



A new European Neighbourhood Policy for the Southern Mediterranean

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Contribution to the public consultation on the European Neighbourhood Policy

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1. Introduction - Borders and the European neighbourhood

What is perceived as a neighbourhood and why? This question lead us to the notion of borders in our response to a consultation by the European Commission on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). In fact, the focus on borders, as applied in studies of Del Sarto (2010) or Scott (2009) among others, allows to account for diverse processes taking place in the ENP, like practices of region-building or the power projection onto the neighbourhood.

Recent developments starting from EU's "Wider Europe" initiative in 2003 until the inception the "European Neighbourhood Policy" in 2006 or its reform in 2011 can thus be understood in terms of a consolidation of European space with de-bordering processes in an inner-European context while external European borders were strengthened at the same time, accounting for the EU's efforts "to create a coherent political space that is at the same time a space of cultural identification with a sense of purpose..."¹ This, however, proves to be increasingly difficult due to a "multiplicity of overlapping and cross-cutting border regimes", ranging not only from different configurations of the Internal market and the Schengen process but also overlapping identity boundaries constituting "different national – and regional – identities that are alive and kicking within the EU..."²

As noted by Horst and Rothe (2013), the EU's definition of an EU-Mediterranean region can, on the one hand, be interpreted as a hegemonic instrument to advance the EU's aims or, on the other, as an attempt of region-building, "...based on the ideas that shared institutions, norms and values are not the premise of socialisation and integration, bur their outcome."³ Thus, we want to put our focus on the regional dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy, with an emphasis on the Southern neighbourhood and the instruments of the ENP, the EMP (Euro-Mediterranean Partnership) and the UfM (Union for the Mediterranean).

The ENP constitutes a unilateral (EU) policy towards its neighbourhood, with a clear bilateral dimension through the negotiation of association agreements on a country to country basis, whereas the EMP is a multilateral approach, built up as a continuous forum (hence: "Barcelona Process").⁴ Being exposed to criticism of not meeting its expectations, the latter was later expanded, upon the initiative of former French president Sarkozy, by an intergovernmental Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) although in a different set-up as initially envisioned. While the UfM does not replace the EMP, it has aims similar aims to the ENP (security, economic prosperity etc.) and is also regarded to have a mixed record of results, due to a rather national than supra- or transnational approach and the lack of a coherent strategy.⁵

The Maghreb countries in the Southern neighbourhood of the ENP share similar challenges, ranging from socio-economic and security issues due economic underdevelopment, insurgency, migration and lack of institutional stability. These issues should not be treated separately but to be addressed in an integrated approach, with a macro-regional differentiation and a focus on transnational and civil society concerns, as further explained in chapter three.

¹ Scott, J. W. (2009); *Bordering and Ordering the European Neighbourhood: A Critical Perspective on EU Territoriality and Geopolitics*; In: TRAMES, Issue 3: 2009, pp. 232 - 247

² Del Sarto, A. (2010); *Borderlands: The Middle East and North Africa as the EU's Buffer Zone*; In: Bechev, D.; Nicolaidis, K.: *Mediterranean Frontiers: Borders, Conflict and Memory in a Transnational World*. London, GBR; I.B. Tauris, 2010

³ Horst, J.; Rothe, D. (2013); *Euro-Mediterranean Relations after the Arab Spring: Persistence in Times of Change*. Ashgate, London. p. 8

⁴ Wouters, J.; Duquett, S. (2013); *The Arab Uprisings and the European Union: In Search of a Comprehensive Strategy*. In: CLEER Working Papers, 2013/3

⁵ Ibid. p. 22

2. Main subjects of inquiry

Having regard to the call for a joint consultation on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) by the European Commission and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy⁶, we will sketch out the different subjects of inquiry that this paper will touch upon concerning the review of the ENP.

