

DVV International contribution to the Consultation: "Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy"

DVV International is the Institute for International Cooperation of the "Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V." (DVV), the German Adult Education Association. As the leading globally acting professional organisation in the field of adult education and development cooperation we provide worldwide support for the establishment and development of sustainable structures for Youth and Adult Education, along with citizens, educational organisations and governments in our partner countries (200 partners in more than 30 countries).

DVV International welcomes the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

DVV International believes that strong relations with the ENP countries are beneficial for both the concerned countries and the EU. Many of our partners are located in the ENP countries and have appreciated the opportunity to work more closely with the EU and its member states. We do think that the cooperation, especially in the area of adult education and lifelong learning, should be improved and deepened.

DVV International's main points are:

- **Extending the ENP makes sense**

DVV International supports the idea to extend the ENP to the neighbours of the neighbours. Closer cooperation with the Mediterranean countries but also Russia and the Central Asian countries can contribute to better strategies in dealing with the key challenges.

- **Strengthen adult education and lifelong learning, including the participation in EU programmes**

Adult education not only helps develop skills and competences but also fosters dialogue, active citizenship and a sense political efficacy. DVV International's partners in the ENP countries appreciate the developments that the EU countries are

making in this area and are keen to join as well as share their own achievements. The participation in the programmes such as Erasmus+ and Europe for Citizens (with additional funds) can foster increased cooperation, innovation and exchanges. We also propose an increased cooperation between DG Enlargement, DG EAC and DG Employment in order to extend the cooperation in the area of education and training. The European Agenda for adult learning, for example, could easily be extended to ENP countries (with additional funds for the new countries).

- **Strengthen civil society and their umbrella organisations**

DVV International strongly believes that civil society organisations contribute enormously to the democracy and grassroots activism everywhere. We therefore encourage the European Commission to support structures and projects that aim at activating citizens, build their capacity in advocacy and support grassroots structures. Our experience, based on our cooperation with partners in the ENP countries, is also that umbrella organisations in the different sectors (even if they are small) are hugely important in order to provide advocacy for their topics, support their grassroots members but also to cooperate with other stakeholders. A low-threshold programme based on lump sum payments that supports civil society in the ENP would be very welcome indeed.

- **Offer more freedom of movement**

Enhancing mobility especially for education, cultural, training and professional purposes and increasing engagement with young people through educational exchange will have positive effects on societies and economies and will help develop a common vision for the future.

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