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39. Invites the Southern Mediterranean partner countries to develop south-south trade, as in the Agadir Economic Agreement signed by Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia, and stresses that the EU institutions must respond positively to requests for technical support to promote such south-south economic integration;

40. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the governments and parliaments of all the partner countries of the Union for the Mediterranean.

Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument

P6_TA(2009)0078

European Parliament resolution of 19 February 2009 on the review of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (2008/2236(INI))

(2010/C 76 E/16)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument ⁽¹⁾ (ENPI),
- having regard to the development of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) since 2004, and in particular to the Commission's progress reports on its implementation;
- having regard to the action plans adopted jointly with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia and Ukraine;
- having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement establishing a partnership between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Russian Federation, of the other part, which entered into force on 1 December 1997, and to the resumption of the negotiations held in December 2008 with a view to the conclusion of a renewed Partnership and Cooperation Agreement,
- having regard to the decisions adopted by the General Affairs and External Relations Councils in September and October 2008 to restore dialogue with the Belarusian authorities and to suspend travel restrictions for leading figures for a period of six months, following the release of political prisoners and minor improvements in the conduct of parliamentary elections,
- having regard to the Barcelona Declaration adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs in Barcelona on 27 and 28 November 1995, establishing a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership,
- having regard to the communication from the Commission of 20 May 2008 entitled 'Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean' (COM(2008)0319),
- having regard to the endorsement of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean by the European Council of 13 and 14 March 2008,
- having regard to the Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, held in Paris on 13 July 2008,
- having regard to the declaration on governance, projects and regional political dialogue adopted at the 'Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean' ministerial conference held in Marseilles on 3 and 4 November 2008,

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 310, 9.11.2006, p. 1.

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- having regard to the Commission's communications of 4 December 2006 (COM(2006)0726) on strengthening the ENP and of 5 December 2007 (COM(2007)0774) on a strong ENP,
 - having regard to the Commission's communications of 11 April 2007 entitled 'Black Sea Synergy – A New Regional Cooperation Initiative' (COM(2007)0160) and of 19 June 2008 (COM(2008)0391) reporting on the first year of implementation of that initiative,
 - having regard to the Commission's communication of 3 December 2008 entitled 'Eastern Partnership' (COM(2008)0823),
 - having regard to the letter of 26 April 2006 from Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner to Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs,
 - having regard to its resolutions on the ENP and the EU's enlargement strategy,
 - having regard to its earlier resolutions on the neighbouring countries and regions of the EU,
 - having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the opinions of the Committee on Development, the Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Regional Development (A6-0037/2009),
- A. whereas the 2006 reform of financial instruments and the agreement on the new external assistance framework contained a commitment by the Commission to carry out a mid-term review of the implementation of the ENPI Regulation before the 2009 European elections and granted Parliament increased powers of scrutiny in respect of Community assistance,
- B. whereas in 2006 the Committee on Foreign Affairs set up working groups in relation to the ENPI South and ENPI East, in order to hold a structured dialogue with the Commission on the implementation documents, which set out the policy framework for the delivery of assistance under the ENPI,
- C. whereas since the beginning of the current financial perspective in 2007 the aim of the ENPI has been to support the implementation of the ENP and in particular the ENP action plans, as well as of the strategic partnership with the Russian Federation through its support for the implementation of the road maps for the four Common Spaces,
- D. whereas the main objective of the ENP is to establish a friendly environment in the closest environs of the European Union; whereas neighbouring countries are divided naturally into two categories: Southern and Eastern, with different goals and approaches to the European Union; whereas this division is exemplified by the two recently proposed initiatives, namely the Union for the Mediterranean and the Eastern Partnership,
- E. whereas the ENPI has also been designed to finance cross-border and multi-country programmes in the ENPI area, with the aim of supporting *inter alia* initiatives such as the Black Sea Synergy, the Union for the Mediterranean and the Eastern Partnership,
- F. whereas the ENP remains one of the principal priorities of the European Union's foreign policy and offers all the States concerned the possibility of closer integration with the EU,
- G. whereas the ENP is independent from, but not exclusive of, the accession process and constitutes a step towards economic and political rapprochement between the EU and neighbouring countries,