Following the framework of the joint consultation paper, the priority areas which have been highlighted, and will subsequently be elaborated upon, are:

- **Differentiation**
This point includes the question, as to whether the current relationship formats constitute the right ones to deal with current external European issues, both geographically and institutionally. We will argue that both a geographical differentiation and institutional coherence needed in the future ENP framework, to account for and to accommodate the various overlapping interests, for the sake of a more effective cooperation in the EU's neighbourhood.
- **Focus**
Questions under this point revolve around the feasibility and the arrangement of priorities for the areas of focus, as well as the EU's toolbox to adequately address sectoral issues. Our standpoint is that the ENP should not be overburdened with issues that can just as well be shared with other institutions or handled on a different level. A new approach of the ENP accounting for geographical differentiation, shared ownership of the activities and a regional/local dimension with the focus on socio-economic issues and civil society would be an improvement.
- **Flexibility**
This subsection covers questions of the instruments that are available within the ENP, where financial incentives like the ENI or trade agreements play an important role. We will argue that the basic structure of bilateral action plans and multilateral, regional for a should be kept and expanded into a new, integrated framework, also putting emphasis on the subnational, regional or local level, being the recipients of the ENI cross-border cooperation funds.
- **Ownership**
This point addresses the necessity of including the partners (including the member states) adequately in the design and implementation of the ENP policy and how to demonstrate an equal partnership. In our view, an equal partnership should not only constitute an empty rhetorical shell but should be concretely addressed in a new framework covering the supranational EU level, the intergovernmental member state level and functional cooperation on regional/local level.
- **Policy and institutional coherence**

The last point was initially not in the joint paper, but has been added here since it was deemed an important part of the European Neighbourhood Policy. Due to the variety of issues that are involved in an external dimension of the European Union, ranging from trade and economic development, migration and home affairs to human rights issues or joint threats to the environment, more coherence between the EEAS, the Commission's DGs (internally) as well as between the member states and the respective partner countries should be achieved. This should be a cross-cutting, cross-pillar issue which is to be appear in all priority areas.

⁶ JOIN (2015) 6 Final, Brussels 4.3.2015. <http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/consultation/consultation.pdf>

2.1. Civil Society and the case of the Amazigh (Berber) people

This section will pay special attention to civil society development and challenges in the case of the Amazigh (Berber) people within the context of the European Neighbourhood and the countries of Morocco and Algeria. Again, civil society development has to be examined from a regional/local bottom-up perspective, since state policy does not always trickle down to the lower levels. This would imply a certain degree of devolution or decentralisation of the regional and local public authorities, which at the moment, is still in its infancy in the region. Nevertheless, a regional and local focus could effectively circumvent tensions on the state level that hinder progress in civil society development. Bearing in mind the transnational and cross-border nature of the region's indigenous Amazigh communities, an increased regional and local focus of the ENP could present a tool for development.

Although the Amazigh (or Berber) people represent the indigenous population of the region for about 4000 years, representing 40-50 percent and 25-30 percent of the total population Morocco and Algeria respectively, activists have been voicing political demands for more participation and greater pluralism since the independence era of the 1950s and 60s.⁷ It is, however, necessary to differentiate between the progress and “modus vivendi” of the Amazigh activism both in between the national states themselves and in between the different levels of activism in a scalar context (national, regional and local). Also, there have been shifts in the nature and perception of Amazigh minority rights movements after the “Arab Spring” in 2012, where Berber have played a key role in calling for democratic reforms.

As Silverstein (2013) points out, Amazigh movements are often stuck between voicing demands of greater regional language protection and self-determination on the national and global level (for example in transnational for a like the World Amazigh Congress⁸) and regional/local concerns and accusations of activists possibly betraying their local heritage, thus facing “a non-negligible scalar dilemma.”⁹ On a state level, Morocco and Algeria are currently the only countries to recognize Tamazight as a “national” or official language respectively, the latter being more advanced in status although Morocco still lacks the appropriate legislation to introduce it in courts, schools and state administration.¹⁰

In the same vein, although both countries practised an “Arabization” of the society in the post-independence era, resulting in the promotion of the Arabic language and a national unification under the Sunni faith, the experiences of dealing with the “Berber question” were vastly different. Even up to today, since the years of independence, Morocco and Algeria “were intimate rivals, offering competing geopolitical, ideological, and sociocultural visions and orientations.”¹¹ This manifests itself, for example, in the dispute over Spain's Saharan territory, still unresolved, where Morocco insisted on the incorporation into the Moroccan territory whereas Algeria supported the Polisario independence movement of the Sahrawi Republic.

