

Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy  
A Consultation Submission by the HBS

The European Neighbourhood Policy was created as an outcome of the 2004 enlargement of the European Union. Uniting a large part of the continent created the inevitable though largely unintended consequence of differences. Recently, the EU launched a consultation on the future of its relations with neighbouring countries. It is hoped that the current review by the EEAS, undertaken within a completely changed geopolitical context in both the eastern and southern regions, will finally allow the ENP to become a **more substantive instrument of assistance and influence in the wider EU neighbourhood** – to the benefit of both the union and the neighbouring states.

The main reason for revision was also summarized well: “Many ENP tools were conceived for a stable environment, but history didn’t wait for the EU’s good work to produce results.”

As a political foundation represented in the region, the Heinrich Böll Foundation participated at the review process and submitted its evaluation to the European Commission. We invited our partner organisations and independent experts from East and South and asked about their experiences and recommendations. Many thanks for the contribution of Polish partners: Jacek Kucharczyk (Institute of Public Affairs), Elżbieta Kaca (Polish Institute of International Affairs), Jan Piekło (Polish-Ukrainian Foundation PAUCI) and Adam Balcer, Jan-Nowak-Jeziorański (College of Eastern Europe).



The broader results reflect a need for fundamental change of the ENP to be anchored in the following six areas:

1. **Political backing** – by the EU, which to date has been mostly absent

Given the massive shifts in the geopolitical context, in both the eastern and southern neighbourhoods, it is clearly time to infuse the policy with some political perspective, i.e. define realistic goals for each region and state, based upon:

- Thorough analysis
- Attention to the core EU values
- An understanding of the mutual needs of the EU and each partner state

Above all, it means ensuring there is sufficient political will behind the instruments allocated to achieving the goals.

Soft power can be extremely effective: economic advice, building and reforming institutions, creating and assisting civil societies, instilling values, sharing cultural and academic spaces and various other such activities can and should be very valuable instruments of policy.

2. **Coherence** – with other EU policies; the ENP is not an island

Political backing from EU member states will only be available if the ENP is built around successful extant EU policies alongside the issues emerging from the rapidly shifting geopolitical context that affect the states as well as the union.

An effective ENP needs to be closely integrated into an overall EU Foreign Policy, as well as concrete issues such as trade, energy and security. Replacing the Mobility Partnership Agreements with a Common Migration Policy is deemed a way to create more agreement on the issue, and strengthen the ENP.

3. **Mutuality** – both sides must benefit from the relationship

The success of the ENP relies on an equilibrium in which both sides have something to both gain, compromise on and lose. Financial and economic benefits and possibly (material) support in the security field are the priorities of the southern neighbourhood – with as little interference and conditionality as possible.

4. **Flexibility** – creating and adapting the correct programme for each state

Sixteen states from two vastly differing regions cannot be fitted into one policy if it is to be effective – and adaptable to change. Within common themes, each region must have an overarching policy aim, but then a distinct policy and relationship must be developed with each state.

A more dynamic approach to economic cooperation and integration, reflecting conditions in partner countries should be developed. By focusing on institutions, the specific needs of each state, and easier access to the ENP much can be done to make it more flexible, and thus also adaptable to quick changes.

5. **Inclusivity** – ensuring the policy incorporates the people and civil society

While the EU as a whole may hold the overall relationship with the governments of the neighbouring states, the ENP will only succeed if the people and societies within them benefit and feel invested. It would be desirable in future if the civil society organizations were more engaged in regular and binding consultation formats regarding policy design, action plans and progress reports, as well as elaboration of the agreements thus making them more efficient for developing assessment and evaluation mechanisms on progress of the ENP.

6. **Values** – the EU must transact on the basis of its values

The ENP must place true emphasis upon human rights, justice for all and social inclusivity it will not succeed. Sustainable security goes hand in hand with a stable democratic system and by respecting the rule of law. For a long term stability (and security), the democratic process has to be enhanced.

The full version of the hbs submission with detailed proposals regarding a new, greener ENP can be downloaded [here](#).