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H. whereas the rapid demographic growth of the countries neighbouring the EU, resulting in their populations becoming increasingly urbanised, represents a new challenge for the ENPI,

General remarks

1. Considers that, overall, the provisions of the ENPI Regulation are adequate and valid for the purposes of cooperation with neighbouring countries and other multilateral organisations;
2. Calls on the Commission, together with the partner governments, to further develop mechanisms for consultation with civil society and local authorities, in order to better involve them in the design and monitoring of the implementation of the ENPI and of the national reform programmes; asks the Commission to speed up publication of the annual action programmes on its website and to persuade the partner governments to make their national programming documents regularly available to the public;
3. Calls on the Council to develop, in conjunction with Parliament, a flexible and transparent instrument for the provision of information in this field and to forward promptly to Parliament minutes of the decisions adopted;
4. Urges the Commission and national, regional and local authorities to promote twinning programmes between towns and regions and to provide appropriate assistance to that end, with a view to building administrative capacity at local and regional levels in neighbouring countries and promoting both exchange programmes for civil society and micro-projects;
5. Welcomes the launching by the Commission, under the ENPI, of the new Cooperation in Urban Development and Dialogue (CIUDAD) programme to enable support to be provided for specific cooperation projects between European towns and towns in countries covered by the ENPI; points out that this type of initiative is a very appropriate means of furthering dialogue and the democratisation process; calls for larger sums to be released in view of this, in order to strengthen these initiatives when the mid-term review of the financial framework is conducted in 2008-2009;
6. Takes the view that the visibility of the Community assistance should be increased through targeted communication with stakeholders and the general public, and recommends that contacts be developed to that end with civil society and local authorities, as they are closer to the citizens and therefore represent a competent and effective level at which to act;
7. Calls for the annual action programmes in the fields of democracy, the rule of law and human rights to be pursued more ambitiously, in line with the objectives set in the ENP action plans, in order to avoid a significant allocations gap between the Eastern and the Mediterranean partners; believes that more should be done to persuade the partner governments to commit themselves to action in those fields;
8. Emphasises the need to define clear, concrete and measurable objectives within all new ENP action plans under negotiation; underlines the necessary interdependence between all chapters of those action plans with a view to moving forward towards progress in all chapters without discrimination; in this respect, reiterates its call for a global Human Rights and Democracy Policy encompassing all existing instruments in this field;
9. Finds that, despite the increased flexibility and simplicity of the Community assistance instruments, as evidenced in particular by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights ⁽¹⁾, the procedures and timeframes under the ENPI remain burdensome for civil society organisations and local authorities; calls on the Commission to conduct a comparative analysis of the procedures applied by other major donors and to present the results thereof to Parliament;

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EC) No 1889/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on establishing a financing instrument for the promotion of democracy and human rights worldwide (OJ L 386, 29.12.2006, p. 1).

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10. Believes that sectoral and general budget support under the ENPI should be made available only to governments which are able to implement it in a transparent, effective and accountable manner and where it constitutes a real incentive; calls on the Commission to review the appropriateness of budget support in countries which have problems with budgetary management and control procedures and high levels of corruption; asks the Commission to strike the right balance between flexibility and transparency during the selection, implementation and monitoring of ENPI programmes;

11. Stresses the need for a country-specific approach with regard to political conditionality, designed *inter alia* to promote democracy, the rule of law and good governance, respect for human rights and minority rights and the independence of the judiciary; considers therefore that an in-depth and thorough evaluation of all 'Justice' projects financed under this instrument should be made public and provided to Parliament;

12. Welcomes the inclusion of cross-border cooperation within the scope of the ENPI Regulation as a strategic tool for developing common projects and strengthening relations between the ENP countries and the Member States; insists, however, on the need to create specific instruments in order to ensure regular monitoring of the management and process of implementation of joint operational programmes on both sides of the EU's border;