After the events of the Arab Spring in 2012, Morocco included Tamazight as an official state language in the constitution. Historically, the Amazigh people of Morocco have been rather

⁷ <http://muftah.org/amazigh-movement-democratic-reform-look-morocco-algeria/#.VYki0vmqpBd> (last accessed: 23/06/2015)

⁸ <http://www.congres-mondial-amazigh.org/-/index.php> (last accessed: 23/06/2015)

⁹ Silverstein, P. A. (2013); *The pitfalls of transnational consciousness: Amazigh activism as a scalar dilemma*. In: The Journal of North African Studies, Vol. 18 (5); pp. 768-778

¹⁰ <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2014/06/infographic-berber-struggle-20146109379433180.html> (last accessed: 23/06/2015)

¹¹ Maddy-Weitzman, B. (2011); *Berber Identity Movement and the Challenge to North African States*. University of Texas Press; p. 65

focused on linguistic or cultural issues, although constituting a rather heterogeneous community with more politically active regions like the Rif in the North-eastern region of Morocco.¹² The events of 2012, unwrapping after the self-inflammation of a Tunisian grocer, triggered demands of more political participation and an increased linguistic pluralism in the Maghreb countries. In Morocco, a constitutional monarchy, the King reacted by drafting a new constitution which included the language of Tamazight as an official state language – not without self-interest in order to ensure public support with necessary legislation on the implementation still lacking, as analysed elsewhere in the literature.¹³

On a political level, the Moroccan Amazigh Democratic party, which existed between 2005 and 2007, was subsequently banned due to ethnic-based parties being prohibited.¹⁴ Furthermore, despite Morocco historically displaying a multicultural, linguistically diverse country, Berber culture was often regarded as “second-best” to standard Arabic in the media and administrations. After radical changes to linguistic policies in the wake of the Arab Spring, what will develop in the future after the King’s “top-down” processes, has to be seen.¹⁵

In Algeria, however, the Arabization programs of the FLN (Front Liberation Nationale) in the post-independence era were much more prominent than in Morocco, thus making the Amazigh (Berber) movements much more adversarial and politicized.¹⁶ This is, for instance, constituted in the “Berber Spring” of 1979, where students demanded more language and cultural rights, representing a turning point in the Berber political struggle.¹⁷ A large share of Algeria’s Amazigh, representing around 25 to 30 percent of the total population, live in the Kabyle valley and is therefore also the most active region, when it comes to demanding self-determination.

Apart from a large Kabyle diaspora in France already present since the 1950s, in recent times several political movements and parties advocating Berber right and autonomy have sprung up, most notably the Movement for the Autonomy of Kabylie (MAK) and the Berber Arouch Citizen’s Movement (Laarac). Both organisations have emerged in the wake of the “Black Spring” events of 2001, where Kabyle protesters were violently suppressed, subsequently leading the Algerian government to concede minor language rights.¹⁸ Although Amazigh is a “national language”, it is not recognised as an official language and remains disadvantaged.

Several conclusions and recommendations can be drawn from this very short overview of the situation of the Amazigh in the Maghreb states with respect to ENP engagement in the area:

- Although the bilateral, top-down approach is not regarded as having had much influence on the political situation in the Maghreb in the past, it should nonetheless remain an important pillar of the ENP. Language and minority rights are implemented top-down, and, thus, the EU should keep leverage to promote those rights – if need be, cancelling agreements with specific countries in cases of violations of these rights. A concrete example will be given in the next section and the case of Western Sahara.

