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DISSERTATION

Titel der Dissertation

“Business as usual?

The European Neighbourhood Policy and
institutional coherence in EU foreign policy-making
(2002-2007)”

Verfasserin

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angestrebter akademischer Grad

Doktorin der Philosophie (Dr.phil.)

Wien, Mai 2011

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt:

A 092 300

Dissertationsgebiet lt. Studienblatt:

Politikwissenschaft

Betreuer:

A.o. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Otmar Höll

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Abstract

In 2003/04 the European Union launched the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) with the main objective “*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*”. EU internally the ENP was supposed to unite within a single framework activities from the three pillars (EC, CFSP, JHA), with the main objective to overcome the often criticised pillarisation of EU foreign policy and to provide a coherent approach toward the neighbours.

Academic research about EU relations with neighbouring countries focused until now primarily on external aspects of the ENP: its goals, impact, instruments and mechanisms. However, the internal aim of the ENP to provide a single and coherent framework for EU policies is only sporadically discussed in EU documents and has not gained any detailed academic attention. This dissertation aims to contribute to this gap in scientific research. It therefore examines to what extent the institutional setting of the ENP changed the interactions, routines and tasks of EU actors between 2002 and 2007, and it assesses what motivations different actors had for this change. By doing so, this thesis contributes to the understanding of EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours in general terms, and to the debate about coherence in EU foreign policy-making more specifically.

The thesis shows that the ENP framework in terms of EU actors’ roles and interaction was not just ‘business as usual’, but that a considerable change in EU actors’ involvement in EU foreign policy-making took place with the set-up of the ENP, in particular in terms of policy-specification as well as implementation. While this change led to conflicts when the new framework was put into place, the interaction turned more consensual over time, what depended to a large extent on the concrete persons involved and on mutual perceptions. The motivation for this change of EU actors’ involvement within the ENP is best explained by intentional decisions of involved actors that were based on the conviction that an adaptation of EU actors’ interaction is best suited and also necessary to achieve the commonly agreed ENP objective of fostering stability and prosperity in the neighbourhood.

Keywords

European Neighbourhood Policy; EU Foreign Policy; Bureaucratic Politics; Inter- and Intra-institutional change; Georgia; Morocco;

Abbreviations

AA	Association Agreement
CA	Cooperation Agreement
CEEC	Central and Eastern European Countries
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
COEST	Working Group on Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia of the EU Council of Ministers of the European Union
COM	Commission of the European Communities
COMAG	Mashrek/Maghreb Working Party of the Council of Ministers of the European Union
CS	Council Secretariat
CSM	Common Strategy on the Mediterranean Region
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DG Relex	Directorate General for the External Relations
DG	Directorate General
e.g.	for example
EC	European Community
EDC	European Defence Community
EEAS	European External Action Service
EFP	European Foreign Policy
EFPM	EU foreign policy-making
EIB	European Investment Bank
EMAA	Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements
EMFTA	Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area
EMP	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ENPI	European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument
EP	European Parliament
EaP	Eastern Partnership
EPC	European Political Cooperation
EU	European Union
GAC	General Affairs Council
HR	High Representative for the CFSP
i.e.	that is (id est)
IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
INTERREG	Financial instrument for interregional cooperation under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
NIP	National Indicative Programme
PCA	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
PHARE	“Poland and Hungary: Aid for Restructuring of the Economies” – one of three EU pre-accession instruments to assist applicant countries in preparation of joining the EU
PR	Permanent Representation
TACIS	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States
TEU	Treaty on European Union / Maastricht
ToA	Treaty of Amsterdam
UfM	Union for the Mediterranean

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PART I - The Set-up of this Research Project

Chapter 1: Introduction & Research Design

In March 2003 the European Union launched the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) with the main objective *”to prevent the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours”* (European Commission 2004b: 3). Externally, the ENP was supposed to give a stronger impetus to the relations with the new neighbours after the 2004 Eastern enlargement. Politically and economically stable neighbouring countries would be the best way to achieve security for the European Union at its borders. However, the ENP was also meant to achieve an EU internal goal: to provide more coherence in the EU policy towards the neighbours and to overcome the often criticised pillarisation of EU foreign policy by establishing a single framework that would incorporate activities from the supranational external relations of the European Community (EC), from the more politicised Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as well as from the increasingly growing third pillar of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA).¹ More coherence was emphasised as the main factor to allow the EU to be an effective and strong partner towards and for its neighbours.

The establishment of new institutional arrangements and the revision of existing structures to provide more coherence in EU activities outside of its borders have been part of the European integration process since its beginning in the 1950s. Several attempts of creating a common foreign policy had failed, like for example the European Defence Community. In 1969, the European Political Cooperation (EPC) was established outside of the European Economic Community framework as an intergovernmental arena to coordinate the foreign policies of the EEC members. The EPC, however, soon showed the shortcomings and insufficiency of this arrangement that could also not be overcome by the association and informal incorporation of EPC in the EC framework with the Single European Act (see e.g. Dinan 2005: 582-588).

The collapse of the Soviet empire, the end of the Cold war, the Gulf crisis and the civil war in Yugoslavia among other profound changes in the international arena during the 1990s on the one hand, and internal attempts to establish also a political Union on the other hand resurrected the discussion about how EC member states could most effectively cooperate in foreign policy issues. Some member states strongly criticised the inadequacy of the EPC and asked for a

¹ The third pillar of Justice and Home Affairs was renamed in “Area of Freedom, Security and Justice” after the Dutch Presidency in 2004, and the new heading will also be introduced by the Lisbon Treaty. For simplicity reasons, though, the traditional name will be used throughout this thesis. Furthermore, the Lisbon Treaty entered into force in December 2009 and abolishes formally the three pillars. However, as this thesis investigates the timeframe from 2000-2007 and hence a time before the Lisbon Treaty was adopted, it still uses the concepts of pillars; Additionally, although institutionally abolished, the Lisbon Treaty still keeps CFSP distinct from other EU policies, and there was not much change in the substance and content of CFSP (For a more detailed elaboration on the various actors and institutions involved in ESDP see Vanhoonacker, Dijkstra & Maurer 2010).

“communitarization of foreign policy” (Piening 1997: 38), while other members strictly refused to integrate foreign policy issues into the EC-framework. At last, a compromise between these two different positions had been incorporated in the Treaty of Maastricht: the EPC was transformed into the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) that constituted the intergovernmental second pillar of the EU. This pillarisation, in the end at the same time, institutionalised the separation between supranationally pursued external economic policies and intergovernmentally coordinated political policies towards the outside world.