13. Calls on the Commission to prepare a detailed overview of all joint operational programmes approved for the period 2007-2013, together with an assessment of the degree to which the principles of transparency, efficiency and partnership have been respected in the implementation of projects; encourages the Commission to prepare an inventory of the most frequent problems faced by the managing authorities both in EU border regions and in the ENP countries, in order to identify more appropriate solutions for them for the next programming period;

14. Encourages the Commission to facilitate the exchange of experiences of, and best practices in, cross-border cooperation between ENP programmes and projects and action taken under the 'European territorial cooperation' objective and under the already completed Interreg III A Community initiative; believes, in particular, that training (including programmes for learning the languages of neighbouring countries) and twinning initiatives for civil servants should be fostered; suggests, in this context, periodical analyses of the improvements made in terms of capacity and institution-building on both sides of the EU's border;

15. Underlines the importance of clarifying the relationship between the ENP as a framework policy and the regional ENP initiatives such as the Black Sea Synergy, the Union for the Mediterranean and the future Eastern Partnership, and of enhancing the coordination and complementarity of those initiatives and of the different Community assistance instruments; calls for improved synchronisation between ENPI programmes and the financial cooperation provided by the Member States and by international organisations;

16. Stresses the need for enhanced cooperation on the part of the ENPI countries with the EU agencies and increased opportunities for the ENPI countries to participate in the Community programmes, provided that the objectives of the ENP action plans have been fulfilled; calls on the Commission to take effective measures to minimise the financial burden that falls upon third countries seeking to participate in these Community programmes;

17. Stresses the need for payments under the ENPI to be transparent as regards country, region and priority field;

18. Calls for greater emphasis to be placed on increased mobility, particularly via the establishment of mobility partnerships with the ENPI countries, and people-to-people contacts, particularly in the areas of education, research and development, business and political dialogue; supports urgent action to reduce visa fees for nationals and residents of all ENPI countries, with the ultimate goal of visa liberalisation;

19. Endorses the Commission's approach to economic integration, which includes the aim of establishing a deep and comprehensive free trade area;

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20. Notes that despite efforts in some ENPI countries to promote gender equality and to enhance women's participation in political, social and economic life, such measures have not yet led to any significant improvement in the Mediterranean Neighbourhood as well as in some Eastern Neighbourhood countries; calls on the Commission to address more systematically gender inequalities in the programming and implementation of the ENPI;

21. Supports the Commission's approach to the energy security issue, aimed at the creation in the medium term of a mutually beneficial interconnected and diversified energy market between the EU and neighbouring countries; stresses, however, that as well as further developing harmonisation of partners' energy policies and legislation with the EU practice and the *acquis communautaire*, particular attention should be given to the modernisation of the energy infrastructure in partner countries;

22. Welcomes the fact that the Commission's proposal for the Eastern Partnership includes the establishment of thematic platforms (democracy, good governance and stability, economic integration and convergence with EU policies, energy security, contacts between people) corresponding to the main areas of cooperation;

23. Underlines the need to increase the ENPI financial envelope in order to enable the ENP to attain its increasingly ambitious objectives and to support its new regional initiatives; asks that, when this occurs, the Mediterranean countries and the countries of eastern Europe can both benefit;

24. Calls for evaluation of the current efficiency and impact of spending in the wider context, such as the aid activities of third countries;

25. Calls on the Commission to prepare an evaluation of the impact of third countries' foreign aid policies in ENP countries, especially those of China and Russia, and of the impact of the financial crisis on all ENPI countries;

26. Calls on the Commission to strictly assess the real needs of the countries to which it currently provides Official Development Aid and similar assistance, with particular reference to levels of GDP and rates of economic growth in recipient states;

27. Calls on the Member States to provide financial support for the reform agenda set out in the ENP action plans through further contributions to the Neighbourhood Investment Facility and similar ENPI initiatives and increased bilateral assistance;

28. Recalls that, during the negotiations on the ENPI's legal basis, Parliament had legitimate concerns over how the medium and short-term strategy papers and country papers, often containing indicative financial amounts, would be subject to parliamentary scrutiny; calls for an evaluation of how these indicative financial commitments have been implemented during the past two years;

