EU should prioritise the areas and initiatives for financing, depending on the necessities of the partner country. Secondly, the EU should support the reform of local administrations, through training and capacity-building, to enable them to efficiently manage the allocated resources.

In the current situation, clearly a priority area for the EU financial support should be to assist partner countries in reforming and modernising state institutions and policies, as well as public administrations. The EU should focus on micro-dimension and support to SMEs, providing partner countries with specific financial facilities, knowledge and training or creating clusters for entrepreneurs. Such clusters stimulate self-employment and affect many regions simultaneously. Another area of focus could be increased supporting of women entrepreneurship, as it largely contributes both to social development and economic growth. The EU could also consider public-private partnerships to support development of transnational and sustainable water, energy and transportation projects.

In addition to increasing financial support, the EU should offer other incentives, bringing considerable benefits in the long term, such as the access to some of the EU common policies, on opinion shared by over 40% of respondents of the Survey. The most important incentive for partner countries is integration to the EU Internal Market as promised in the launching of the ENP, since it would contribute to significant inflows of investment, economic growth and decrease of unemployment. In the short term, however, it would imply huge costs and necessity to undertake fundamental reforms. Therefore, the EU should firstly establish a comprehensive and detailed list of reforms tailored to the economic situation in every country and, secondly, assist and provide guidance to the partner countries in introducing those changes.

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The EU should offer the committed countries  
sharp upgrading of their trade agreements,  
including opening access to the EU agricultural market.

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Considering that the EU is the biggest trade partner of the Southern neighbourhood partner countries, the powerful incentive for implementing reforms is also to offer the committed countries sharp upgrading of their trade agreements. As the economic systems in partner countries varies, such agreements should be differentiated and tailored according to the needs of each of the partners. Trade agreements should above all include opening access to the EU agricultural market. This would suppose great economic gains for the southern partner countries and relatively low costs for the EU. At the same time, the EU should assist those countries in improving the efficiency and competitiveness of their agricultural sectors.

Another significant incentive of which the EU disposes is increased cooperation in the area of mobility. This includes signing Mobility Partnerships and opening labour market



to the most strongly engaged partner countries. The EU should also focus on fostering mobility among academics, entrepreneurs and youth. Erasmus+ programme already enables the participation of the Southern Mediterranean partner countries in student exchanges, however the number of grants is still too low. Thus, the programme should be supported with sufficient resources, opening the participation in exchanges to as many people as possible. The exchanges among youth are crucial, as they contribute to better knowledge and understanding of others' cultures, which underpins any effective cooperation. The EU should also work with partner countries in approaching the educational systems. This will facilitate the mutual recognition of diplomas and lead to increased mobility among youth and researchers.

The most important however is that the EU offer should be realistic and achievable. The current EU's intentions do not correspond to the actual support, which fails to satisfy the expectations of the partner countries and leads to the EU decreasing credibility. According to the survey, these are one of the major elements for which the ENP in its current form has failed.

**Addressing crucial strategic issues**

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From a strategic point of view, a revision of the ENP should also target coordination and strategic issues in the decision-making process and also how foreign policy is shaped at European level, including to review the implementation of the Common Foreign Policy in line with what is agreed in the Lisbon Treaty. The cooperation and coordination between the EU and its Member States, as well as between the European Commission, the EU Council and the European External Action Service (EEAS), in formulating and implementing the ENP should be further developed and reformed. At the same time, major issues in the broader context of the European Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) should be addressed in order to make external instruments such as the ENP more effective.

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There are several flaws resulting in the lack of a coherent engagement of the Member States, resulting in the absence of political leverage of the policy and its mainly techno-bureaucratic character.

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#### **Coordination: the EU and Member States**

The current articulation of the ENP, mainly because of its roots in the enlargement model, allows the Member States to modulate their foreign policies according to diverse needs and interests, disregarding any collective EU plan. There are several flaws resulting in the lack of a coherent engagement of the Member States, resulting in the absence of political leverage of the policy and its mainly techno-bureaucratic character. A revised ENP should then be an instrument allowing for a more effective foreign policy, with the Member States agreeing on common policy strategies and objectives and sticking to them. In this sense, the diplomatic missions in the region constitute a consistent network for policy coordination. The Member States' missions in the region should share their information and intelligence among them and with the EU delegations consistently, while also supporting them through providing resources for the identification and implementation of key interlocutors and strategies. Also, the EU Member States should be incentivised and involved in the policy on a broader basis. A way to facilitate this process could be transforming the annual progress reports in official documents that every actor can refer to. The EU should therefore rethink its ENP in order to play a more effective role in coordinating between the national diplomacies and in achieving common aims, while also complementing their security interests.

#### **Coordination: the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Commission**

A fundamental review is also needed at institutional level, notably in the coordination between the European Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS). As



a matter of fact, the impact and visibility of the European Union in its Neighbourhood would benefit from a more efficient institutional hierarchy and set of responsibilities with clearer and coherent policy objectives. The High Representative, as Vice President of the Commission, should be placed in charge of the ENP in order to ensure its better connection with the broader foreign policy and security interests of the EU. The Commissioner for the ENP would then assist in the implementation of the policy. Changing the setting of the institutional coordination would help in removing the current dichotomy between external relations and foreign policy, for which instruments like the ENP are managed in an excessively bureaucratic manner and with a lack of a broader strategic overview. A strengthened leadership framework at EU level with the coherent involvement of the Member States is one of the main keys to the success of a renewed Neighbourhood Policy. Such a revision could not leave behind also the role of the EU Council which holds the main final decisions in the formulation of the CFSP and should play a fundamental role in the coordination of the Member States foreign policies, while in reality is a victim of compromise and of the frequent deadlocks in reaching consensus. The EU Council should instead be an active and fruitful part of the implementation of the ENP as a place to hold regular and functional meetings among ministers.