The quest for coherent foreign policy frameworks that support the linkage of economic, political, social but also cultural aspects can be observed in EU foreign policy-making in general, but the need for a coherent and overarching framework is especially emphasised in the relations of the European Union with its neighbourhood. The importance of these countries for the security and stability of the European Union and its citizens is repeatedly highlighted by politicians of the EU and the member states as well stated in various documents. The European Security Strategy of 2003, for example, emphasises *“building security in our Neighbourhood”* as one of three strategic objectives for the European Union that should lead to *“a ring of well governed countries to the East of the European Union and on the borders of the Mediterranean with whom we can enjoy close and cooperative relations”* (European Council 2003b: 7-8; for similar emphasis see follow-up report European Council 2008: 10-11)

1.1. The Research Puzzle and the Research Questions

Academic research about EU relations with neighbouring countries focused until now primarily on external aspects: the goals, impact, instruments and mechanisms of the European Neighbourhood Policy. Some scholars compare the ENP with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Aliboni 2005b; Moschella 2006; Del Sarto & Schumacher 2005; Dannreuther 2006; Baracani 2005; Kelley 2006), while others highlight the shortcomings and challenges of the ENP (Smith, K. E. 2005; Emerson, Noutcheva & Popescu 2007). The use of conditionality, the promotion of democratisation, good governance and other values are also high on the research agenda (Sasse 2008; Bosse 2007; Johansson-Noegués 2006; Baracani 2006; Schimmelfennig & Scholtz 2009), while more recently the impact of the EU in third countries is the focus of comparative assessments (Wichmann 2007b; Weber, Smith & Baun 2007).

However, the internal aim of the ENP to provide a single framework for EU policies from all three pillars is only sporadically discussed in EU documents and has not gained any detailed attention by academics. This dissertation aims to contribute to this gap in scientific research. It seeks to scrutinise more closely to what extent the single framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy provides the possibility to achieve more coherence at EU level and to

what extent the single framework that was established with the ENP did change the involvement, tasks and interaction of the respective EU actors.

The puzzle of this focus rests on the assumption that the single framework was established to allow for more coherence, what implies that it was supposed to change how policies are made towards EU neighbours and to facilitate the interaction, routines and tasks of the involved EU actors to achieve a coherent EU output. The interesting aspect of this ENP framework towards the neighbourhood is that it was meant to combine foreign policy-making in a coherent way that was at this time formally, i.e. in regard of the treaty provisions, still strictly divided in economic EC and political CFSP aspects. At first glance, the ENP just seems to add together the output of supranational as well as intergovernmental forms of EU policy-making. But this thesis argues it indispensable to not just take this assumption for granted but to also empirically assess how policies are formulated, decided and implemented within this new single framework. The ENP framework might not only bring different elements of EU foreign policy (EFP) together, but it might also change and alter the content and processes of these policies. Therefore following main research question guides the argumentation of this thesis:

- **In what respect and to what extent did the single framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy change EU policy-making processes towards the neighbours?**

To be able to answer this main question following sub-research questions are supposed to facilitate the research process.

- What role do different EU actors have in formulating, specifying, deciding and implementing foreign policy at EU level at different points in time between 2002 and 2007?
- How did the interaction and task allocation of EU actors change in different stages of the policy cycle (agenda-setting, formulation, decision-making, implementation, evaluation) after the incorporation of the ENP?

The differentiation between various stages of the policy cycle (Versluis, van Keulen & Stephenson 2010) allows for a more differentiated assessment, as formally decisions are still taken according to the provisions of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU), but we might expect that especially in regard of policy formulation and implementation the EU actors' involvement changed after the incorporation of the ENP framework and that it is especially informal processes that affect ENP policy-making.

The main interest of this research is not primarily to assess what the respective pillars do on their own or which pillar gained more influence over time, but to examine the involvement of different EU actors within the ENP framework and to trace the processes that have caused a potential new form of division of labour and tasks. The motivation of involved actors and

politicians to allow or push for an assumed change is therefore the focus of the second main research question of this thesis:

- **What factors explain changes in interactions of actors in EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood, and what constraints did the ENP single framework at the same time encounter?**

This question is crucial to assess why the member states considered a change in policy-making in such a sensitive area like foreign policy at all, while at the same time the Commission might have a certain interest to gain as much influence as possible.

This argument emphasises a crucial background condition that I assume as important to keep in mind: after all, EU Foreign Policy developed primarily from the multilateral but intergovernmental framework of the European Political Cooperation, i.e. the coordination of the foreign policies of the member states. The member states are the crucial decision-makers in foreign policy, and only they can decide – intentionally or unintentionally – to allow other (supranational) actors to fulfil a role. Furthermore, we can assume that member states will carefully design control mechanisms to make sure that supranational institutions do not exceed their mandated tasks and still act in the interest of all member states (for delegation and its link to control see for example Tallberg 2002). On the other hand it seems, of course, quite plausible to assume that supranational institutions try to extend their competences also to these areas of policy-making. So what happened in the process of setting up the ENP? Did the interests of the larger EU member states change in so far that these new priorities became the decisive driving forces for the adaptation? Or did primarily EU-external developments motivate these changes? Or can the 2004 enlargement provide sufficient explanation for the single framework approach? Furthermore, it has to be questioned if the set-up of the ENP in this form was a deliberative and totally rational decision by the member states. Why did the member states and the European institutions choose exactly this form of interaction in policy-making towards the neighbourhood? Or was it merely an unintentional acceptance of already established day-to-day practice? And in terms of a more theoretical perspective, is this new form of policy-making a new form of interaction between the European actors or does it only formalise already existing trends.

This research looks for “change” on the one hand in regard of the involved actors (i.e. Is a new body involved in ENP policy-making? Are certain actors not involved anymore?), but on the other hand also in regard of the tasks that they perform (Are the same actors involved, but did their contribution to the policy in the different stages of the policy cycle change?). Furthermore, this thesis assumes that different actors with their distinct institutional and cultural background might pursue different ideas about what a “good” policy is and what certain goals should be.

The timeframe under investigation is from 2002 to 2007. Although prior developments will be taken into consideration, it is especially this time period that will be analysed in detail, because those were the decisive years in setting-up, negotiating and shaping the ENP framework. The year 2002 was chosen as starting point to allow comparing ENP policy-making with the EU arrangements that were used beforehand to cooperate with its neighbours. Although the ENP was developed and formally negotiated in 2003 and incorporated in 2004, this research also does not just stop at exactly this time, but we must assume that certain changes took some time for manifestation and that especially during the first two years all involved actors still had to get used to the new framework and find their role and position in the new arrangement (for a more detailed explanation of the chosen timeframe see the chapter on method on p. 72).

In this thesis, following institutions and units are perceived as EU actors in foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood: The member states (and especially their permanent representations in Brussels) are on the one hand dealt with as a collective (the Council, the Council working group etc.), when the interests of the various member states are similar or in the same way affected. On the other hand and to a certain degree, the member states are also incorporated as single actors, if the interest of one specific member state is especially harmed or one member state has a special interest in changing the policy framework in a certain direction. Other actors are the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union with the Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit and the High Representative for the CFSP², as well as the Commission and its various Directorate Generals (DGs). Similar to the member states, the Commission will be treated as a collective actor when appropriate, but sometimes it is also crucial to take a closer look ‘inside’ and go to the level of the various DGs. Beyond the latter especially DG Relex is of interest. The European Parliament (EP) is only incorporated in a limited sense, but it must not be fully ignored, as several basic ideas of how to further develop relations with third countries were initiated by committed members of the EP.

This thesis, hence, aims to examine to what extent the institutional setting of the ENP changed the interactions, routines and tasks of EU actors and to assess what motivations different actors had to at least allow for this change on the one hand or to oppose certain developments.

