

## Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation: Taking Stock of the Situation

The wide range of cooperation programs between the European Union (EU) and Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC) is the result of multiple initiatives and strategies pursued by EU institutions toward the region since 1995. The “layers” of cooperation that have been superimposed over the years include:

- 1) The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (since 1995), also known as the Barcelona Process;
- 2) The European Neighbourhood Policy since 2005;
- 3) The Union for the Mediterranean (since July 2008);
- 4) The Advanced Status, granted to Morocco in October 2008.

This note aims at giving an overview of the current situation including a review of the status of each of these cooperation initiatives. A comparative table presents in pages 4-5 the respective priorities of the different cooperation schemes and their main fields of action, largely superimposed. They concern the cooperation between the EU on the one hand, and Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, the Palestinian Authority, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, on the other. Libya, for the moment, has (auto) excluded itself from Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. Turkey benefits from a pre-accession strategy since 1999.

### The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

In November 1995, the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Barcelona gathered the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the 15 Member States of the EU at that time and of 12 MPCs (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, the Palestinian Authority, Turkey, which became candidate for accession in 2004, and Cyprus and Malta, new member States in 2004). They adopted the Barcelona Declaration<sup>1</sup> (a political document, not a legal instrument), which founded the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP). Its overall objective is to turn the Mediterranean into “an area of dialogue, exchange and co-operation guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity” that “requires a strengthening of democracy and respect for human rights, sustainable and balanced economic and social development, measures to combat poverty and promotion of greater understanding between cultures, which are all essential aspects of partnership”

The EMP is a global process that includes:



- establishing a common area of peace and stability through strengthened political dialogue (Political Chapter);
- implementation of an economic and financial partnership and progressive establishment of a free trade area for 2010 (Economy Chapter);
- bringing peoples closer and developing exchanges between civil societies (Social, Cultural and Human Chapter). In 2005, a new chapter on justice and home affairs was added.

The multilateral follow-up of the EMP is performed through periodic meetings of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (approx. every 18 months) and by the “Euro-Mediterranean Committee for the Barcelona Process” of senior officials who meet, in principle, on a monthly basis. There are also sectoral ministerial meetings, in which the ministers agree on joint conclusions, with a summary of discussions, a number of general political declarations and the objectives of actions to be engaged in the respective field. These conclusions are essentially a tool for political and policy dialogue<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.medeas.be/index.html?doc=261>.

<sup>2</sup> A list of ministerial conferences is available at

The legal instruments implementing the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership are bilateral Association Agreements (AA) between the European Union and each of the Mediterranean Partner Countries that have come into effect between 1998 (for Tunisia) and 2005 (for Algeria). Syria has not signed its AA yet. Association Agreements<sup>3</sup> provide for bilateral Association Councils that meet annually at ministerial level to evaluate the progress accomplished and to determine political priorities for cooperation.

The core of the EMP is the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area scheduled for 2010. To this effect, AAs provide for the creation of bilateral free trade areas (FTA) for industrial products (with negotiations for the progressive liberalization of trade in agricultural products) between the EU and each MPC, with a transition period of 12 years for total customs tariffs dismantling on these products on a basis of reciprocity.

MEDA programs have provided financial support for the modernization process in MPCs and to mitigate short-term adverse effects of the FTA (€4.6 billion for the period 2000-2006 or an approximate average of €3.50 inh./year<sup>4</sup>). A small share of MEDA funds also finances regional programs (see EUROMED Background Note n°2).<sup>5</sup> In addition, the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP)<sup>6</sup> created in 2002 within the European Investment Bank grants loans to MPCs for direct support to private sector development and for infrastructure projects. Since 2004, the FEMIP has provided credit for an amount of €6.7 billion to MPCs and it has a lending envelope of €7.6 billion for 2009-2013.

Since 2004, a series of new Euro-Mediterranean institutions have been created: the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (2004), the Anna Lindh Foundation for the dialogue between cultures (2005) and the Euro-Mediterranean University (2008). These will soon be followed by the creation of the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (EMRLA). (See EUROMED Background Note n° 3.)

The Five Year Work Program<sup>7</sup> adopted during the Euro-Mediterranean summit of Heads of State and Government held in Barcelona in November 2005 established a series of general objectives and specific

goals for each of the four chapters of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. The absence of local and regional authorities in this Program was manifest.