29. Expresses, in this context, its concerns about the high level of requested budgetary transfers for chapter 19 08 of the budget, which already amount to a cumulative increase of EUR 410 million in commitments and EUR 635 million in payments for the years 2007 and 2008;

30. Notes with satisfaction that countries covered by the ENPI are entitled to benefit from loans from the European Investment Bank (EIB) ⁽¹⁾, and that financing operations should be consistent with and support EU external policies including specific regional objectives; recalls that the current maximum ceiling of the EIB financing operations for ENPI countries over the period 2007-2013 is EUR 12,4 billion, broken down into two indicative sub-ceilings of EUR 8,7 billion for Mediterranean countries and EUR 3,7 billion for Eastern countries and Russia; calls for an evaluation in conjunction with the EIB to determine how such loans are being implemented;

⁽¹⁾ Council Decision 2006/1016/EC of 19 December 2006 granting a Community guarantee to the European Investment Bank against losses under loans and loan guarantees for projects outside the Community (OJ L 414, 30.12.2006, p. 95).

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31. Notes with satisfaction that the Court of Justice recently annulled the original legal basis for such loans, following a challenge by Parliament ⁽¹⁾, and ruled that in these cases the codecision procedure should apply under Articles 179 and 181a of the EC Treaty; stresses that the review of the ENPI and the adoption of a regulation replacing the annulled Council Decision on a Community guarantee of EIB loans must be conducted in parallel, since they are complementary instruments with regard to EU policy towards neighbouring countries and contradictory or counter-effective provisions need to be avoided;

32. Reiterates its concern about the potential deficiencies of accountability and the risk of misappropriations of Community funds when EU assistance is channelled through multi-donors' trust funds; stresses the importance of a sound public financial system based on transparency and democratic accountability; calls on the Commission, therefore, to avoid channelling funds through these intermediaries where possible, and where better and more transparent means for channelling such funds exist;

Country and region-specific remarks

33. Notes the progress made under the Union for the Mediterranean initiative; stresses, however, that:

- the ENPI financing of the ENP initiative for the South or East should not be used to the detriment of each other,
- Parliament should be adequately informed of the Union for the Mediterranean projects funded from the ENPI;
- when ENPI funds are used, the transparency of other sources, including private funding, is particularly important;

34. Reiterates that the Mediterranean component of the ENP should complement the Barcelona Process, and that the ENP's objectives need to be more clearly defined in order to strengthen the Barcelona Process by favouring a multilateral regional approach;

35. Considers that, in order to strengthen the effectiveness of the regional, multilateral and cross-border projects within the framework of the ENPI, an extension of the participation in those programmes to all the new Union for the Mediterranean partners should be envisaged;

36. Takes the view that the recent geopolitical developments in the EU's Eastern neighbourhood underscore the importance of developing the ENP further by adapting it better to the needs of the partners, including enhanced EU involvement in the Black Sea region and an ambitious Eastern Partnership; stresses the need to speed up, in relation to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in particular, the establishment of a free-trade zone as soon as partner countries are ready, and the need to finalise as soon as possible steps towards visa freedom with the EU, as well as the need to enhance regional cooperation so as to promote stability and prosperity in the European neighbourhood;

37. Proposes that an Eastern Neighbourhood assembly ('Euroeast'), with the participation of the European Parliament, be created on the same lines as the Euromed and EuroLat assemblies with a view to implementing the ENPI in the countries of eastern Europe, namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus;

38. Points out that the frozen conflicts represent an obstacle to the full development of the ENP with regard to the South Caucasus, and calls on the Council to engage more actively in the conflict resolution;

⁽¹⁾ Judgment of 6 November 2008 in Case C-155/07 *Parliament v Council* (OJ C 327, 20.12.2008, p. 2).