But before turning to more details about the set-up of this research and the theoretical framework, the contribution of existing academic literature to answer the outlined research question will be scrutinised.

² In the timeframe under investigation, the High Representative for the CFSP was Javier Solana, who held at the same time the post as the Secretary General of the Council Secretariat. (European Commission 2008c)

1.2. The State of the Literature: Researching the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)

After the first years of its existence, the assessment of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is quite diverse. The Commission cheers the new policy with small critical remarks in some policy areas (see for example press release European Commission 2008c; or see also Overall ENP Progress Report 2010: European Commission 2010c), most member states view the development in some aspects critically but generally positive (Lippert 2007), and European citizens seem to primarily ignore it (see European Commission 2007) while most scientists critically predict the failure of the ENP to effectively support change in and rule transfer to neighbouring countries (see e.g. Weber, Smith & Baun 2007).

The perception of the ENP in the scientific literature as well as in political debates seems contradictory at different levels: on the one hand it is perceived as a new policy towards the EU neighbours, while at the same time it is compared and analysed in relation to formerly used frameworks and instruments. It is, in addition, cheered at to provide new impetus, and at the same time condemned because of its predicted failure. Three internal changes and dynamics are identified by scholars as shaping the ENP that also mirror the academic approach in analysing the ENP (see e.g. Del Sarto & Schumacher 2005: 19): Enlargement, the dissatisfaction with existing neighbourhood relations, and the adoption of a comprehensive security approach.

First, scholars expand concepts and approaches that were developed to explain and understand the Eastern enlargement from 2004/07, while, secondly, the new ENP framework is compared with already existing, often criticised existing relations with the neighbouring countries (e.g. the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership); Thirdly, with the adoption of the European Security Strategy in 2003, also a comprehensive security approach was increasingly used to analyse EU foreign policy-making. The following paragraphs provide a short overview about the main research findings of these three strands in the academic literature, and in doing so they show that the scholarly focus is mainly on the impact of the ENP on the EU-external world, but that hardly any research strategy explicitly focuses on the EU-internal implications of the newly established single framework of the ENP. Their results are also linked back to the main research questions of this thesis to show that reflections on these research results are useful – not to provide definite answers to the research question of this thesis but to at least steer crucial questions and assumptions that might be interesting to keep in mind during the research of this thesis.

1.2.1. ENP as Enlargement-light and as External Governance

In policy documents, the prospect of sharing borders with new neighbours after 2004/07 was the most often mentioned trigger of how to organise the relations with the new neighbours (see e.g. joint letter of Patten/Solana 2002). The Commission cheered this latest enlargement round “as

the Union's most successful foreign policy instrument" (European Commission 2003c: 5). Scholars started to take this rationale up and to extent concepts and theoretical approaches to the ENP that had been developed beforehand for explaining enlargement dynamics. Instruments and mechanism that were used in both frameworks (like for example action plans, the use of evaluation and progress reports and the principle of differentiation) were scrutinised in terms of application and effectiveness (Kelley 2006: 49; Del Sarto & Schumacher 2005: 37).

The increased application of tools from analyses of enlargement is especially visible in the extension of the external governance model to the relations with the EU neighbours. Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier developed this model of rule transfer to explain how and under what conditions the EU is able to impact on national structures, norms and behaviour of acceding candidate countries (Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier 2004, 2005). The authors juxtaposed a rational-choice model following the logic of consequences (external incentive model, use of conditionality) with a more socio-constructivist approach of logic of appropriateness (lesson-drawing model and social learning). They concluded that rule transfer to candidate countries works best for the EU when it follows the external incentive model, hence applies strict conditionality and is able to offer the reward of membership as positive incentive.

This model was also modified to be applied to the EU's relation with its near abroad. Sandra Lavenex (Lavenex 2008) uses the concept of "network governance" to investigate the organisational set-up of sectoral integration. She emphasises that it is not only the adaptation of third countries to EU regulations and norms that is crucial to understand the impact of the EU on its neighbours, but that we should also take into account how (the reforms of) certain policy sectors are structured and organised according to the EU model. The advantage of this approach is, according to Lavenex, that networks comprise an alternative mode of governance that allow rule transfer without the strict application of conditionality. Network governance, hence, sometimes might be a suitable alternative in contrast to hierarchical forms of traditional foreign policy-making and it should not be ignored when observing adaptation and rule transfer. However, Lavenex also emphasises that the applied modes and their effects differ tremendously according to policy sector, and that these new forms of governance can also easily be hampered by hierarchical structures and traditional foreign policy aims, if they are opposing the latter.

In a follow-up project, Lavenex and Schimmelfennig (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig 2009) assess that EU rules are increasingly expanded to the near abroad, and that external governance plays a decisive role. However, they also again emphasise that the effectiveness of rule transfer is sector-specific and highly differential, especially when compared to the processes and dynamics of the Eastern enlargement. Hence to be able to generalise, Lavenex and Schimmelfennig draw their conclusions on a number of case studies where different authors assess the mode and effectiveness of external governance in different issue areas (see Special issue of the Journal of

European Public Policy 16(6), and for example on democratic governance see Freyburg, Lavenex, Schimmelfennig, Skripka & Wetzel 2009).

This latter research model is applied to ENP partner countries, however its results focus mainly on the modes, instruments and impact of EU policy-making towards the near abroad, and hence these articles do not tell us explicitly what the ENP changed in terms of interaction at the EU level. In another research article, Lavenex, Lehmkuhl and Wichman concluded that sectoral governance seems indeed more in line with sectoral logic, and they even suggest that the macro-institutional design of frameworks like the ENP do not have any impact on (the success of) EU rule transfer at all (Lavenex, Lehmkuhl & Wichmann 2009). This conclusion allows us to draw different assumptions in regard of the ENP actors: On the one hand, we could assume that the actors are always the same across the different frameworks, so that mistakes and shortcomings are replicated and therefore cause the same impact in different countries. This would imply for the ENP that it was set-up according to other existing schemes, or that its set-up was used as a model for other frameworks (whereas the first option seems more likely). On the other hand, we could assume that the actors' involvement differs across frameworks, but that either their output is quite similar (ie it does not matter for the EU output which actors are involved), or that the EU output in the end does not matter for the impact on the ground, as there are other more important, probably EU external factors that explain the (failure of) impact on the ground. These assumptions allow for totally new research questions and therefore it is very difficult to answer them even partly in this thesis. However, it draws our attention to the fact that we can not just analyse the ENP as a whole, but that we have to be sensitive for differences across sectors and policies. In addition, those research results also emphasise an implicit assumption of this thesis: that we have to analyse EU foreign policy-making from a pluralist approach that highlights that it is not only member states who determine EU foreign policy-making. This is also in line with one of the basic assumptions of the governance turn in EU studies that policy-making influence is not only in the hand of the national governments but spread across different levels (Marks, Hooghe & Blank 1996; Jachtenfuchs 2001).