## Work Program for 2009

During the Marseilles Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs,<sup>8</sup> the ministers agreed on the principle of adopting a bi-annual Work Program during each bi-annual Summit and established the Program for 2009, with an indicative list of ministerial meetings<sup>9</sup>. Due to the political stalemate of the Partnership since 2008, only four ministerial meetings have been held in 2009 (water, employment, sustainable development, and economy and finances).

A new trend has emerged recently from ministerial meetings, that is, using work programs, action plans or even full-fledged Euro-Mediterranean strategies to coordinate actions designed to achieve sectoral objectives:

- In the transport sector, the Regional Transport Action Plan (RTAP) for the Mediterranean;
- In the field of energy, the Priority Action Plan for 2008-2013 (approved at Cyprus, December 2007);
- A work program on tourism to be elaborated and submitted during the next ministerial conference in 2010 (decided in Fez, 2-3 April 2008);
- A process that should lead within a two-year period to a new Euro-Mediterranean Culture Strategy (Athens, 29-30 May 2008);
- A Mediterranean Maritime Strategy to be developed according to the Marseilles Declaration;
- A Framework of Actions to develop a genuine social dimension of the EMP approved by Employment Ministers (Marrakech, 8-9 November 2008);
- A long-term water strategy for the Mediterranean currently being defined (Jordan, December 2008).

The Marseilles Declaration also provides for a new field of cooperation in **Urban Development**, with the involvement of regional authorities to define appropriate planning.

<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/euromed/conf/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/euromed/conf/index_en.htm).

<sup>4</sup> Available at

[http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/euromed/docs/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/euromed/docs/index_en.htm).

<sup>5</sup> Figures in [http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/euromed/docs/meda\\_figures\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/euromed/docs/meda_figures_en.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> For a description of all regional projects, see EuropeAid (2008), see bibliography.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.eib.org/projects/regions/med/index.htm>.

<sup>8</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/euromed/summit1105/five\\_years\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/euromed/summit1105/five_years_en.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Final Declaration, Marseilles 3-4 November 2008, [http://ue2008.fr/webdav/site/PFUE/shared/import/1103\\_ministerielle\\_Euro\\_med/Final\\_Statement\\_Mediterranean\\_Union\\_EN.pdf](http://ue2008.fr/webdav/site/PFUE/shared/import/1103_ministerielle_Euro_med/Final_Statement_Mediterranean_Union_EN.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> 3rd Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Water; 1st Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on sustainable development projects; 6th Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Transport and Urban Development; 2nd Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Higher Education & Scientific Research; 6th Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Energy; 4th Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on the Environment; 2nd Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society; 9th FEMIP Ministerial Meeting; 5th Euro-Mediterranean ECOFIN Ministerial Meeting; 8th Euro-Mediterranean Trade Ministerial Conference; 1st Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Food Security, Agriculture and Rural Development; 1st Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Justice, Liberty and Security; 11th Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Foreign Affairs; 1st Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Human Development.

## The Union for the Mediterranean

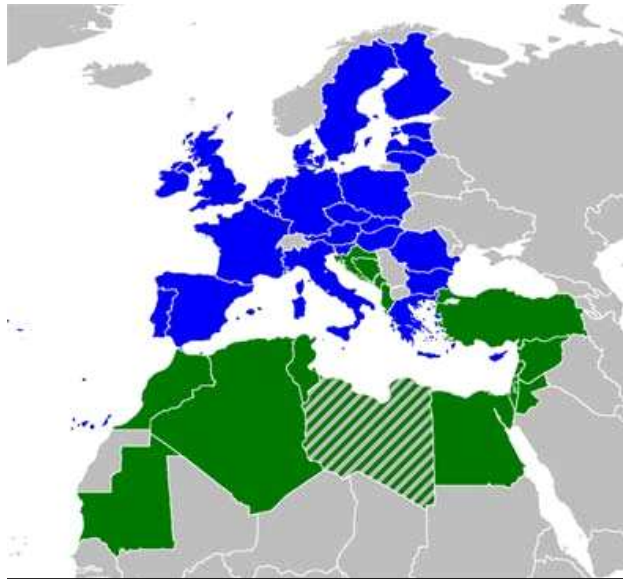
Following a personal initiative of the President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, and after more than nine months of intense internal debate within the EU, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) was launched in July 2008 during the Paris Summit with the accession of new Mediterranean partners, the gradual establishment of a new institutional structure (Co-presidency, Joint Permanent Committee, Secretariat) and the identification of six concrete regional projects. The founding documents of the UfM are the Declaration of the Summit of Euro-Mediterranean Heads of State and Government held on 13 July 2008 in Paris, the "Paris Declaration",<sup>10</sup> and the Final Statement of the Conference of Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Marseilles<sup>11</sup>.