#### **The ENP and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)**

The EU failed to respond adequately to the challenges of its broader Southern Neighbourhood, the Mediterranean region and the Middle East, also because of the impossibility to forge effectively a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and to link the ENP to its scope. Following the so-called Arab-Spring, a more comprehensive approach than before was adopted by the European Union. The toolbox was expanded, by mobilising different instruments at disposal, including CSDP missions such as the EUBAM in Libya, Electoral Observation Missions and by creating new ones like the European Endowment for Democracy (EED) and the Civil Society Facility (CSF). Regional strategies were created for Syria and the Sahel, underlying the EU's consciousness that the broader Middle Eastern and North African region needed a broader engagement, but with uncertain outcomes.

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The ENP should become an asset for the broader CFSP, both in providing analysis with a closer regional focus and in serving as a tool for the setting out of the CFSP.

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However, despite the merits of this engagement through a more comprehensive effort, the EU's action in the region has been limited and the results are doubtful. Indeed, the ENP has not been conceived as a tool to address conflict as it is an assistance

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instrument, but it is clear that the situation on the ground in the whole European Neighbourhood and especially in the Mediterranean Region is presenting challenges that not only are not possible to be addressed in the current ENP formulation, but they also undermine the functioning of the policy as such. As a consequence, the ENP should be reviewed with the aim to make it more flexible, for example by setting principles for the degree of engagement and the type of actions to be undertaken in dealing with the different interlocutors and situations. In addition, the ENP should become an asset for the broader CFSP, both in providing analysis with a closer regional focus and in serving as a tool for the setting out of the CFSP, in particular in its peace-building and aid efforts. For these reasons, it would be appropriate if the final Communication reforming the ENP was delayed until the strategic review of the European external action, which High Representative Mogherini has announced<sup>6</sup>, will take place.

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The EU should rethink its foreign policy in the Middle East  
in relation with those of other main foreign powers active in the region.

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### **The EU and other powers in the Mediterranean Region**

On another level, the EU should also rethink its foreign policy in the Middle East in relation with those of other main foreign powers active in the region. This does not mean that the EU should institutionalise in some way such a wide geopolitical issue in a tool like the ENP or in its CFSP. However, as a matter of fact, the EU and in particular the format in which the ENP was conceived have benefited for many years of the United States' supremacy in the region, while now, as the US strategy is stalling and the influence of Russia and China is growing, the EU needs to concretely and realistically explore ways to deal with a multipolar and unstable scenario<sup>7</sup>. This is not just a matter of leverage, which is indeed a part of the problem as these foreign power show most of all greater economic resources for investment, but it might also be a way to regain consciousness of what the EU wants to achieve as a geopolitical actor. If the EU still wants to accomplish the goal, stated at art. 8 (1) of the Treaty of the TEU, of "an area of shared prosperity and good neighbourliness", it will have to choose coherent strategies in the broader geopolitical scenario and act accordingly.

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<sup>6</sup> The review is envisaged to take place in the last quarter of 2015 following what has been declared in the President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker's agenda and by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Commission Vice-President (HR/VP), Federica Mogherini at the European Parliament (EP) confirmation hearing in October 2014.

<sup>7</sup> See p. 210, 5th Euromed Survey of Experts and Actors: table on impact of the international players in the region.

## Conclusion

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All in all, the EU faces challenging times in the regions closest to its borders, and particularly in the Eastern and Southern Mediterranean. The time has come to review the European Neighbourhood Policy and not only to adapt it to the current situation, but also to make it a useful and flexible tool for the future. In summing up, the following main suggestions are made:

- The High Representative, as Vice President of the Commission, should be placed in charge of the ENP in order to ensure its better connection with the broader foreign policy and security interests of the EU.
- It would be desirable if the review of the ENP went together with the European Security Strategy Review announced for the last quarter of 2015, in order to make it an instrument coherent with the overall foreign policy of the European Union.
- The ENP should be divided into two separated policies for the Eastern and the Southern Neighbourhood. The close or medium range Southern neighbourhood should then have three completely differentiated policy arrangements in accordance to the level of compromise agreed by the third country and their regional relevance: a closer level of partnership with neighbouring countries defined as “partners”, a second level of “slacker” countries which do not wish to compromise on key conditionality issues but have undeniable historical and geographical ties, a third level of countries that have a high regional relevance such as Iraq, the GCC Countries and the Sahel Countries.
- The EU Delegations in the partner countries should play a much more central role in the definition and implementation of the ENP and, subsequently, they should be given more autonomy in adopting the measures to adequately and swiftly respond to the situation on the ground.
- In view of the seriousness of the situation in the partner countries, it is not acceptable to lock-up the provision of funding to the concrete breakdown foreseen in the Multiannual Financial Framework. Europe should be ready and able to take quick and effective actions at the necessary scale when the situation requires it. Therefore, in order to have more impact, the EU should drastically increase all the resources at its disposal.
- Redefine the goals behind the ENP. The core long-term objectives of developing relations with the neighbouring countries should remain the promotion of the



commonly shared values. The short-term objectives should be much more detailed and easy to attain.

- The focus areas for cooperation in the negotiation of the Action Plans shall be defined on the basis of a deeper assessment of the situation in the partner country by a group of experts composed of officials from the EU Delegation, the local Government and local independent actors, such as members of CSOs and NGOs.
- The “more for more” approach, if applied consistently, will lead to increasing EU credibility and will ensure other countries in the region that once they engage in reforms, they can count on the EU firm support. The benefits offered by the EU should be realistic, that is to say that they should be agreed and supported by all the EU Member States. In addition, they should significantly outweigh the short-term costs of introducing reforms.
- Civil Society involvement in the ENP should be given further importance especially through the participation of the local Civil Society actors and NGOs in the dialogue among the EU and third countries and by giving more space to bottom-up initiatives.