However, while the majority of this strand of the literature focuses on the impact dimension, there is one exception that takes into account the involved actors and their interests in setting up the ENP. Judith Kelley (Kelley 2006) identifies in her article primarily rational, bureaucratic power reasons to explain why the Commission proposed exactly this set-up of the ENP. According to her research results, former officials from DG enlargement were shifted to the new ENP units within DG Relex during the planning and setup stage of the ENP what lead to an automatic taking over of many enlargement instruments, as those functionaries had experienced them as successful in their previous tasks. Furthermore, Kelley shows quite convincingly that the Commission proposed this new form of policy-making towards the neighbours to keep its

successful position after enlargement also in external relations (Kelley 2006; for similar argumentation see Smith, M. E. & Weber 2007: 10).

In the scientific literature this linkage between the Eastern enlargement process and the ENP is often used to compare the success of the two processes and to investigate to what extent EU external governance is also effective in neighbouring third countries. There is extensive research on the similarities and differences in terms of aims, instruments and impact on the ground between enlargement and the ENP, but the salience of and the link to the institutional dimension is hardly taken into account. However, we have to assume that relations with neighbouring countries follow a different logic and are related to different national interests of member states than enlargement dynamics.

This for example shows in regard of the missing membership perspective: Scholars who just too easily extend enlargement to the ENP perceive the missing carrot of an accession perspective as the only difference between ENP and the enlargement process, which in their line of argument is strong enough to make the ENP fail. Membership is here perceived as an incentive, ie an instrument that can be used to convince countries to reform in a certain way. This assumption, however, blurs an important difference: While enlargement follows the clear aim of transforming (potential) candidates to EU members, the relations with neighbouring countries seems much more driven by a foreign policy approach where actors try to either shape the policy-making environment in a positive and favourable manner, or to make other actors act in line with their own interests (Wolfers 1962). Hence, although the applied instruments during enlargement and ENP might be the same, the final goals differ. During the enlargement process there was no general debate among member states or between member states and other EU institutions anymore about the final outcome of enlargement. There might have been disagreement about details or timetables, but the general direction was set. In EU foreign policy-making and also in the relations towards the EU neighbours this thesis will show that there seems to be general agreement that the EU shall work closer with willing partners, but that for the rest there are still various ideas and plans of how to achieve this and what the final aims should be.

In my view, this not presupposed final goal of the ENP alters the dynamics within this policy framework in such a way that it makes it very difficult to compare it to enlargement. Furthermore, we have to be careful not just to take over presupposed assumptions from a comparative mode of EU public policy-making (where I would also include enlargement research) and impose them on ENP research, but we have to carefully adapt these concepts to complement traditional foreign policy analysis. Hence, although the ENP does not include the perspective of accession what creates critical reluctance of some third countries, I fully agree with Moschella (2006: 161) that such a comparison is misleading. The final goal of the ENP is

not accession and integration, but creating stability and security for EU citizens by supporting economic and political reforms in the neighbourhood (GAERC 2007: 2).

1.2.2. ENP compared to existing relationships

The second strand of the academic literature mainly compares the newly established ENP framework with already existing EU relations towards the East and the South. To the East, the enlargement in 2004 made it necessary to think about creating closer links with newly bordering countries. The European Union now shares borders with Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, and through the Black Sea with Georgia as gate to the Southern Caucasus.

Research about third countries covered by the ENP has grown during the last ten years, but similar to the enlargement-strand these studies focus mainly on the impact and effectiveness of EU policies on the ground, or on the problems that can be identified (Aliboni 1996, 2005a, b; Aliboni & Ammor 2009; Baracani 2005; Benkö 2000; Cremona 2004; Del Sarto & Schumacher 2005; Gillespie 1997; Gomez 1998; Pardo & Zemer 2005; Reiterer 2009; Senyücel, Güner, Faath & Mattes 2006; Smith, K. E. 2005; Tiirmaa-Klaar 2006). Scholars traced that the initial idea for setting up the ENP arrived from the need to deal with the new neighbours in the East, but that also the dissatisfaction with the 1995 initiated, multilateral framework of the Barcelona process (also called Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, EMP) played a decisive role. The Barcelona process was perceived as moving (too) slow and as not delivering the desired results (Dannreuther 2006: 190). The multilateral framework of the EMP only allowed to follow the speed of the slowest member and did not allow more ambitious partners like Morocco or Israel to intensify their relations with the EU according to their individual interests.

Nevertheless, comparative analyses between ENP and EMP demonstrated (see among others Del Sarto & Schumacher 2005; Kelley 2006) that the single multilateral framework of the EMP was used as a template for the ENP. But instead of providing a multilateral framework the single setup was used to bring together all bilateral relations between the EU and its partners. The ENP differs from the EMP in its more positive approach to conditionality and its application of a benchmarking system, as this differentiated and bilateral approach allows the European Union to reward well-behaving partner countries³. Del Sarto and Schumacher (2005: 22) furthermore argue that within the ENP framework the EU interests are more clearly defined than within the EMP: safe external borders, security and stability for European citizens are the final goals of the ENP, while the support of social, political and economic welfare in partner

³ In the recently published progress reports the Commission announced that it will intensify cooperation with Ukraine, Israel, Moldova and Morocco as these partners “*have shown particular ambition and capacity*” (Winn & Lord 2001)

countries is perceived as the instrument to reach the final goals. In addition, these scholarly comparisons demonstratively show which EMP shortcomings have been tackled by the ENP framework. However, these studies do not investigate what the adaptation meant for the actors at European level, although it must be emphasised that the ENP officially is not meant to substitute the EMP but is designed as “complementary” policy. I assume, nevertheless, that it would be necessary to observe more closely to what extent the “old” EMP structures and the ENP units cooperate, and that it must not be overlooked that ENP is working quite differently from the still pillarised EMP. Furthermore, the dissatisfaction and disappointment with previous frameworks might be an interesting factor to take into account when analysing the motivations of the actors to set-up the ENP.

Summing up, these scholarly contributions comparing the ENP with previous relationships do not directly provide answer to the question about the internal dimension of the ENP, but later on in this thesis it will become clear that this research provides useful empirical material that feed the analysis. Only when we know how the EU relations with the neighbours worked before the ENP was set-up, we can investigate the supposed changes that were brought about by this new institutional framework.

1.2.3. ENP as comprehensive security approach to provide cross-pillar linkage

The third strand of research combines more current studies focusing on a comprehensive security approach and emphasises the cross-pillar mode of EU policy-making towards the outside world. While those research outputs are not directly investigating the ENP as an empirical case, they provide crucial assumptions about coherence and cross-pillar governance that help us to understand the single framework that was established with the ENP.

In 1993, the Treaty of Maastricht had formalised the clear separation of economic external relations that were dealt with in the former EC pillar (like common commercial policy, development policy) and the more politicised aspects of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. This separation of foreign policy-making at EU level in political and economic aspects has also been sustained in the scientific research for a very long time. Although several scholars asked for a comprehensive definition of EU Foreign Policy that encompasses EC external relations, CFSP as well as the national foreign policies of the member states (Hill 1993: 322), analysis and studies focused either on the EC external relations or on CFSP, their institutional set-up, their outputs, and their shortcomings. Research that questioned the intergovernmental-supranational divide was scarce (as pleasant exception see Winn & Lord 2001), and the application of a cross-pillar perspective was only recently incorporated into the research frameworks (see for example Pilegaard 2003, 2004; Stetter 2004, 2007). This development was on the hand, of course, influenced by evolving theoretical approaches within the International

Relations literature (i.e. merging of external/internal security issues, the definition of “governance” in contrast to “government”), but on the other hand it was also the actual emergence of “coherent” approaches or cross-pillar policies of the European Union towards third countries that made this scientific development necessary.