¹² <http://muftah.org/amazigh-movement-democratic-reform-look-morocco-algeria/#.VYkiOvmqpBd> (last accessed: 23/06/2015)

¹³ See for example: Mulderig, M. C. (2013); *New Constitution, Old Tricks: Moroccan Exceptionalism During the Arab Spring*. In: Sullivan, D. J.; Tobin, S. A. (eds.); *Understanding Today’s Middle East: Peoples and Places of the Arab Spring*. Northeastern University & Boston Consortium for Arab Region Studies.

¹⁴ <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2014/06/infographic-berber-struggle-20146109379433180.html> (last accessed: 23/06/2015)

¹⁵ See for example: Zouhir, A. (2014); *Language Policy and State in Morocco: The Status of Berber*. In: DOMES-Digest of Middle East Studies, Vol. 23 (1); pp. 37-53

¹⁶ Maddy-Weitzman (2011); p. 67

¹⁷ <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2014/06/infographic-berber-struggle-20146109379433180.html> (last accessed: 24/06/2015)

¹⁸ Ibid.

- The ENP should be more closely coordinated with UfM/Euro-Med approaches in order to focus on the regional dimension of the relationship between the EU and the North African states. In contrast to the political conditionality of the bilateral ENP approach, the regional incentives should not be subject to the “less for less” principle and the promotion of the civil society (as in the Amazigh case) should not be affected the EU’s security concerns, as often noted by regional CSO’s.
- Therefore, as for example already proposed by the CoR’s ARLEM Council¹⁹, a focus on the regional dimension with a specific macro-regional dimension, at best combining internal and external instruments like the cohesion funds and ENI programs, will bring an increased attention to civil society on the local and regional level. Although decentralisation in the Maghreb states still being in its infancy, the actors on the grassroots level demanding more political, cultural and linguistic rights, should be supported by those instruments, regardless of hampering security concerns or economic aspirations to increase the EU’s market share by concluding FTA’s.

2.2. The ENP and the case of Western Sahara

Traces of the member states’ colonial legacy are still looming in the case of the Southern Mediterranean neighbourhood of the ENP, most notably Morocco and Algeria (or Spain and France) in the dispute over Western Sahara. Already in 1961 border tensions between Morocco and Algeria escalated into a military conflict, while in 1963 Morocco did not acknowledge and ratify the *uti possidetis* principle in the charta of the OAU, “prohibiting newly independent states from changing the territorial status quo.”²⁰

After Spain’s decolonisation of the *Rio de Oro* territory in 1975, the region was divided into a Moroccan and a Mauritanian part without the consultation of the local population, which subsequently triggered a war of independence of the Sahraoui people, led by the Polisario Front (Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia al-Hamra and Rio de Oro).²¹ Following Mauritania’s retreat, guerrilla warfare continued between Morocco’s claims on territorial integrity and the Sahraoui’s demands for self-determination. The dispute remains unresolved, despite several attempts by the UN to implement referendums and to end the conflict.

Since negotiations on the settlement of the dispute are stuck, this is not the place to examine the possible alternatives to end the conflict and the EU and the restructuring of the ENP alone cannot carry that burden. But it suffices to say that the EU has the leverage through the bilateral ENP association agreements to influence the outcome of the dispute. The UN has confirmed that Morocco does not have a territorial claim and it continues to violate basic rights

¹⁹ ARLEM (2014); *Report on a Cohesion Policy for the Mediterranean*. Fifth Plenary session. Tangiers, 24 February 2014

²⁰ Ben Slimane, F. (2010); *Between Empire and Nation-State: The Problem of Borders in the Maghreb*. In: Bechev, D.; Nicolaidis, K.: *Mediterranean Frontiers: Borders, Conflict and Memory in a Transnational World*. London, GBR; I.B. Tauris, 2010

²¹ Daadaoui, M. (2008); *The Western Sahara Conflict: towards a constructivist approach to self-determination*. In: *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2; pp. 143-156

of the Sahraoui people, either violations of human rights, the extraction of minerals from the conflict area²² or through the illegality of the EU-Moroccan fisheries agreement.²³