## **Annex**

### **The 6<sup>th</sup> Euromed Survey: an early opinion from experts**

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Before launching the 6th Euromed Survey to 4,900 experts and actors, the IEMed has collected the early opinions of the EuroMeSCo network researchers in the field of European external relations in the Mediterranean, and other experts that participated in the Research Group on the ENP Review. Out of 206 people invited more than 30% has answered.

The questionnaire comprises of a total of 22 general questions and has been designed to cover the main elements of the Joint Consultation “Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy”. It starts with a general assessment followed by several questions devoted to the review of the ENP, its articulation with other EU policies, the neighbourhood’s redefinition, the relations with partner countries and their expectations. Finally, a last block of questions concerns the proposed areas of focus for Euro-Mediterranean relations with a special emphasis on actions and policies to address security threats, face governance challenges and enhance orderly migration and mobility.

### **The Euromed Survey**

The European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed) has carried out five Surveys of actors and experts aiming to assess the progress, achievements and shortcomings of Euro-Mediterranean relations.

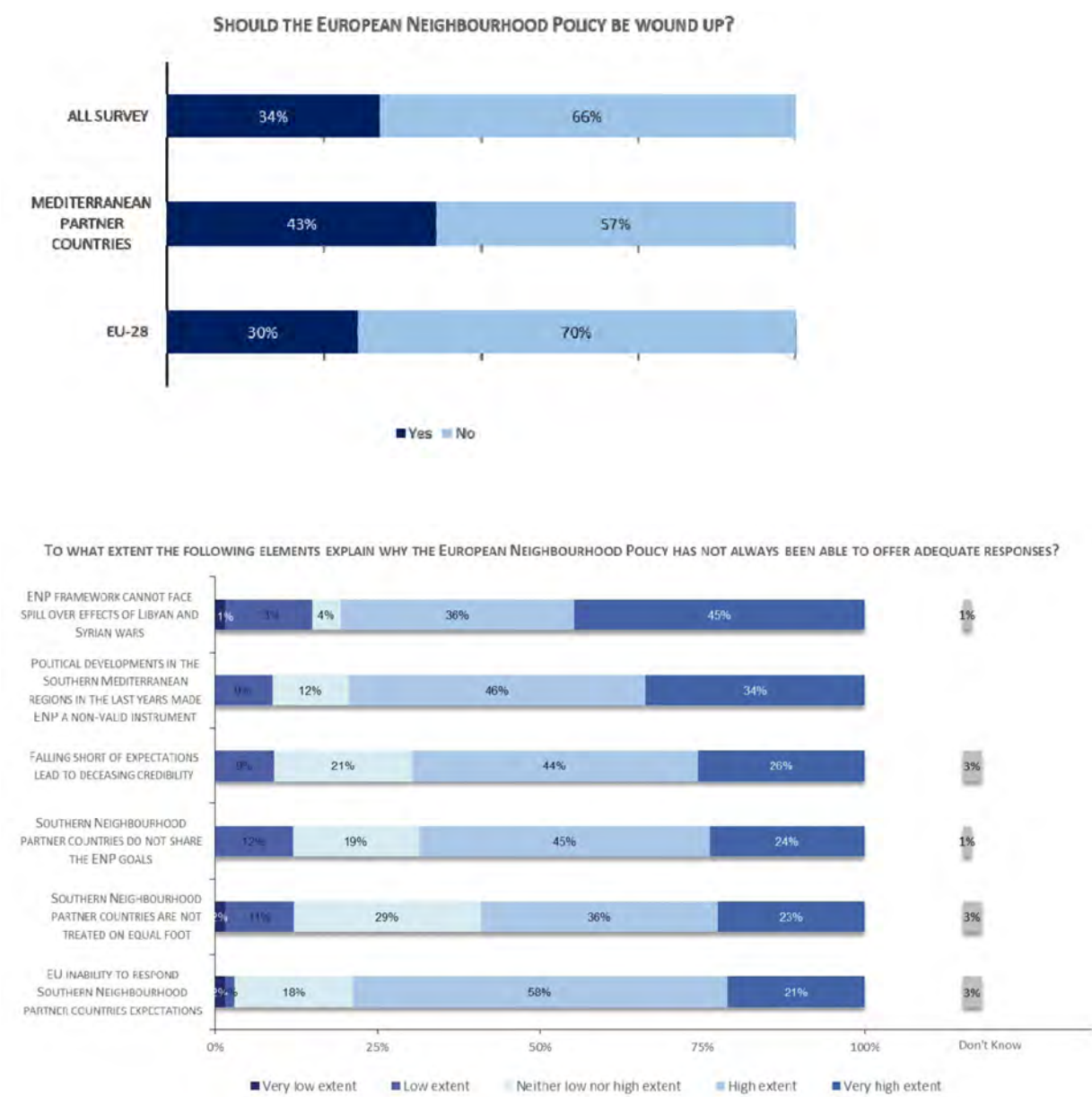
Known as the Euromed Survey, it is based on a broad sample of policy-makers and experts, with the objective of covering the main issues on the political agenda of the region and monitoring the progress in Euro-Mediterranean perceptions and policies.

The initial four versions of the Survey were developed following a request from the European Commission. Given the success of the Euromed Survey, both in terms of the number of respondents and quality of proposals made, the IEMed decided to continue the Euromed Survey with the aim of offering a way for experts and actors to express their hopes and concerns, as well as the possibility of putting forward proposals that could help decision-makers in the Mediterranean Partner Countries and the EU.