During the 1990s scholars used the formal pillarisation of the treaty as justification to look only at one part of the EU “*system of external relations*” (Hill 1993: 322), i.e. to analyse the external (economic) relations of the EC-pillar or the intergovernmental CFSP pillar (Wessel 2000: 1135), what in the end also did not allow to grasp the emerging interaction and the mutual linkage between the two forms of policy-making and their respective main actors. Cross-pillar perspectives have only recently been added to the research agenda, although this approach has not yet been explicitly applied to the ENP.

Theoretically, Michael Smith had already discussed the issue of “politicisation” and the linkage of policy areas across the pillars in 1998. He viewed the first pillar of the EU, and especially the external relations of the EC as agent of the actor EU and identified the process through which the external relations become politicised as the most crucial research question (Smith, M. 1998: 78)⁴. Winn and Lord (2001) choose the EU joint actions of Mostar, Dayton and the Southern Caucasus during 1996 and 1999 as case studies to analyse the interaction of European actors beyond the pillars in regard of foreign policy-making. They concluded that the European Commission does have a certain scope as policy entrepreneur in pillars two and three, but that its role highly depends on the extent of a-priori defined national preferences of EU member states and the level of information of other (national) actors.

Krause concluded with similar results, arguing that the EU-Africa relations became increasingly overlapping between external relations and political CFSP issues what allowed for “*a mutual influence of the central actors of the two pillars on each other’s policy output*” (Krause 2003: 222). In regard of the ENP it is interesting how Krause shows that the Commission intentionally used the argument of a comprehensive and coherent approach to strengthen its entrepreneurial position also in political issues.

The most extensive study on cross-pillar issues was so far conducted by Stetter who convincingly shows that functional linkages between policy areas allowed for a gradual integration also in the area of foreign policy-making (Stetter 2004: 735). However, it should explicitly be made clear that this form of integration is still distinct from first-pillar integration and that Stetter does not assume a communitarisation of CFSP issues. But the emerging cross-

⁴ In practice, during the following years a similar argument was made by critics about the incoherent EC development assistance and its weak use of political conditionality (Baratta 2002; Pocar 2002; Paasivirta & Rosas 2002). But apart from normative discussions about the use of conditionality there are only some legal analyses (Allen 1998: 44) about the overlap of external relations and CFSP provisions.

pillar setting, nevertheless, changes the interaction and the roles of the involved actors, what in the end leads to following phenomenon:

“One of the key insights from this analysis is that the main differentiation in EU foreign affairs is neither along the ‘pillar dimension’ nor on the often assumed ‘supranational’-‘intergovernmental’ divide – but rather on an actor dimension that cross-cuts the supranational-intergovernmentalist divide” (Stetter 2004: 733)

This research result links directly back to one of the underlying assumptions of the thesis: that the ENP not only brings together intergovernmental and supranational policies under one single framework, but that the latter allows for an alteration of the roles and interactions of the involved EU actors. Therefore, I assume that it is crucial for our understanding of the ENP to also investigate in more detail the changing interaction of the involved actors.

Next to the cross-pillarisation literature, the topic of blurring boundaries between internal and external policies increasingly caught the attention of scholars (for state of the art and outline for future research see Eriksson & Rhinard 2009). Empirically, those studies focused so far mainly on the European Security and Defence Policy (see for example Duke & Ojanen 2006) or more recently on the external dimension of Justice and Home Affairs (Trauner & Kruse 2008; Wichmann 2007a, b; Lavenex & Wichmann 2009). Especially the latter show the dilemma when “internal security concerns” clash with “external stabilisation needs”(Trauner & Kruse 2008). While also these studies do not primarily deal with the ENP, the investigated policy areas are of course also subsumed under the roof of the ENP, and contradictions in terms of aims of different policies can be expected. Furthermore, and for this thesis more relevant is, however, the question if those dilemmas are policy-specific, or if the understanding for different goals is also dependent on the involved actors (ie are certain actors more inclined to bridge those dilemmas in objectives, or do the involved actors not matter at all?).

While this strand of the academic literature does not deal primarily with the ENP, I argue that the reflection about their research results and their cross-pillar assumptions allow to consider interesting aspects of the EU actors’ interaction within the ENP that on the one hand have not been grasped until now and that on the other hand, are also crucial to understand certain aspects of how the ENP has been developed until now. As this thesis claims at a latter point, the claim for a “single framework” is the continuing quest to achieve coherence in EU foreign policy-making.

At this point, I want to highlight once more that the core motivation of this research project is not to analyse if the first or the second pillar (i.e. the supranational institutions or the member states) are more important for EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours, but to desist from this rigid pillar-separation and to look more closely what roles and tasks different actors

perform in foreign policy-making towards the neighbours, and how this separation of tasks changed over time and influenced the interaction of the respective actors.

This brief elaboration on the contribution of current academic research shows that we can build on these theoretical and empirical results that bring up valuable insights about questions to take into account. This short literature review, however, also shows that the current state of academic research does not provide an explicit investigation of the internal dimension of the ENP and the institutional change provided with its set-up. Hence, while it is crucial to link to these academic results, a more thorough analysis is indispensable to answer the research questions of this doctoral thesis.

1.3. A brief overview of the structure of this dissertation

After this brief outline of the main rationale of this thesis, the next chapter 2 will even more detailed elaborate on the links to the academic literature to also more clearly show the relevance of the here formulated research questions. The relevance is differentiated in three categories: Understanding the EU foreign policy-making system over time, assessing coherence, and investigating the nature of the EU as international actor. By linking to these wider strands in the literature, it is shown how the research questions contribute to these and to what extent the results of this thesis sketches out future research questions that might be interesting to investigate.

Chapter 3 moves then to set up the conceptual and theoretical framework of this thesis, and to discuss methodological challenges. The assumptions derived from the academic literature that have been taken before embarking on empirical research are discussed and elaborated upon, and the applied methods for data collection and analysis are critically presented.

After this conceptual reflections the following chapters present the empirical evidence to answer the research questions in a comprehensive manner and to reflect and discuss the assumptions elaborated upon at the first part of the thesis. Chapter 4 starts off by looking in detail into the set-up of the European Neighbourhood Policy, beginning from the first time the idea was flooded as “wider Europe initiative” and the agenda-setting, this part especially focuses on the policy specification stage when different proposals were put on the table and various amendments proposed. Furthermore, this chapter 4 presents in a more descriptive manner the formal establishment and set-up of the ENP, its goals and its instruments. This chapter provides the reader with the background knowledge that is needed to understand and follow the argumentation in the subsequent chapters.

