Basic information

2004/2166(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
European neighbourhood policy **Subject** 6.40.04 Relations with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) 6.40.05 Relations with the Mediterranean and southern European countries 6.40.15 European neighbourhood policy	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs	TANNOCK Timothy Charles Ayrton (PPE-DE)	13/09/2004

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
INTA International Trade	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	2701	2005-12-12
General Affairs	2655	2005-04-25
General Affairs	2649	2005-03-16
General Affairs	2640	2005-02-21

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
12/05/2004	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2004)0373	Summary
28/10/2004	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/02/2005	Debate in Council		Summary
16/03/2005	Debate in Council		
25/04/2005	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
29/11/2005	Vote in committee		Summary
07/12/2005	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0399/2005	

12/12/2005	Debate in Council		Summary
18/01/2006	Debate in Parliament		
19/01/2006	Decision by Parliament	T6-0028/2006	Summary
19/01/2006	Results of vote in Parliament		
19/01/2006	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2004/2166(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/6/23666

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Amendments tabled in committee		PE357.899	24/05/2005	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0399/2005	07/12/2005	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0028/2006	19/01/2006	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2004)0373	12/05/2004	Summary

European neighbourhood policy

2004/2166(INI) - 19/01/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Charles **Tannock** (EPP-ED, UK) on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

Towards European neighbourhood agreements: Parliament declared that the enlargement process must be accompanied by a flexible neighbourhood policy for those European countries which are not at present EU Member States and which cannot yet join, or do not wish to join, the EU but are nevertheless aligning themselves with the values of the EU and are minded to take part in the European project. It emphasised that the Nice Treaty was not an acceptable basis for further decisions on the accession of any more new Member States and therefore insisted that the necessary reforms be brought into force within the framework of the constitutional process. The ENP should be tailored to the needs of the individual countries to which it applied and should not be a 'one size fits all' policy. Parliament also emphasised the need to establish an effective monitoring mechanism and a readiness to restrict or suspend aid and even to cancel agreements with countries which violate standards of respect for human rights and democracy. It called on the Commission to operate a vigorous policy of support for democratic forces in those neighbouring states, in particular by ensuring access

to independent media and information. The Commission should define the purpose and priorities of the European neighbourhood policy, thus setting criteria for the evaluation of achievements.

Parliament welcomed the idea of providing a European neighbourhood agreement at the end of the ENP process for those countries which are not applying for EU membership but which have come closer to the EU's body of law. It asked the Commission to develop specific policies to extend the ENP where feasible to Atlantic island countries neighbouring EU outermost regions adjacent to the European continent, where special questions of geographical proximity, cultural and historical affinity and mutual security may be relevant. Such a neighbourhood agreement could encourage step-by-step progress towards full access to the internal market and participation in the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), which will require appropriate financial and technical support from the EU. Close cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs must also be allowed.

Parliament supported the development of action plans with all countries covered by the neighbourhood policy and insisted that the development of human rights, democracy and the rule of law be regarded as a key priority in all national action plans. It proposed that the Commission publish monitoring reports at annual intervals, setting out an assessment of ENP progress in the individual countries concerned, in accordance with clearly defined criteria and standards, to serve as the basis for further steps on the path to a European Neighbourhood Agreement. The partner countries for their part must provide detailed information for the joint monitoring process.

Parliament went onto underline the crucial link between the EU's Russia strategy and the ENP. The success of that policy in some of the ENP states depends on the relations between the EU and Russia. It asked the Commission and the Council, therefore, to reformulate the Common Strategy on Russia in such a way as to entrench the same democratic, legal and human rights considerations as have been accepted under the ENP. The Russian government was encouraged to allow for greater flexibility in decision-making instruments for its regions neighbouring EU countries. This development was an important precondition for viable cross-border relationships.

Whilst the possibility of membership of the EU must remain the ultimate incentive for all European countries to follow the common European ideals and participate in the European integration process, the fact of non-membership should not be used as a stick or a whip to punish non-member countries. Parliament emphasised that all bilateral relations and all existing multilateral organisations must be utilised in promoting our goals of European cooperation and integration.

Linking neighbouring countries with one another: It is the aim of the ENP not only to strengthen bilateral relations between the EU and the neighbourhood countries but also to bring about the development of regional integration between neighbouring countries. In this connection, consideration should be given to creating for the European neighbour states an instrument along the lines of the European Economic Area, covering not only participation in the single market but also political matters. Parliament expressed its concern at the serious delays in this area. It was vital for the Union, together with all neighbourhood policy partners, to undertake to activate all political and institutional instruments capable of supporting the development of the multilateral dimension.

On the Ukraine gas incident, Parliament stated that, whilst recognising the strong need for an eventual negotiated move to worldwide free-market rates for the prices enjoyed by Russia in its supply of oil and gas as well as the prices paid by Russia for transit rights through intermediary countries, it regretted the unilateral suspension by Russia of gas supplies to Ukraine on 1 January 2006. Parliament called on Russia not to use its market dominance as a political instrument in the conduct of its foreign policy.