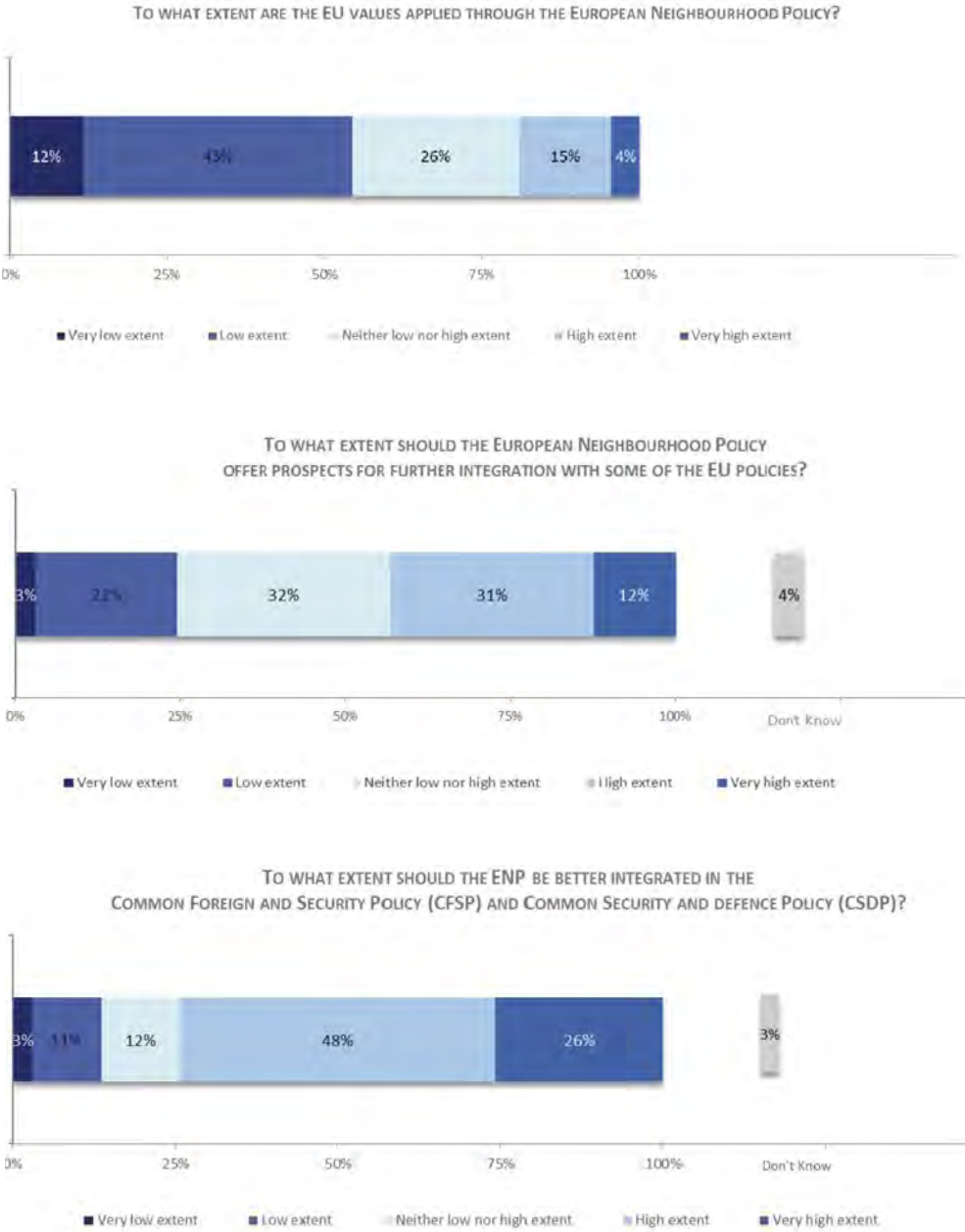
The fifth edition centred its attention on the short- to mid-term scenarios related to domestic and geopolitical changes in the region, the state of play of democratic transitions and the role of the EU in the region.

The present sixth edition of the survey is devoted to the European Neighbourhood Policy review and the EU’s role in the Mediterranean in the frame of the Joint Consultation “Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy” launched by the European Commission and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