The main research objective of this thesis is to assess how the set-up of the ENP changed the interaction of EU actors in EU policy-making towards the neighbourhood. To be able to do so, the point of reference has to be established, what is done in chapter 5. This subsequent chapter shows that the ENP did not establish the EU relationship with the neighbours from scratch, but that frameworks, agreements etc have already been set-up beforehand. It is also shown here that these arrangements were already much stronger and elaborated towards the South (especially within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership) than towards the East. The analysis of this chapter is relevant for the main research questions of this thesis as it shows the starting point upon which the ENP was build upon, highlights certain features that have also been relevant in the establishment of the ENP in terms of path-dependency and incrementalism, and also shows the different degree and intensity of EU relations with the South and the East.

Chapter 6 finally investigates in detail how EU policy is made towards the neighbourhood once the ENP has been set-up and is running. First the different EU actors under investigation are presented and briefly introduced, before the task allocation within the ENP is analysed within different policy stages and by referring by traditional tasks of national foreign policy bureaucracies. By looking at different stages of the policy cycle it is shown that actors perform different tasks throughout the policy process and that it is not only the member states that are crucial actors, although they are the ones being most prominent in the decision-making phase. By allowing for a comparison with chapter 5, it will be shown what changed and what practices stayed the same even within the ENP.

Chapter 7, finally, looks at the motivations to set-up the ENP, considering that a restructuring and reshuffling of tasks and competences always leads to unrest and even conflict. This was also visible in the ENP where the first ten months were marked by turf battles and conflicts between actors. However, the analysis in this chapter also shows that in terms of policy substance the different actors agree on the objectives that should be achieved, but that there is some disagreement, even within actors, of how those objectives can be best achieved.

The thesis concludes by returning to the main research questions and to the assumptions that had been developed in the theoretical framework, and it furthermore reflects on potential avenues for future research.

But for now as a next step, the relevance of the research focus is elaborated by linking the research questions to different strands of the broader academic debate. By doing so, I will also specify more clearly the focus of this research project.

Chapter 2: Relevance of the Research Question & Specification of the Research Approach

The research interest of this study about the changing interaction of the European actors in foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood is linked to several political debates and contributes to different strands of the academic literature. But why should we care who is involved in EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours? To what extent does it make a difference how the different actors are involved in the policy process? Why is the research question of this PhD project politically and scientifically relevant? Within this section I shortly outline the more general and fundamental socio-political implications of the research questions. I start by focusing briefly on the societal and political relevance, before elaborating in more depth on the scientific relevance and on the linkages of this study to academic research.

The **societal and political relevance** of the outlined research question is quite straight forward; the EU tries to find the best suitable way to establish a secure and stable neighbourhood, but repeated institutional adaptations and the continuous set-up of new policy frameworks leaves the impression that the EU is still not confident in the design of its relations with the neighbours. For nearly ten years the EU has emphasised the need to create a stable neighbourhood, and while there seems to be general agreement that stronger cooperation with the neighbours is needed, there is not much consensus about how this can be best achieved. Already in 2006, only two years after the ENP Strategy Paper (European Commission 2004b), the Commission published a follow up Communication entitled “Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy” (European Commission 2006f). This publication raised the suspicion that this was already the first attempt to rescue an unsuccessful policy initiative after only two years. Similar rhetoric accompanied the proposals of the Union for the Mediterranean and the Eastern Partnership. In 2008, the French presidency negotiated the establishment of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) which is supposed to be a re-launch of the in 1995 established Barcelona Process (for Joint Declaration establishing the UfM see Paris Summit 2008; for background see Whitman & Juncos 2009; Reiterer 2009; Aliboni & Ammor 2009), and just a few month later the idea for a Eastern Partnership (EaP) was brought up by Poland and Sweden and meant to intensify the EU relations with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine (see for example European Commission 2008a). While officially the Commission and the Member states emphasise the complementary character of these new frameworks towards the ENP, critics and observers also voiced the concern that the ENP single framework proved as not very successful and that it will in the end be replaced by these new initiatives.

These observations provide significance to the research question of this thesis in several ways. First of all, we have to question the link between institutional design, task allocation among actors, and the substance of the policy output. We should not assume beforehand that a change

in the institutional framework automatically alters the (role of) involved actors and/or the substance of the policy output, but different scenarios are possible (see Table 1).

If we can observe that a change in the institutional framework changes the substance of the policy output and at the same time changes the number/role of involved actors (scenario 1), the assumption seems plausible that it matters which EU actors are involved in EU policy-making, as different actors in the policy-making process alter the substance of the policy output. Hence, the restructuring of the EU foreign policy machinery in Brussels after the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, might for example also lead to a different EU foreign policy output.

In scenario 2, an altered institutional framework changes the substance of the policy output, but the number and/or the role of the involved EU actors does not change. If our empirical observations verify this scenario, we can assume that it actually does not matter who from the EU level is involved in EU foreign policy-making. The different institutional design then might alter the cooperation with the third country or take other factors into account that shape the policy output. This would, however, also imply that the reoccurring turf-battles in Brussels between Member States, Commission and Council Secretariat are obsolete, as the policy output does not change, no matter how the Brussels actors share tasks and competences. A similar conclusion can be drawn from scenario 3 where the institutional framework changes the number and/or role of involved EU actors, but the substance of the EU policy output stays the same.

Table 1: Relevance of Research question: linkage between institutional design, role of involved actors and substance of policy output

scenario	Institutional framework	Number / role of involved actors	Substance of policy output	What does this tell us?
1	change	change	change	Institutional framework changes content of EU policy-making, because it changes the tasks of the involved actors;
2	change	No change	change	Institutional framework changes content of EU policy-making, while not altering the involvement of actors; This implies that the diverse EU actors in the end pursue the same kind of policies (what would make the debate about the involvement of more intergovernmental or supranational elements dispensable);
3	change	change	No change	The institutional framework mainly impacts on the task allocation and the number of involved actors. While it changes the actors that give their input in EU policy-making, this does not alter the content of EU policy-making. This implies in addition to scenario 2 that the number and role of involved EU actors does not matter for the concrete content of output;
4	change	No change	No change	The institutional framework in itself does not impact on the number and role of involved EU actors, and does also not directly or indirectly alter the substance of EU policy output. This implies that if the EU would like to change/upgrade its relationship with a third country it is not enough to just change the institutional framework, but this change would also have to alter the (role of) involved EU actors;

Finally, in scenario 4 we assume that the institutional framework changes, but this does neither lead to an alteration of the number and/or role of involved EU actors nor to a change in the substance of the policy output. This would imply that to achieve a different policy output it is not enough for the EU to just alter the institutional framework, but that more profound (treaty) changes would be needed to establish, for example, a different kind of cooperation with the neighbours.

The research question of this thesis therefore relates smoothly to questions investigating the current changes introduced with the Lisbon Treaty. This latest treaty revision is based on the logic that for the EU to become a more prominent international actor it has to provide an increased single identity (or “single voice” as it is often called in the academic literature) at world stage. To get closer to this goal, the Lisbon Treaty mainly focuses on institutional changes to achieve coherence. The post of the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy that was established with the Treaty of Amsterdam is altered and became the post of the “High Representative for the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy”. The first office holder, Lady Catherine Ashton, is at the same time the Vice President of the European Commission and the Commissioner of the respective Directorate General, DG Relex⁵. Having the same actors involved in different aspects of EU foreign policy-making shall ensure a coherent and effective actorness of the international actor EU. The same logic is also adhered to the set-up of the European External Action Service (EEAS) that is currently under negotiation and supposed to be running latest beginning of 2011.