The UfM groups 43 European and Mediterranean States, EU institutions and a number of regional organizations. Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Monaco and Montenegro that accepted the *acquis* of the Barcelona Process were welcomed during the Paris Summit as new members<sup>12</sup>. The Union for the Mediterranean will "build on the *acquis* and reinforce the achievements and successful elements of the Barcelona Process".

### Institutionalization

During the ministerial Conference in Marseilles, a new institutional structure was adopted by all the partners. It is composed of:

- A system of **bi-annual Summits of Heads of State and Government**. The next summit will be held under the Spanish Presidency of the European Union in 2010.



- A system of **Co-presidency** for all summits and all ministerial meetings, as well as meetings of senior officials. For the period 2008-2010, Egypt has been designated for the presidency of MPCs. France assumed the presidency of EU members from July to December 2008, then jointly during the Czech-French presidency (January-July 2009) followed by the Swedish-French presidency (July-December 2009).

- A **reinforced Senior Officials Committee**. Its mission is to deal with all aspects of the initiative,

prepare the ministerial meetings and submit to them project proposals and the annual work program.

- A **Joint Permanent Committee** based in Brussels that will assist and prepare the meetings of Senior Officials. It will also provide appropriate follow-up and may also act as a rapid reaction mechanism if the need arises.

- A **Secretariat** whose functions will be limited in principle to the identification and follow-up of UfM projects, the promotion of new projects and the search of funds and partners for their implementation. This newly created institution is the only one whose role does not concern the EMP as a whole, but appears to be limited to UfM projects only. The European Commission will continue to manage regional programs of the EMP as it has done so far. The Secretariat will have a separate legal personality with an autonomous status. It shall have a technical mandate and will follow the recommendations of senior officials, but will be composed of officials appointed by the States participating in the process. As provided by the Marseilles Declaration, the Secretariat will have a Secretary General and six deputy secretary-generals. It will be based in Barcelona and was supposed to start functioning in May 2009 according to statutes to be adopted by senior officials before the end of February 2009. However, the political stalemate faced by the EMP has delayed its creation, and the details concerning its composition, functioning and mandate have still to be definitely endorsed by partner countries.

<sup>10</sup> [www.ue2008.fr/webdav/site/PFUE/shared/import/07/0713\\_declaration\\_de\\_paris/Joint\\_declaration\\_of\\_the\\_Paris\\_summit\\_for\\_the\\_Mediterranean-EN.pdf](http://www.ue2008.fr/webdav/site/PFUE/shared/import/07/0713_declaration_de_paris/Joint_declaration_of_the_Paris_summit_for_the_Mediterranean-EN.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> [www.ue2008.fr/webdav/site/PFUE/shared/import/1103\\_ministerielle\\_Euromed/Final\\_Statement\\_Mediterranean\\_Union\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ue2008.fr/webdav/site/PFUE/shared/import/1103_ministerielle_Euromed/Final_Statement_Mediterranean_Union_EN.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> In addition to the 27 member States of the EU, the 9 partners mentioned in the introduction and Turkey, Mauritania and Albania were accepted as new members of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership in November 2007.