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39. Stresses that a stronger engagement in the Black Sea region is needed if the EU is to help to resolve some of the outstanding conflicts and to enhance cooperation between the countries of the region; considers that increased regional cooperation in the Black Sea region should be one of the key priorities for the ENP as well as for various regional initiatives launched by the EU; looks forward to seeing further implementation of the Black Sea Synergy; calls for enhanced cooperation with Turkey in the Black Sea, given its strategic importance and the future role it could play in the common foreign and security policy, as well as with Russia, emphasising the need for the full involvement of those countries in the resolution of regional conflicts and in the promotion of peace and stability in the European neighbourhood; takes the view that several projects of common interest could be implemented within this framework;

40. Welcomes the fact that the Eastern Partnership offers a more significant incentive to ambitious partner countries such as Ukraine; welcomes in particular the new Comprehensive Institution-Building programme for improving administrative capacity in the relevant sectors of cooperation;

41. Considers that the Eastern Partnership should not hinder EU membership for neighbouring countries wishing to apply on the basis of Article 49 of the EU Treaty;

42. Supports the Commission's proposal that new relations with the Eastern Partnership countries would be constructed on the basis of country-tailored new association agreements, which would provide a better response to partners' aspirations for a closer relationship;

43. Welcomes the fact that energy security is an integral part of the proposal for the Eastern Partnership in relations with Eastern partners; endorses the main goals of the Commission's above-mentioned communication of 3 December 2008, such as the swift completion of negotiations on Ukraine's and Moldova's membership of the Energy Community and the enhancement of political engagement with Azerbaijan, aimed at its convergence with the EU energy market and infrastructural integration; points out that all ENP countries should be included in energy cooperation measures;

44. Endorses the Economic Recovery and Stability package under the Community budget, which will provide up to EUR 500 million over the years 2008-2010 to rebuild Georgia after a damaging war and to ensure the economic rehabilitation of internally displaced people pending their return to their homes and properties; underlines that, in order to guarantee that the assistance is allocated to the most urgent needs of Georgia, proper conditionality and monitoring mechanisms should be attached to the Community financing; emphasises that the aid should be targeted to supporting the reform agenda as defined in the ENP action plan and the ENPI programming documents, which remain highly appropriate;

45. Stresses that the financial envelope for Belarus needs to be reviewed to see whether cooperation can be broadened to cover areas beyond energy, the environment and migration, with a view to pursuing the policy of re-engagement initiated by the Council in September 2008; recalls that relations between the EU and Belarus will depend very much on the commitment of the government of Belarus to democratic values; underlines the need for effective political conditionality and for guarantees that the assistance will have an immediate positive impact on citizens and will not be misused by the authorities against their political opponents; stresses that the EU should give more effective support to civil society and to political parties who are defending democracy;

46. Takes the view that the EU should focus on the following issues during the negotiations on a new EU-Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement:

- greater Russian cooperation in identifying clear financial cooperation priorities, which would lead to better planning and multi-annual programming of aid;

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- guarantees that any financial assistance granted to the Russian authorities contributes to the strengthening of democratic standards in the Russian Federation;
- increased joint ownership of projects identified for funding;

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47. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of the ENPI countries, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly.

The fight against Alzheimer's disease

P6_TA(2009)0081

Declaration of the European Parliament on priorities in the fight against Alzheimer's disease

(2010/C 76 E/17)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 116 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - A. whereas Alzheimer's disease currently affects 6.1 million Europeans and that figure will double or triple between now and 2050 with the ageing of the population,
 - B. whereas this disease is the most common cause of dependency,
 - C. whereas it is vital that political commitment be made in the areas of research, prevention and social protection,
1. Calls on the Council, the Commission, and the governments of the Member States to recognise Alzheimer's disease as a European public health priority and to develop a European action plan with a view to:
 - promoting pan-European research on the causes, prevention and treatment of Alzheimer's disease,
 - improving early diagnosis,
 - simplifying procedures for patients and carers and improving their quality of life,
 - promoting the role of Alzheimer's associations and giving them regular support;
 2. Instructs its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to the Council, the Commission, and the governments of the Member States, as well as to the national, regional and local authorities concerned.