Investigating if the ENP was in the end able to create a single framework and if this changed the interaction and roles of the different actors, will allow us to deduct certain general assumptions about how institutional changes (e.g. of the Lisbon Treaty) might impact more generally on EU foreign policy-making. The new cross-pillar post of the High Representative as well as the EEAS seem on a broader level to duplicate what was argued for in regard of the ENP in 2003/04, and it is interesting to assess what generalisations of this research project we might also expect to observe in the near future about EU foreign policy-making in more general terms.

From an **academic point of view**, this thesis builds mainly on political science and International Relations as the core disciplines, but also (sub-)disciplines such as public administration, comparative politics, and European Studies are taken into account. By linking the research questions to these different strands and by discussing some crucial already established concepts I want to further specify my research interest, limit the focus of research and show in what way this research project adds to different aspects of the scientific discussion. This will be done in

⁵ See Council Website about the new post of the HR, or also newly established Website of the European External Action Service: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showpage.aspx?id=1847&lang=en> or <http://eeas.europa.eu/>

three steps. *First*, this thesis contributes to the understanding of the complex system of EU foreign policy-making. The development of the ENP has to be put into perspective in terms of time, by perceiving the development of the ENP framework as one instance of the constant adaptation of the EU foreign policy-making system. Furthermore, by referring to distinctions drawn from Foreign Policy Analysis (output vs. outcome, routine decision-making vs. history-making decisions) the research focus is more narrowly specified. *Secondly*, the concepts of coherence and consistency lie at the core of this thesis, and the application of these more general concepts to EU policy-making towards the neighbourhood provides empirical and analytical refinements to the concepts themselves. And *finally*, the research questions of this thesis relates closely to the academic debate about the EU as an international actor.

2.1. Understanding the EU Foreign Policy-making System over Time

The research question about the changing interaction of EU actors in making policies towards the EU neighbours contributes most obviously to the understanding of how foreign policy is made at EU level, how these processes might have changed over time, and how they are distinct or similar to EU foreign policy-making towards other partners. Furthermore, in more analytical terms, this research adds to European integration theories (Intergovernmentalism, role of supranational actors, governance approaches) as well as to EU foreign policy analysis. In regard of the latter, it contributes to the understanding of the role of bureaucracies in foreign policy-making, and also relies on certain distinctions like output/outcome or different forms of decisions.

2.1.1. Contributing to European Integration Research and EU Governance

EU policy-making in general, and EU foreign policy-making in particular is often described as a complex and not easily comprehensible process with lots of different actors involved. The EU comprises a peculiar political system, ranging between a traditional form of the federal state and an international organisation. And also the way policies are conducted within this system is often difficult to grasp with traditional theoretical scientific tools. Hence, for some time scholars had argued to treat the EU as a political system *sui generis* (Kohler-Koch & Eising 1999: 3), with a structure and form of policy-making that is different to the way nation states are set-up and conduct policies. Linked to this assumption is the “N=1” problem for scientific research, implying that research about the European Union has to be specific and treated differently, as theories and methods have to be adopted accordingly and EU studies are difficult to compare with traditional results from state-centred International relations or comparative politics research.

In general terms, a long standing discussion has taken place within the European integration literature about who the pivotal actors in European Union policy-making are (for an overview see Diedrichs & Wessels 2006: 209-213; Matlary 1997). Liberal intergovernmentalists assume that the key actors within the European Union are the member states, and that supranational institutions like the European Commission only provide administrative assistance to overcome cooperation problems (Moravcsik 1993) but that they are constantly under the control of the member states. In contrast, neo-functionalist scholars (see among others Schmitter 1969) perceive the supranational institutions as active and autonomous actors in shaping EU policies. In their view, the expertise of the European Commission and its assumed representation of the European interest legitimate possible spill over effects from other policy areas. Since the 1980s neo-institutionalist principal-agent approaches joined this discussion, got further elaborated (Kassim & Menon 2003; Pierson 1996, 1998; Pollack 1997, 1998, 2003) and settled between these two extreme positions of intergovernmentalism and neo-functionalism. Additionally, there was also a shift in theoretical discussions in regard of European integration, moving from the traditional dispute between intergovernmentalism and supranationalism to the assumptions of a multi-level governance approach (Hooghe & Marks 2003; Marks, Hooghe & Blank 1996; Jachtenfuchs 2001).

However, especially during the last ten years, European integration scholars call for interdisciplinary and comparative research, claiming that the EU might be special but not totally different, and that comparison with other regions/institutions and the use of concepts and theories from other (sub)disciplines might provide useful insights and support the development of theoretical and methodological challenges for research (Hix 1998; Caporaso 1998; for a concise summary of arguments for/against this assumption see Caporaso, Marks, Moravcsik & Pollack 1997; for a similar reflection about the EU as Westphalian, regulatory or post-modern state see Caporaso 1996).

During the last years the shift to a governance approach emphasised that the EU has not acquired the institutional requirements and the sovereignty comparable to traditional nation states, but that it is able to perform public policies that are similar to those of a nation-state (Richardson 1996: 3, cited by White 1999: 48). The question remains to what extent this assumption also applies to EU policies with external character. Furthermore, several scholars (Pollack 1997; Tallberg 2002; Kassim & Menon 2003; Pollack 1998, 2003) have developed a principal-agent approach to public policy-making of the European Union, and although it is often stated that this framework does not apply to CFSP or the third pillar (Justice and Home Affairs) it will be interesting to analyse if similar mechanisms and processes can be examined in more integrated external policies like the ENP. Of course the peculiarities of foreign policies

have to get incorporated in such an analytical framework, but nevertheless interesting observations can be expected.

These more current theoretical approaches have never extensively been applied to EU foreign policy-making (as above discussed, exceptions are e.g. Krause 2003; Stetter 2004, 2007) it was still argued that foreign policy is different than public policies and that these approaches would not be appropriate to be applied to EFP. I agree that foreign policy is different in certain aspects compared to other public policies. Foreign policy is much more executive-orientated (Stetter 2004: 722), what, however, at European level normally points to a pivotal role of the Commission. On the other hand it has to be kept in mind, that irrespective of the change in interaction and the involvement of supranational actors, it is still the member states that decide unanimously. Nevertheless I assume that with a critical adaptation of these theoretical approaches to the respective differences, the underlying mechanisms and causal relations can also explain certain dynamics in the change of EU actors' interaction.

However, especially during the first ten years after the Maastricht Treaty, research about EU foreign policy-making and the EU as an international actor has still primarily been the prerogative of scholars from the field of International Relations, and cooperation between scholars of EU public policy-making and EU foreign policy-making was rare. Intergovernmentalism was the main approach and CFSP assessed as special case. This neatly reflected the way EU foreign policy has been set-up and perceived in reality since the Treaty of Maastricht.