<b>EMP Priorities</b> Five-year work program Barcelona Conference 2005*	<b>ENP Priorities</b> EC Communication of 2006 on “strengthening the ENP”**	<b>UfM Priorities</b> Marseilles Declaration November 2008***
<b>Political and Security Partnership</b>	<b>Strengthening Political Cooperation</b>	<b>Political and Security Dialogue</b>
Extend political pluralism and participation by citizens	The EU needs to play a more active role in multilateral conflict-resolution including, if necessary, participating in civil and military peace missions.	Middle East Peace Process (regular review of the political situation in the Middle East)
Enable citizens to participate in decision-making at local level	Possibility of alignment with CFSP Declarations (Common European Security and Defence Policy) offered to all EMP partners	Terrorism (implementing a Code of Conduct to counter terrorism)
Increase the participation of women in decision-making	Intensified parliamentary cooperation	Deepening of the dialogue on the Common European Security and Defence Policy (CESDP) and crisis management
Ensure freedom of expression and association	Strengthening of EU diplomatic presence in all EMP partners	Strengthen democracy and political pluralism through expansion of participation in political life and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms
Foster the role of civil society	<b>Enhancing Regional Cooperation</b>	Deepening of regional dialogue on joint cooperation, best practices and exchange of experience in the area of elections
Enable the development and implementation of UN and Regional Charters and Conventions	Strengthened cooperation with “the neighbours of our neighbours” For example, on energy, transport, fight against illegal migration	Lay the foundations for a long-term Program, the Euro-Med Program for the Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters - PPRD (2008-2011)
<b>Sustainable Economic Development and Reform</b>	<b>Enhancing the Economic and Trade Component</b>	<b>Economic and Financial Partnership</b>
Create more job opportunities for more young people in the region	Envisage the FTA (Free Trade Area) within a deep and comprehensive approach	Energy
Improve the business climate, in particular for SMEs	Reinforced support for reforms and efforts aimed at improving the economic and trade regulatory environment and the investment climate	Transport
Reducing regional poverty rates	Strengthened economic integration and cooperation in key sectors	Agriculture
Closing the prosperity gap and raising the GNP growth rates		Urban Development
Increasing North-South and South-South regional cooperation	<b>Strengthening Financial Cooperation</b>	Water
Increasing the rate of employment of women in partner countries	Maximizing the impact and leverage of scarce resources	Environment
	Governance Facility	Information Society
	Neighbourhood Investment Fund	Tourism
	Improved coordination between Member States and EC assistance	Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area
		Economic dialogue
	<b>Building a Thematic Dimension to the ENP</b>	Industrial Cooperation
	Considering additional multilateral agreements in energy and transport	Ongoing work on statistics cooperation
	Work for the extension of the EU transport and energy networks to neighbouring countries, as well as interoperability	<b>Maritime Safety</b>
	Participation of neighbours in relevant Community agencies and programmes	

<b>Educational and Socio-cultural Exchanges</b>	<b>Promoting People-to-People Exchanges</b>	<b>Social, Human, and Cultural Cooperation</b>
Halve the number of illiterate female and male adults and children	Educational, cultural, youth and research exchanges	Developing a genuine social dimension
Promote equality of access to quality education	Enhanced civil society participation in ENP	Health
Reduce disparities in educational achievement between Mediterranean states	Exchanges between regional and local authorities	Human Development
Enhance graduate employment through high quality higher education	Training the regulators of tomorrow	Towards a Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education and Research Area
Increase awareness and understanding of the different cultures and civilizations	Business-to-business contacts	Promoting dialogue between cultures, cultural diversity
	Visibility and information activities	Strengthening the role of women in society
		EuroMed Youth
<b>Migration, Social Integration, Justice and Security</b>	<b>Facilitating Mobility and Managing Migration</b>	Cooperation with civil society and local actors
Promote legal migration opportunities	Visa facilitation, removing obstacles to legitimate travel	Enhancing the visibility of the Partnership
Facilitate the flow of remittance transfers	Addressing readmission and effective and efficient border management	Justice and Law
Address "brain drain"		Migration
Reduce significantly the level of illegal migration and trafficking of human beings		
Promote modernization and efficiency of the administration of justice		
Reinforce judicial cooperation		
Promote the ratification/implementation of UN Conventions on organised crime		
<b>EMP Priorities</b>	<b>ENP Priorities</b>	<b>UfM Priorities</b>

\* Euro-Mediterranean Summit of Barcelona, November 2005. Five-year work programme, <http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/05/st00/st000002.en05.pdf>

\*\* COM (2006) 726 final, Communication from the Commission on Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy, Brussels, 4 December 2006.  
[http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com06\\_726\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com06_726_en.pdf)

\*\*\* Final Declaration, Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, Marseilles, 3-4 November 2008

[http://www.ue2008.fr/webdav/site/PFUE/shared/import/1103\\_ministerielle\\_Euromed/Final\\_Statement\\_Mediterranean\\_Union\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ue2008.fr/webdav/site/PFUE/shared/import/1103_ministerielle_Euromed/Final_Statement_Mediterranean_Union_EN.pdf)

# The Union for the Mediterranean

## Projects

The Heads of State and Government considered that it was crucial to translate the objectives established by the Barcelona Declaration of 1995 and by the Work Program of 2005 into concrete regional projects. The first six projects that will be completed in subsequent Summits are:

- **De-pollution of the Mediterranean** (including coastal and protected maritime areas, focusing on the "water and waste sector").
- **Maritime and Land Highways** (including connection of ports, creation of coastal motorways and the modernization of the "trans-Maghreb" train).
- **Civil Protection** (a joint Program on prevention, preparation, and response to disasters).
- **Alternative Energies**: Feasibility, development, and creation of a Mediterranean Solar Plan.
- **Higher Education and Research**: A Euro-Mediterranean University, based in Slovenia, with the mission to develop post-graduate and research programs.
- **Mediterranean Business Development Initiative** (aimed at assisting entities in MPCs that already support small and medium-sized enterprises).