As already observed by Hans Corell, former Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and the UN Legal Counsel, Morocco's jurisdiction to conclude such agreements is limited due to the international rules on self-determination.²⁴ The same applies to the exploitation of minerals in the conflict area, by UN standards a violation against human rights when the indigenous population is not consulted. But the Moroccan government continues to sign contracts with international mining companies to extract the materials on the disputed territory.²⁵

The conclusion of the EU-Moroccan association agreement or any other agreements in that context, therefore, have to be seen in the light of the developments above. It is especially through bilateral negotiations that the EU can support the UN and the self-determination of the Sahraoui people in order to influence the settlement of the dispute, but "...to assist Morocco in exploiting the natural resources of Western Sahara constitutes an impediment to these efforts"²⁶.

Thus, in the context of the ENP, several conclusions recommendations can be drawn from the situation in the Western Sahara conflict:

- In the case of the bilateral ENP negotiations, violations against human rights and international legal norms should be taken into account. Existing agreements (like the EU-Morocco fisheries agreement) should therefore be reviewed and, if necessary, cancelled.
- It is by these means that the EU can positively contribute to the settlement of the Western Sahara conflict within the bounds of the efforts of the UN, whereas idleness would hamper the self-determination of the Sahraoui people and serve the interest of the Moroccan government, which currently blocks further progress due to its insistence on territorial sovereignty.
- Rather than trying to increase the EU's market share by concluding economic trade agreements, the EU should rather be more engaged in the settlement of the conflict. The often-cited EU 'soft power', apart from its economic strength, would come in handy here.

²² Parliamentary question in the European Parliament, 19/03/2015, on this issue: (last accessed 24/06/2015) <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2015-004499&format=XML&language=EN>

²³ For an analysis of the agreement see: Corell, H.; *Western Sahara: the EU should reconsider its fisheries agreement with Morocco*. In: NEWEUROPE, 12-18 April 2015, p. 11

²⁴ Ibid. p. 11

²⁵ <http://blogs.ft.com/beyond-brics/2013/12/12/western-sahara-eu-morocco-deal-in-uncertain-territory/> (last accessed: 24/06/2015)