General assessment

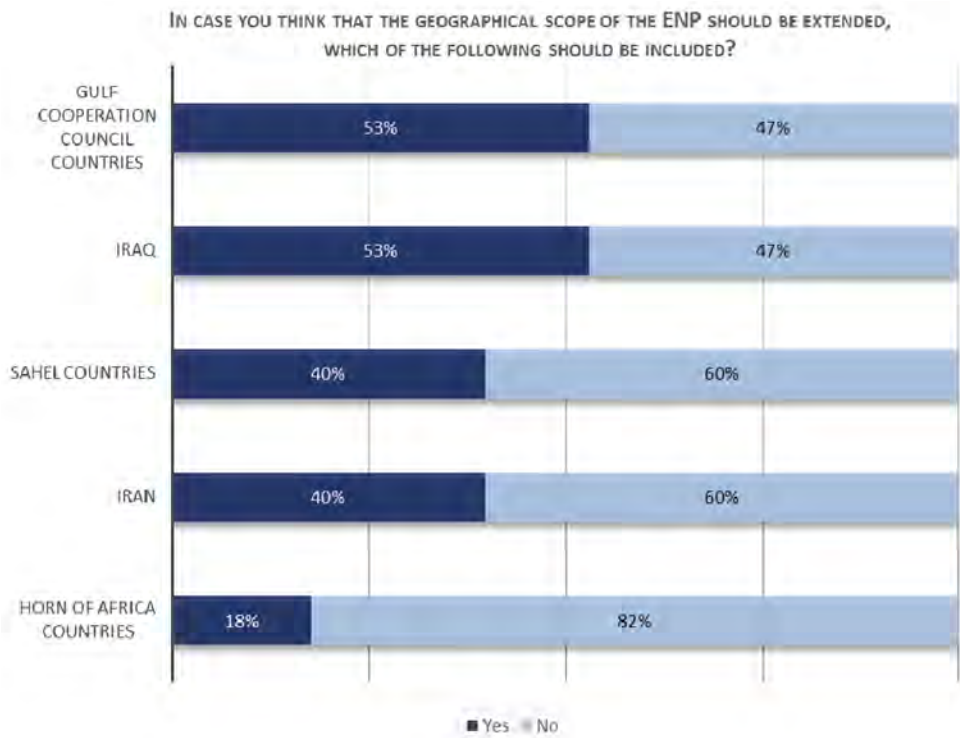
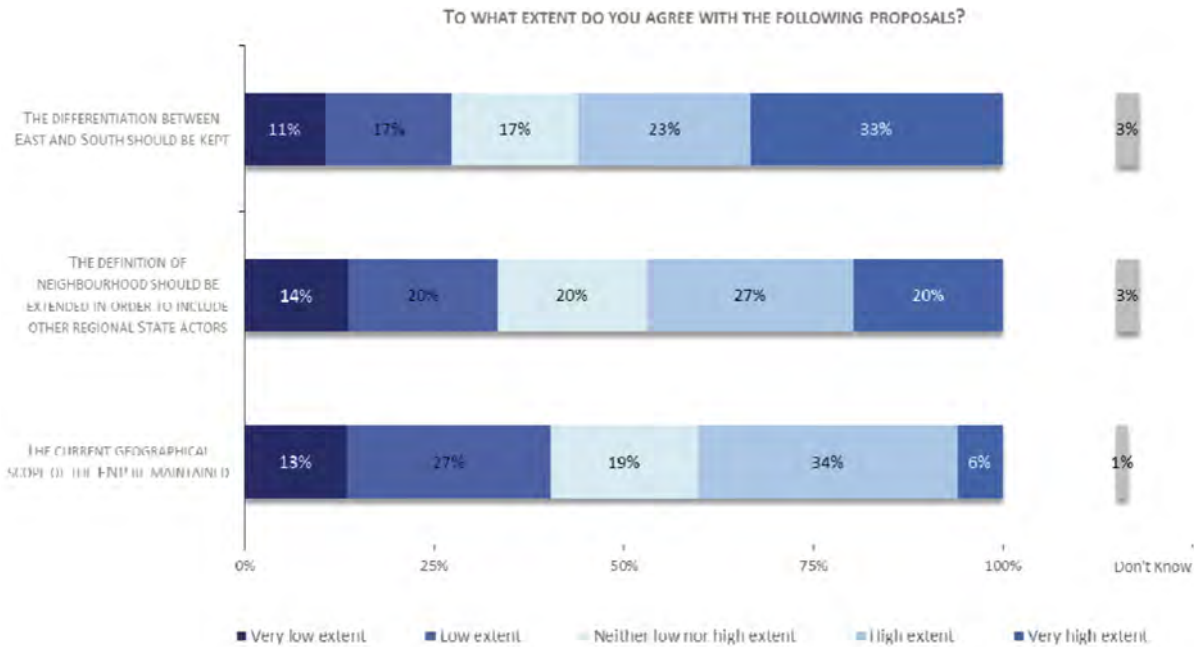


Articulation with EU policies

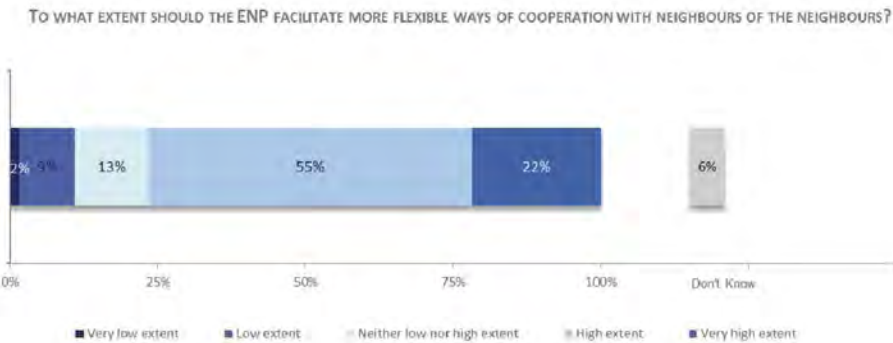
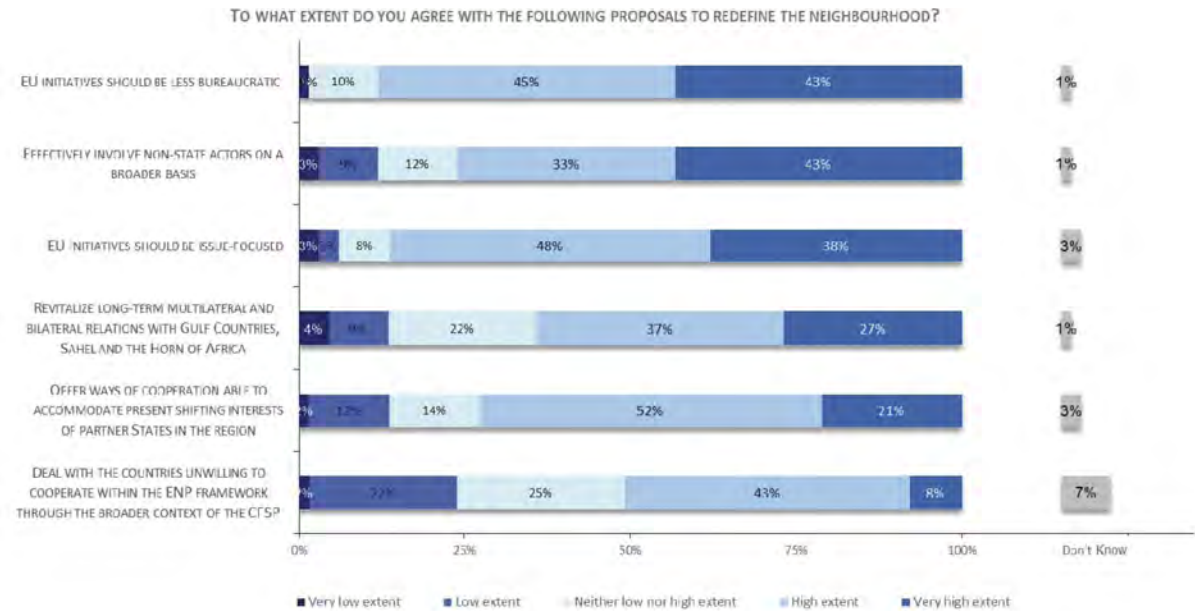