The Union for the Mediterranean projects have not been implemented yet due to the political stalemate and the lack of concrete financial commitments in the Paris summit and the Ministerial Meeting in Marseilles, even if preparatory meetings have already been held for each project. All the projects are currently in a pre-feasibility study stage (analysis of barriers to their implementation and the necessary regulations) that will be followed by the identification of pilot projects. Only the Civil Protection project (that continue the MEDA regional Program for civil protection 2004-2008, focusing on technical

assistance and capacity building) and the project for the de-pollution of the Mediterranean (continuing the Horizon 2010 initiative agreed by the Euro-Mediterranean ministers for environment during the Cairo meeting of 2006) have made progress towards an operational stage.

Financially, the situation seems rather unclear, but the first commitments are beginning to take shape, particularly for environmental projects (€72 million from the European Commission, €250 million from the French Development Agency). The World Bank announced it would allocate €750 million for solar energy projects in the Mediterranean.

## Political Stalemate

The Arab-Israeli conflict has blocked the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership for most of the last year. After the Paris summit on the Union for the Mediterranean in which the League of Arab States participated as an observer, the demand of Arab Mediterranean Partner Countries to grant the Arab League the status of permanent observer in all Euro-Mediterranean meetings (not only for bi-annual summits) and Israel's opposition to their demand paralysed the EMP during several months. Euro-Med Committee meetings, the meetings of senior officials and ministerial meetings were either cancelled or postponed. An agreement was reached during the Marseilles Euro-Med Ministerial Meeting of November 2008 granting the Arab League the status of permanent observer in all Euro-Mediterranean meetings, but the reaction of Arab MPCs to Israel's attacks in the Gaza Strip once again blocked the functioning of the EMP and the implementation of decisions on the Union for the Mediterranean until July 2009.

# The European Neighbourhood Policy

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was developed by the European Commission since 2003 within the context of the enlargement of the EU seeking not only to avoid the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours but also to strengthen prosperity, stability and security along the borders of the EU<sup>13</sup>.

Through the ENP, the EU proposes to its neighbours a privileged relationship based on mutual commitments in favour of common values (democracy, human rights, the rule of law, good governance, market economy principles and sustainable development). The ENP's philosophy consists in ensuring

<sup>13</sup> The countries benefiting from the ENP are Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Jordan and Lebanon in the

Mediterranean, and Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia to the east of Europe. Algeria, Syria and Libya are not part of this policy, but they benefit from the ENPI like Russia. Belarus does not have an Action Plan.



neighbouring countries—in exchange of concrete progress in the internalization of these common values through legal, political, economic, and institutional reforms, and particularly by adopting the “*aquis communautaire*”, i.e. the EU’s body of law—the perspective of deeper economic integration with the EU and their participation in the European single market (in terms of free movement of goods, capital, and services, but not people), as well as the possibility of participating in EU programs and agencies.

The ENP is therefore based on the model for the EU enlargement (although it explicitly excludes the perspective of eventual EU membership); in other words, it is focused on the achievement of predetermined results: for the candidate countries the achievement of Copenhagen criteria and the full adoption of the EU’s “*acquis*”; for the ENP countries the completion of reforms established within the framework of relevant bilateral Action Plans. The ENP provides for a gradual approach (for the adoption of reforms) focused on concrete and differentiated objectives for each country, based on periodical and objective assessments by the European Commission of the progress made. The ENP has produced significant changes in terms of financial management by introducing three new planning instruments based on the methodology of the pre-accession strategy: Country Reports, Action Plans, and Progress Reports<sup>14</sup>.

The main instruments for the implementation of the ENP are four-year Action Plans that receive financial support for their implementation under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument - ENPI. They establish a number of priorities, objectives, and actions to be accomplished (for Morocco, for instance, there are 9 priorities, 85 objectives and 395 actions programmed)<sup>15</sup>. Elaborated according to the standard negotiation program for accession to EU membership by candidate States which consists of 35 chapters, Action Plans incorporate into the cooperation between the EU and neighbouring Mediterranean countries new issues such as human and social rights, technical standards and many others, offering new possibilities and perspectives for this cooperation.