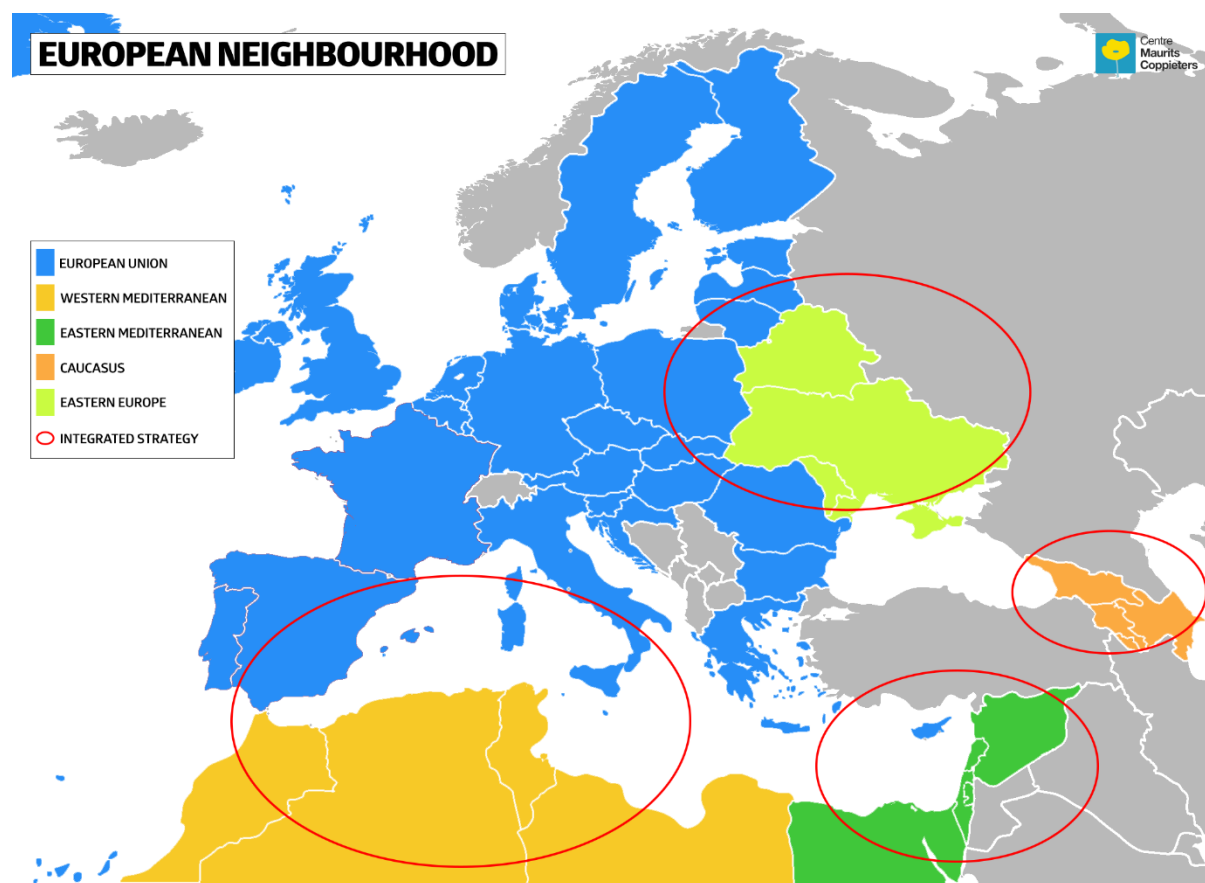
²⁶ Corell (2015) p. 11

3. Recommendations and concluding remarks

This chapter shall lay out the respective details of our proposal as well as summarise and formulate the observations above into specific recommendations. Since it is not possible, in the frame of this paper, to deliver an exhaustive account of all issues and challenges concerning the European neighbourhood, we thus put our focus on the Mediterranean region, specifically the Western half. This directly leads us to the first priority area indicated in the public consultation:

1) *Differentiation*

Geographically, we propose to split up the ENP area, covering the Mediterranean and the Eastern neighbourhood, into several subsections. This is due to the fact that the commonalities in challenges are greater between countries in geographical proximity, thus enabling the ENP to focus on regionally-specific issues. Below is map of a proposed set-up:



As it can be observed in the map above, we propose four regions which the ENP can specifically address with strategies in the future. The bilateral basis of the ENP with country-specific reviews and recommendations of the European Commission would stay the same. But association agreements and DCFTA's (Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements) would still have to be negotiated between the EU and the respective partner countries. This bilateral mechanism and the implementation of agreements should,

nevertheless, be made more dependent on progress or adherence (and non-adherence for that matter) to agreed upon principles of human rights, democracy and self-determination. To be precise, as in the case of Morocco and the non-adherence to such principles, it may lead to the cancellation of EU agreements. The proposed focus of the EU's instruments will be explored in the next section.

Additionally, the bilateral framework should be more closely coupled with a multilateral approach, possible to be integrated within the UfM/Euro-Med approach, which is regionally-specific as laid out in the map above. The “less for less” principle of differentiated conditionality in bilateralism has to be viewed with caution, since countries may not have the same incentives as, for example, accession candidates and thus, it may hamper the development within the country. Therefore we propose an integrated regional and multilateral approach in order to possibly escape an EU-centric hegemonic vision of the neighbourhood and to set up an integrated strategy for the four “macro-regions” above.