Energy policy is an important aspect, since the EU is surrounded by the world's largest oil and natural gas reserves (Russia and the Caspian basin, the Middle East and North Africa), and many countries in the neighbourhood, such as Russia, Algeria, Egypt, Libya and Azerbaijan are suppliers or, as in the case of Ukraine, Belarus, Morocco, Tunisia, Georgia and Armenia, transit countries. An improvement in energy network links will benefit both the EU and its partner countries. The relations in the field of energy between the EU and neighbouring countries should be considered within the framework of a broader European energy policy, the aim of which would be to contribute to the diversity and security of energy supply of both the EU and its partner countries. Parliament asked the Commission to present a communication on the foreign and neighbourhood policy aspects of the energy policy.

Parliament went on to discuss the following matters as likely to improve links: stepping up trade and tourism between the EU and the partner countries; cooperation on the environment and in such key areas as water quality and water management, waste management, air pollution, flood management and combating desertification; and the problem of legal and illegal immigration should be tackled in the context of the neighbourhood policy.

Maghreb: Parliament called on the Commission to adopt an action plan for Algeria in the near future, so as to give fresh momentum to the Arab Maghreb Union. In addition, the EU must explain the Barcelona Process and the new ENP, so as to erase the image of a fearful Europe, more concerned with its own security and combating immigration than with the sustainable development that is both expected and necessary.

Middle East and Mashreq: Parliament welcomed the elections in the Palestinian Authority in January 2005, and welcomed Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza strip and the northern part of the West Bank. It stated that Syria must cooperate without any further delay in the international fight against terrorism and the international investigation into the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri. Parliament welcomed the withdrawal of the Syrian army from Lebanon, and the holding of legislative elections in Lebanon in June 2005, but expressed its deep concern at the recent attacks on journalists and publishers and called for the full implementation of UNSCR 1559(2004) including the disarmament of Hezbollah. On Egypt, Parliament expressed its deep concern about the conviction of Ayman Nour.

Eastern Europe: Parliament recognised Ukraine's and Moldova's European aspirations and called for a long-term European perspective to be established. It expressed concern at the present developments in Belarus, which is a dictatorial regime in which opposition activities of any kind are suppressed. Support for the civil-society activities of non-governmental organisations and of the opposition must be increased. The question of Belarus must be raised with Russia, pointing out that the democratisation of that country is in the interests of both the EU and Russia.

Southern Caucasus: Parliament welcomed the fact that the European Council has, at the insistence of the European Parliament, included the countries of the Caucasus in the neighbourhood policy. It referred to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, calling on both parties to refrain from unilateral actions and aggressive statements and to work for settlement of the conflict in a constructive dialogue with all the forces concerned.

Finally, Parliament proposed an EU stability pact for southern Caucasus – including a parliamentary and civil-society dimension modelled on the EU stability pact for south-eastern Europe – involving the EU (with the participation of Turkey as an accession candidate), Russia, the United States and the United Nations (the Quartet). Such a stability pact is likely to help settle the regional conflicts through a dialogue between all the parties concerned.

European neighbourhood policy

2004/2166(INI) - 12/05/2004 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present the Commission's European Neighbourhood Policy strategy paper.

CONTENT : EU enlargement in May 2004 altered the external borders of the EU bringing with it new security and economic challenges. One of the EU's main objectives now is to ensure that the new countries bordering the EU can benefit from closer EU economic and security related ties. To meet the new challenges the Commission, in consultation with other EU institutions, is in favour of setting up "The European Neighbourhood Policy". Over the past year, the Commission has held talks with partner countries in Eastern Europe and the Southern Mediterranean to assess their views on the creation of the ENP. The objective of this Commission Communication is to convey to the Council and the European Parliament, the results of its work over the past year and to map out the next steps in carrying forward the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Since the concept of the ENP was first launched one of its main priorities has been to share the benefits of the EU's 2004 enlargement with neighbouring countries by strengthening stability, security and well-being for all. It is designed to prevent the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours and to offer them the chance to participate in various EU activities through greater political, security, economic and cultural co-operation. The method proposed is to define a set of priorities, which will bring the partner countries closer to the EU. The priorities, in turn, will be incorporated in jointly agreed Action Plans – covering a number of key areas such as political dialogue, trade measures, energy, transport etc. The new partnership should be based on a commitment to common values including the rule of law, good governance, the respect for human rights, the free market and sustainable development. Although all Action Plans will be founded on the same principles, they will be different according to the existing state of relations with each individual country, its needs and capacities. Progress in meeting the agreed priorities will be monitored in the bodies established by Partnership and Co-operation Agreements or Association Agreements. Action Plans will be put forward by the Commission, with contributions from the High Representative on issues relating to political co-operation and the CFSP. Additional assistance is also being offered through support instruments such as technical assistance and twinning arrangements. In addition the ENP will seek to reinforce existing forms of regional and sub-regional co-operation as well as providing a framework for their further development. To the south, the ENP will encourage the participation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership – or the Barcelona process – for the promotion of infrastructure connections such as in the energy sector.