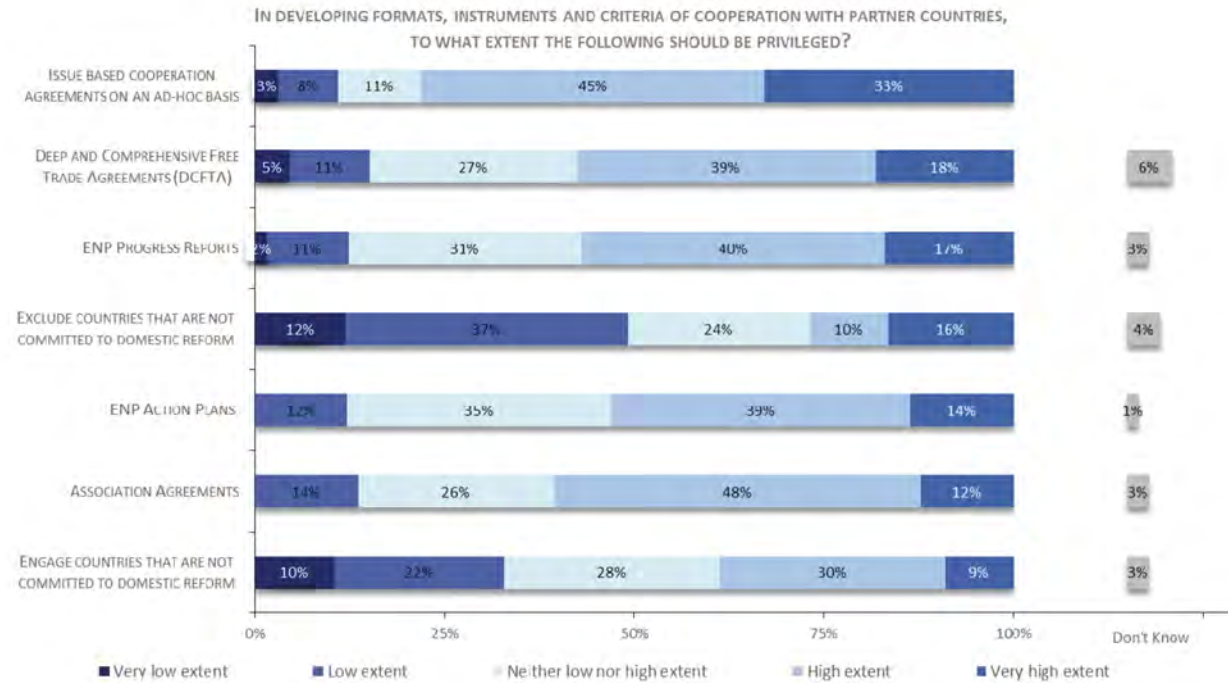
Redefining the neighbourhood



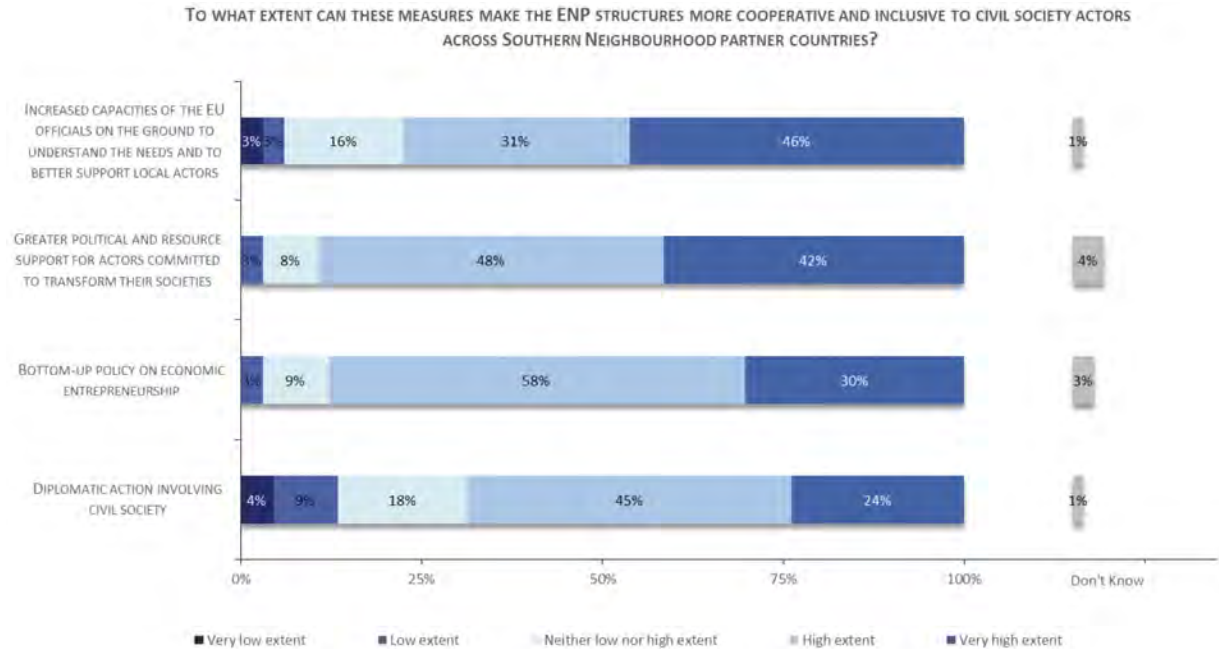