The term “macro-region” does not necessarily refer to the EU-internal macro-regions based on the EU's cohesion policy but they can serve as examples of how the regional and local level can be successfully integrated in the framework. It is, however, necessary to streamline cohesion and European neighbourhood funds for better achieving an effective coherence in this regard.²⁷ ARLEM's proposal of countries' earmarking ENP funds for the integrated strategies is an interesting idea in this direction.²⁸

In the end, the differentiation we propose would entail a geographical dimension and what we call the “polity” level in a multi-level governance setting. Thus, the EU would still engage with the countries in a bilateral framework, but this time based on regionally-specific strategies. This approach is complemented by a multilateral set-up, where the countries' representatives discuss the strategy and its priorities. As proposed by Wouters and Duquet (2013), this can also take place in form of a parliamentary assembly, possibly to be integrated within the UfM/Euro-Med frameworks.²⁹ Additionally, the regional and local level, which is where most of the impact from the strategies would be directed, should be adequately represented.

2) *Focus*

Our standpoint on the priority areas of the ENP is, that the EU should clearly distinguish between trade and economic development. The latter does not necessarily imply the conclusion of trade agreements like the DCFTA's, while more importantly, an increased focus on governance and stable institutions should prevail. Further, the EU's offer of a “stake” of the internal market has not always been an incentive for the Southern Mediterranean countries, since trade in agriculture was traditionally excluded, reflecting “...the unequal power relations between Brussels and its southern ‘borderlands’...”³⁰

Thus, we believe that the first priority should be to provide a stable political environment, which adheres to democratic and human rights. Although the EU used this agenda of democracy promotion conveniently to press for domestic governance change in the respective countries, issues like self-determination, absence of extremism and freedom of expression remain vital, especially with regard to civil society engagement. The latter can be effectively addressed with regard to local and regional authorities (LRA's) where stable, decentralised structures are

²⁷ See Scott (2013) for an analysis of the lack of coherence between the INTERREG cohesion funds and ENPI neighbourhood funds in the case of Finnish and Russian Karelian regions.

²⁸ ARLEM (2014) p. 16

²⁹ Wouters/Duquet (2013) p. 49

³⁰ Del Sarto (2010) p. 161

fostered on the level below the central state in order to nurture the involvement of grassroots, non-state civil society actors.

Cross-border cooperation should become an overarching priority for all the above-mentioned integrated strategies. Practically all issues ranging from security (IS acts across borders), migration (organised smuggling etc.) to environment (functional environmental protection of the Mediterranean sea etc.) and civil society engagement (as mentioned above, the Amazigh live in communities straddling state borders) have to be tackled in a cross-border dimension. Common challenges can, thus, be tackled within the integrated, regional strategies. This can be achieved, one the hand, multilaterally with the involvement of the adjacent countries and with proper representation of the regional and local level, on the other.

As recently observed in the terrorist acts in Tunisia, even countries with a very positive development after the events of the Arab Spring in 2012, still need proper economic and political support. Additionally, Libya presents a very destabilising factor for the entire region. Again, support for Tunisia could, in a first instance, be initiated on the bilateral level with the EU possibly providing for the training of the police force or budgetary assistance, but on the premise that reforms of the public sector will be enacted in order to have a democratic and transparent supervision. At the same time, country representatives could exchange experiences on the issues multilaterally within the proposed regions, with an additional focus on fostering development on the regional and local level.

We believe that the issue of migration is, first and foremost, one to be tackled within the EU and its institutions. There has not been much progress on the implementation of a new, innovative agenda on EU migration policy, albeit the fact that discussion on the reform of the Dublin-system and the introduction of quotas has been dragging on for months without result. Once this is done, the Commission needs to think about improving its internal coherence of different policy portfolios. As noted by Collett (2015), the EU needs more “diplomatic firepower” and a stronger link between foreign policy and immigration, as well as better coherence with other policies to establish links between “...humanitarian crisis and asylum policy.”³¹

3) *Flexibility*

Through our proposed geographical and institutional differentiation, regarding the focus on several “macro-regions”, a stronger focus on multilateralism, as well as the regional and local level, the EU would have a more appropriate approach towards the neighbourhood. In bilateral negotiations, the “more for more” principle can be effectively turned into a “less for less” principle and the EU should refrain from concluding agreements with countries did violate certain rights, like that of self-determination of the Sahraoui people in the case of Morocco.