Since 2007, the ENP finances regional and bilateral cooperation programs between the EU and neighbouring countries, replacing previous geographic and thematic assistance programs of the European Union.<sup>16</sup> The total allocation for the period 2007-2013 for the 16 neighbourhood countries plus Russia amounts to €11,810 million.

10% of these funds—€1.181 billion for 2007-2013—is allocated to cross-border cooperation programs. (See EUROMED Background Note n°2). The main focus of the ENPI is on Country Programs, transposed in operational

terms through Action Plans. During recent years, the European Commission has increasingly granted direct budget support (transfer of funds to specific sectors) instead of funding for individual projects. The total annual budget support to ENP/ENPI countries increased from €397 million to €635 million in 2007, accounting in 2007 for 100%

of overall financial cooperation in the case of Morocco and 88% in Egypt during the same year<sup>17</sup>.

Indicative Allocations under the ENPI for the period 2007-2010 In Million Euros Programs by Country	
Algeria	220
Palestinian Authority	632
Egypt	558
Israel	8
Jordan	265
Lebanon	187
Libya	8
Morocco	654
Syria	130
Tunisia	300
<b>Total MPCs</b>	<b>2,962</b>

The ENP has therefore become a new frame of reference for bilateral relations between the EU and neighbour countries along its borders. This does not mean Mediterranean countries have abandoned the more general framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (the ENP falls within the EMP), but it redefines its priorities and operating methods. The EMP becomes the framework for multilateral cooperation at regional level while the ENP complements the EMP and appears as the main instrument for bilateral cooperation. With the exception of Syria, Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements remain the contractual framework for relations with MPCs, but new neighbourhood agreements are being envisaged with the most advanced MMPCs (namely Morocco, after being granted the “advanced status”, and Israel).

The role of local and regional authorities in the ENP is limited to the regional program CIUDAD and to cross-border cooperation programs. (See EUROMED Background Note n°2.)

<sup>14</sup> They are all available on line at [http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm)

<sup>15</sup> Action Plans may be consulted at [http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm)

<sup>16</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/overview/how-does-enpi-work\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/overview/how-does-enpi-work_en.htm).

<sup>17</sup> See the brochure “Budget Support: The effective way to finance development?”, [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/infopoint/publications/europeaid/documents/budgetsupport08\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/infopoint/publications/europeaid/documents/budgetsupport08_en.pdf).

## EU-Morocco Advanced Status

In October 2008, the EU granted Morocco “Advanced Status” (see the “Joint Document” to this effect<sup>18</sup>) aimed at strengthening political cooperation, a gradual integration of Morocco in the EU single market, with the appropriate financial support and in phase with the scope and ambitious nature of this new evolution. The Advanced Status also seeks greater involvement of local and regional authorities, economic actors and social partners of both parties in order to promote synergies between these players and to achieve joint ownership of the partnership. The actions provided for in the Joint Document represent a road map for the strengthening of EU-Morocco bilateral relations towards an Advanced Status. To date, the content of the road map and above all its implementation have not been negotiated, and its added value in comparison with the ENP remains to be demonstrated in operational terms.

Within the human development dimension of the Advanced Status, the Joint Document provides for “closer relations between the representatives of local and regional authorities of Morocco and their European counterparts to consolidate the dynamics of cross-border and inter-regional cooperation promoted within the framework of ENP, in the understanding that it should respect the same principles of cross-border cooperation under the ENPI. Morocco seeks eventually to connect Moroccan regional authorities with the network of the Committee of the Regions (COR).”

The first EU-Morocco Summit within the context of the Advanced Status should take place in March 2010 under the Spanish Presidency of the UE. A forum of European and Moroccan local authorities should be held before the Summit.

Following the agreement with Morocco, other Mediterranean countries were eager to establish special relations with the EU. In spite of the delay due to the War in Gaza in December 2008, Israel seems to be the most advanced country in the process, but Tunisia, Jordan, and Egypt have already requested the creation of bilateral working groups to discuss the modalities of these relations.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup>[http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/morocco/docs/document\\_conjoint\\_fr.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/morocco/docs/document_conjoint_fr.pdf) (French version).

<sup>19</sup> See the Conclusions of the EU Council of 8-9 December 2008 on the reinforcement of bilateral relations between the EU and its Mediterranean partners ([www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/104616.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/104616.pdf)). For a comparative analysis of the Advanced Status, see Iván Martín (2009).

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Author: Iván Martín