Redefining the neighbourhood



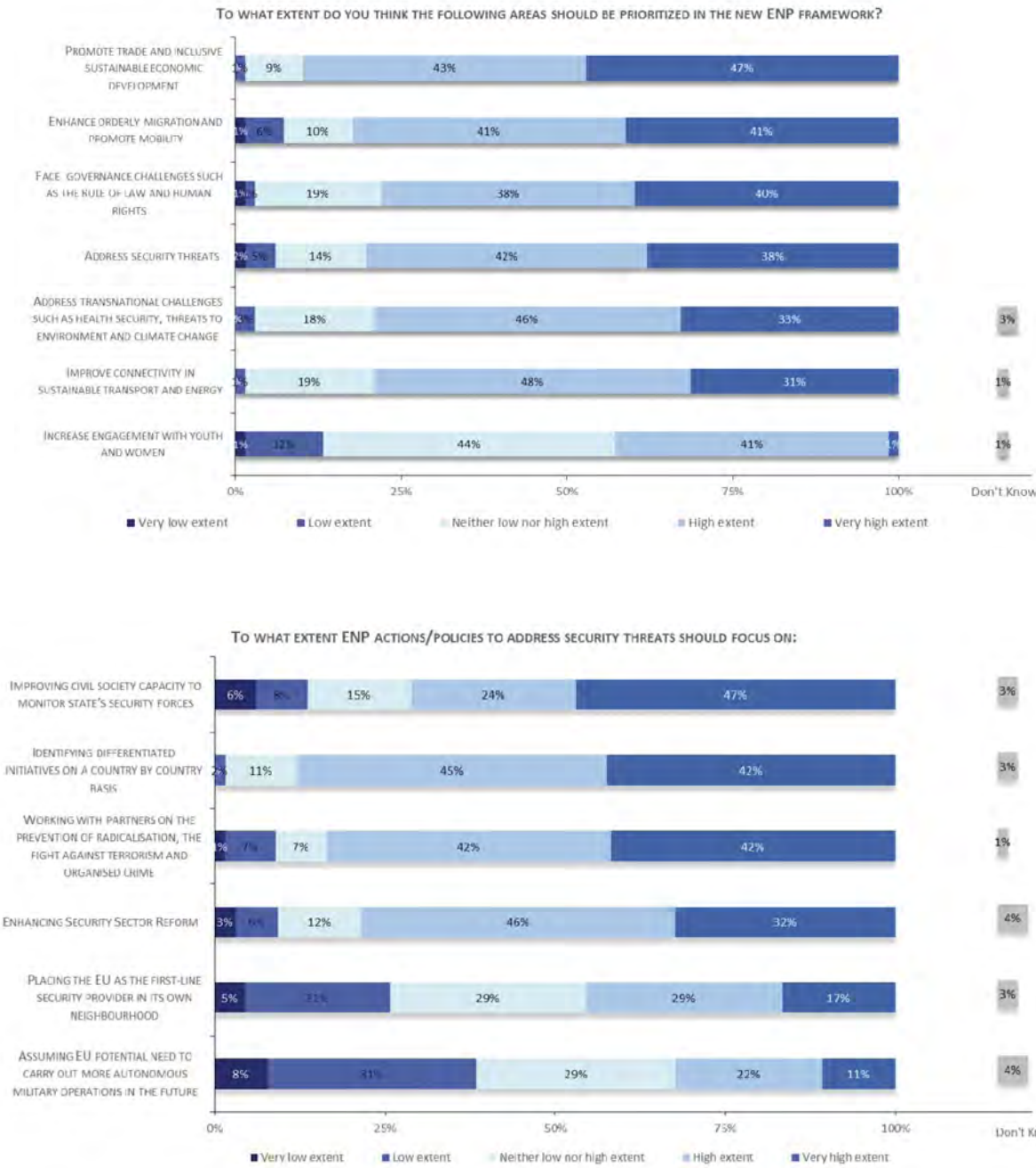
Relations with partner countries (Mediterranean Partner Countries)