However, conditionality in bilateral negotiations should be used with caution and should always be complemented by a multilateral approach with the focus on the regional and local level. This may be achieved by reforming the UfM/Euro-Med framework into a more effective one, being able to formulate integrated strategies for the Eastern and Western Mediterranean regions. As mentioned earlier, each country could set aside funds from the bilateral ENP negotiations and channel them into the integrated strategies.

Additionally, the assistance to regional and local level should not be affected by conditionality as in bilateral negotiations. Even if countries like Belarus opt out of pursuing the system of Action Plans, the fostering of development on the level below the central state should not be

³¹ Collett, E. (2015); *The development of EU policy on immigration and asylum – Rethinking coordination and leadership*. Policy Brief Series, March 2015, Issue no. 8. Migration Policy Institute Europe; p. 11

neglected and not be dependent on the outcome of central state, bilateral negotiations. Furthermore, funding mechanisms for the regional and local level have to be made more coherent. Currently, there are a variety of funding instruments for the Western Mediterranean region, ranging from UfM-Euro-Med mechanisms, the ENI CBC Med programme, to the Commission's SPRING programme. Due to this variety of instruments, we propose to integrate these different funding mechanisms under the roof of the above-mentioned integrated strategies within the revised UfM framework. This could ensure coherence both in the distribution of funds as well as in the priority areas for that particular region.

4) *Ownership*

The last point of the consultation refers to the often repeated criticism of the ENP not providing an equal footing for all partners, especially for the non-EU ones, lacking a sense of ownership in general. First of all, we welcome that the last revision of the ENP has already brought an increased focus to the involvement of actors from the regional or local level, also to actors from the civil society. In the next step, these actors now need to become actual policy makers in the sense that the EU policy is not solely "imposed" on them.

Clearly, the direct engagement of the EU with these actors on the basis of the national action plans through the bilateral negotiations is more than uncertain.³² That is why we propose their involvement within the integrated regional strategies, complementing the country-specific action plans. As laid out above, the regional and local level would be represented in parliamentary council (within the revised UfM-EuroMed framework) and able to influence the strategy for the whole region together with the EU. Not only would an integrated, coherent strategy be an effective guidance for the respective regions, but it would also promote a sense of ownership for the "recipients" of the policy to be more involved.

All in all, we should not forget that the European "borderlands" to the South and to the West are a projection of internal developments in the Union. It is through the ENP, but not exclusively, that the EU projects its power onto the neighbourhood while changing domestic structures according to its own vision. It therefore comes down to what the EU wants to become and will develop into, which will reflect directly in the neighbourhood policy. Thus, our final but cautious appeal, with emphasis on the Southern Mediterranean and repeating Horst and Rothe's (2013) analysis, is to overcome the hegemonic aspect of region-building in the Mediterranean and start forming relationships "...based on the ideas that shared institutions, norms and values are not the premise of socialisation and integration, but their outcome".³³

³² Johansson-Noguès, E. (2013); *EU's Post-Arab Spring Relations with Southern Mediterranean Civil Society Actors: Continuity or Change?* In: CLEER Working Papers, 2013/3; p. 93

³³ Horst/Rothe (2013) p. 8

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Background note on the Centre Maurits Coppieters

The Centre Maurits Coppieters is registered as a think-tank in the European Register of interest representatives with the identification number of 57231475311-15.

The Centre Maurits Coppieters promotes policy research at a European and international level mostly focusing on nationalism, management of cultural and linguistic diversity in complex societies, multilevel governance, decentralization, State and Constitutional reform, secession of states and self-determination, political and economical governance of sub-central governments, conflict resolution, human rights and peace promotion.

The Centre Maurits Coppieters is a "Political Foundation at a European Level" recognized by the European Parliament since 2007 and a non-Governmental Organisation (asbl/vzw) under belgian law.

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