To conclude, the ENP vision involves a ring of countries, sharing the EU's fundamental values and objectives, drawn into an increasingly close relationship. The Report suggests that such a vision will bring enormous gains to all involved in terms of increased stability, security and well being. The Commission, therefore, invites the Council to consider the approach outlined in the Communication and to draw up conclusions on the way to carry this initiative forward. The Commission, for its part, is ready to complete exploratory talks with the countries identified and to present draft Action Plans.

European neighbourhood policy

2004/2166(INI) - 12/12/2005

The Council heard a presentation by Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner on the first year of implementation of the first seven European neighbourhood policy (ENP) action plans (with Ukraine, Moldova, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority and Tunisia) and an update on negotiations for five more action plans (with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia and Lebanon). The Commissioner also set out priorities for ENP for 2006.

European neighbourhood policy

2004/2166(INI) - 25/04/2005

The Council adopted the following conclusions on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) :

Firstly, it reaffirms the special role of this policy for the European Union's external relations, offering the possibility of increased political, security, economic and cultural cooperation between the European Union and its neighbours. The Council confirms its desire for the European Union's commitment in the Mediterranean, Eastern European and South Caucasus regions to be carried forward.

Equally, the Council reaffirms the importance that the European Union attaches to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia and Lebanon as neighbours and partners. The EU hopes that these five countries will maintain close links with the Union, on the basis of common values of democracy, the rule of law, good governance, respect for human rights, including the freedom of the media, and common interests, as defined in the framework of the ENP.

The Council welcomed the Commission communication on European Neighbourhood Policy, as well as the national reports for the five countries, drawn up in close cooperation with the SG/HR. It endorsed the main thrust of these documents and thought they would form an excellent basis for further development of the ENP. The national reports give a clear and accurate account of the progress made by each country, but also of the

challenges to be taken up by each of them both in political and in economic and social terms. These reports, pointing out the priorities for action which the Union would like to pursue with those five countries, form the basis on which the European Union should be able to enter into joint preparations for the ENP action plans.

The Council notes that the Commission has already begun discussions to prepare an action plan jointly with Egypt and Lebanon. The timetable for consultations with Lebanon will be determined by the development of the internal political situation in that country.

The Council notes that Member States will be kept fully informed of the progress of those consultations. The Council notes the Commission's intention to finalise the ENP action plans as far as possible by the end of 2005. The Association or Cooperation Councils concerned will be invited to approve the action plans after their adoption by the Council. The action plans should run for a minimum period of three years and be renewable by common agreement. Their implementation will be monitored in the framework of the institutions provided for in the relevant Association or Cooperation Agreements. The Council reiterates that the structures laid down for the Agreements in question should, if necessary, be re-examined so that all the priorities set out in the framework of the ENP are duly taken into account.

The Council believes the action plans will prove to be useful tools by means of which the European Union will be able to strengthen its relations with the countries in question and actively encourage the necessary rapprochements.

The Council stresses that the ENP action plans to be negotiated with each of the partners will be on a level of intensity and ambition reflecting the real extent to which common values are shared, the state of relations with each country, its needs and capabilities, and common interests. The Council also notes that possible difficulties which could arise in the joint preparation of an action plan with a partner should not impede the adoption of action plans with the others.

With regard to the South Caucasus countries, particular attention will be paid to encouraging regional cooperation and progress in conflict resolution. On this point, the Council welcomes the determination expressed by Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to use the action plans as essential instruments for strengthening regional cooperation. The Council notes with satisfaction the recent ratification of the Association Agreement by the Algerian Parliament and notes the Commission's intention to draw up a national report on Algeria.

In conclusion, the ENP, including the action plans which will start being negotiated with the five neighbouring countries, is tangible proof of the EU's desire to continue strengthening its commitment in the regions of Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and the Mediterranean and to help the countries of those regions to attain a significant degree of economic integration and enhance their political cooperation. The Council wants the action plans to become a solid platform enabling progress to be made on that path, in the interest of the parties and in accordance with common strategic priorities.

European neighbourhood policy

2004/2166(INI) - 21/02/2005

The Council adopted Decisions on the position to be adopted within the Association Councils with Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia and the EU-Palestinian Authority Joint Committee, established by the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements with a view to implementing the Action Plans envisaged by the European Neighbourhood Policy (5962/05, 5970/05, 5959/05, 6003/05 and 6014/05).

The Action Plans serve the dual purpose of setting out concrete steps for the fulfilment of the obligations set out in the Euro-Mediterranean Agreements, and of providing a broader framework for further strengthening relations between the EU and its partners to involve a significant measure of economic integration and a deepening of political cooperation.