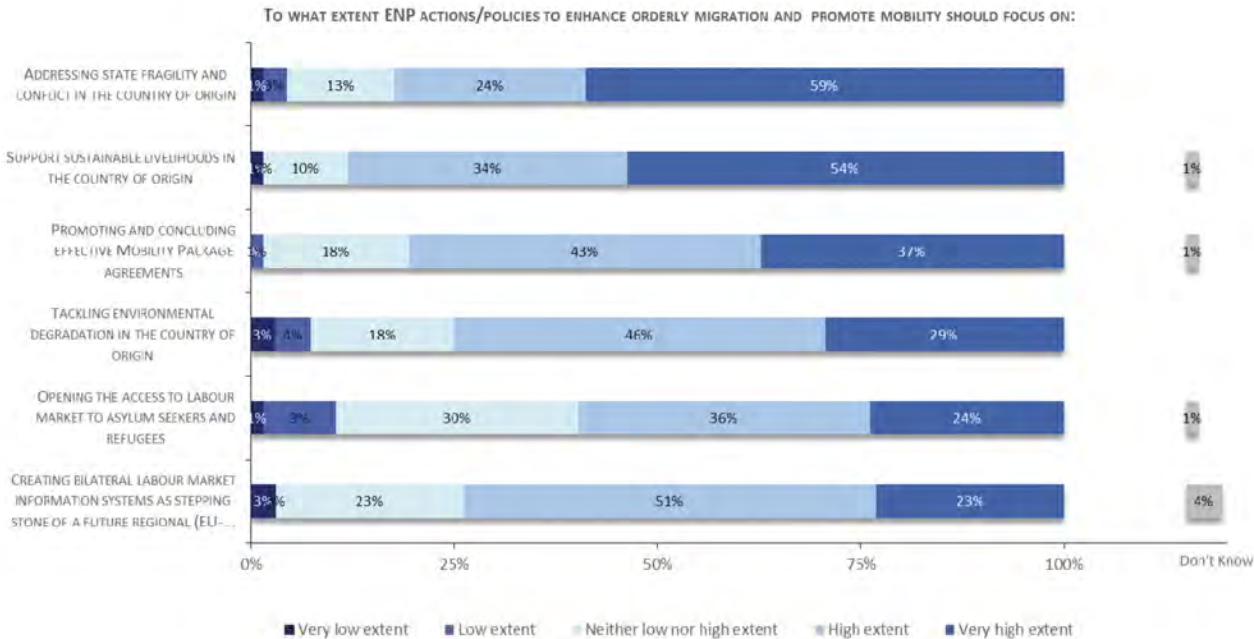
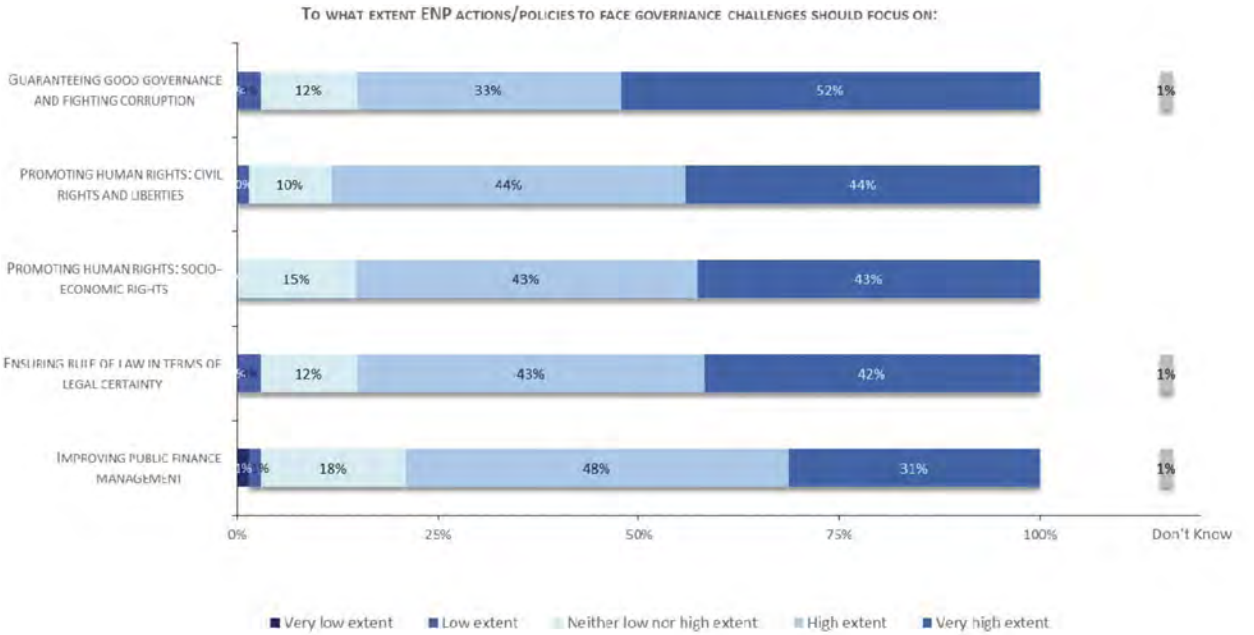
Expectations of partner countries (Mediterranean Partner Countries)



Proposed areas of focus



Proposed areas of focus



# IEMed.

The European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), founded in 1989, is a consortium comprising the Government of Catalonia, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and Barcelona City Council. It incorporates civil society through its Board of Trustees and its Advisory Council formed by Mediterranean universities, companies, organisations and personalities of renowned prestige.

In accordance with the principles of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership's Barcelona Process, and today with the objectives of the Union for the Mediterranean the aim of the IEMed is to foster actions and projects which contribute to mutual understanding, exchange and cooperation between the different Mediterranean countries, societies and cultures as well as to promote the progressive construction of a space of peace and stability, shared prosperity and dialogue between cultures and civilisations in the Mediterranean.

Adopting a clear role as a think tank specialised in Mediterranean relations based on a multidisciplinary and networking approach, the IEMed encourages analysis, understanding and cooperation through the organisation of seminars, research projects, debates, conferences and publications, in addition to a broad cultural programme.