For decades, the preservation of national sovereignty had been the most prominent argument against the incorporation of foreign policy issues at European level. In the 1950s several attempts (e.g. the European Political Community, the Fouchet Plans for closer political but intergovernmental cooperation) had been launched for foreign policy integration or at least to allow a closer coordination of foreign policies at European level (Smith, M. E. 1998: 304). The European Defence Community, modelled after the Plevén plans, aimed at the creation of a pan-European defence force, but because of sovereignty concerns the French national assembly rejected the idea in 1954. In 1970, however, the European Political Cooperation (EPC) was established as an intergovernmental forum outside of the framework of the European Economic Community to coordinate foreign policies of the EEC members. The Single European Act incorporated this informally introduced European Political Cooperation (EPC) within the EEC-framework, but policies and institutions were still clearly separated (Hix 1999: 341-342). Hence, until the Treaty of Maastricht innovations were primarily meant to improve the cooperation and coordination of national foreign policies of the member states.

In contrast to these efforts to coordinate political issues of national foreign policies more closely, the Rome Treaty, however, had already covered three economic areas that had a strong external impact. *First*, the common market of the European Community also asked for a common customs system towards the outside world, which was the main focus of the Common Commercial Policy. *Secondly*, already at this time the Community had the competence to conclude trade, cooperation or association agreements with third countries (Piening 1997: 169-191). And *thirdly*, the EC had the power to cooperate on issues of economic policies with international organisations like for example the United Nations (Smith, K. 2003: 34; Piening 1997: 13-20). Hence, before the Maastricht Treaty, there was a clear separation between economic external policies and political external issues: the former were pursued at supranational EC-level, while the latter were coordinated and discussed in the intergovernmental framework of the EPC.

With the end of the Cold War, the Gulf crisis and the civil war in Yugoslavia among other events, important changes in the international arena took place. In addition to these external factors, also a debate among the members of the European Communities started off about the need to establish a real “political Union” that would also allow for a more effective cooperation in foreign policy issues. While some member states still strictly refused to integrate foreign policy issues, others criticised the inadequacy of the EPC. At last, the compromise between these two different positions was the Treaty of Maastricht, where the EPC was incorporated as the second pillar within the institutional framework of the EU and renamed to the “Common Foreign and Security Policy” (CFSP). In contrast to the first EC pillar, however, this second pillar remained purely intergovernmental, what meant that member states remained the main actors, the Commission was only associated but did not have its right of initiative, and there was no judicial oversight of the European Court of Justice. Through this pillarisation, the already earlier established separation between external economic policies and external political policies got institutionalised.

In line with this pillarisation, Christopher Hill argued already in 1993 that it is more useful not to speak of a “European Foreign Policy”⁶ but that the term EU “*system of external relations*” (1993: 322) is better suitable to represent the three included decentralized strands of EU foreign policy since the Maastricht Treaty. It comprises the sum of national policies of the member states, the second and intergovernmental pillar of CFSP and thirdly, the external relations of the European Community (EC), represented especially by the European Commission within the policy areas of trade, aid and development (White, Brian cited by Smith, K. 2003: 2, 217; See

⁶ ‘European Foreign Policy’ is in the literature often used interchangeably with EU Foreign Policy, especially when it refers to foreign policy-making before the existence of the EU. Also in this thesis “European Foreign Policy” will just be used as substitute for EU Foreign Policy, and there is no difference in meaning implied;

also Becher 2004: 345; White 1999: 46-47)⁷. Already before the Maastricht Treaty established a political Union, the relations with developing countries were profoundly shaped by the EU development policies and its assistance programmes in third countries, in regard of which the EU was always proud to announce that it was and is, together with its member states, the most important donor of development and humanitarian aid. Under the heading of external relations, there is nowadays nearly no country with whom the EU does not have a special agreement to specify cooperation and common interests. The EU is, together with the United States, the most important trade bloc in the world, and many countries are influenced by its external trade policies. At the same time the CFSP has developed considerably since its institutionalisation in 1993, and since 1999 the EU also developed the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Within the framework of the latter, new bureaucratic bodies and institutional units were set-up, and already in 2003, the EU started to run its first civilian and military missions (for more background on ESDP see among others Howorth 2005; Vanhoonacker, Dijkstra & Maurer 2010). Policies are conducted differently within these three strands, and especially between CFSP and EC external relations different modes of policy-making exist.

External Trade is a field of exclusive competence of the European Union under the Common Commercial Policy, which gives a very strong role to the European Commission (Art. 207 TFEU, ex-Art 133 TEC). The framework for implementation is defined by the European Parliament and the Council, acting under the ordinary legislative procedure, and agreements with third countries or international organisations are recommended by the Commission, who receives then an authorisation and a mandate from the Council. The negotiations itself are negotiated by the Commission, monitored by a special committee and the European Parliament.⁸ Humanitarian aid and development cooperation, on the contrary, fall under “shared parallel competences” (or also called “mixed competences”, see Art. 2-6 TFEU for list of competences) since the Lisbon Treaty, implying that these EU policies are complementary to the development policies of member states. The European Parliament and the Council again set the framework for implementing this policy, while the Commission is responsible for the project implementation and evaluation and monitoring (Art. 208-211 TFEU).

CFSP on the other hand is kept separate, also in terms of the treaty text where it is not together with the other external policies part of Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (the

⁷ While the Lisbon Treaty formally abolishes the three pillars, the use of Hill’s term seems still accurate: CFSP is incorporated within the EU framework, but in terms of content the Lisbon Treaty does not allow for profound changes. At the same time, the first dimension of Hill’s categorisation, the foreign policies of the member states, is absolutely untouched by the changes of the Lisbon Treaty. Furthermore, the timeframe of this research is roughly from 2000-2007, hence the changes of the Lisbon Treaty do not apply to this research focus.

⁸ The Lisbon Treaty did not change the provisions on the common commercial policy considerably. Only the involvement of the European parliament in setting up the framework for implementation and monitoring the Commission during negotiations together with the ex-133-committee is new.

former Treaty establishing the European Community) but outlined under Treaty on European Union. Despite the abolition of pillars with the Lisbon Treaty, policies under this former second pillar are still kept intergovernmental, with predominantly unanimous decision-making⁹ in the Council. The Commission and the European Parliament have an “associated” but limited role, and the European Court of Justice does not have jurisdiction of this policy area, in which formally also no legislation can be passed. Since the Maastricht Treaty, the main instruments of the CFSP were joint actions, common positions, and common strategies, all of which are now renamed to “decisions”. The Lisbon Treaty mainly brought two changes to the area of CFSP: The European Council is now formally responsible for defining general interests and objectives, what it already did beforehand without a formal treaty provision. Furthermore, the post of the HR is slightly renamed to “High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy”, who is at the same time the Commissioner for External Relations and shall in the future be supported by a newly established European External Action Service (EEAS).

Since the Maastricht Treaty, two different developments can be observed in EU foreign policy-making: the CFSP as well as the EC external policies increased remarkably. During the last 15 years the CFSP evolved considerably in terms of institutional organisation as well as in terms of policy output (Nuttall 2000; Smith, M. E. 1998, 2004a; Duke & Vanhoonacker 2006; Smith, M. E. 2004b; Christiansen & Vanhoonacker 2008; Dijkstra 2008; for a concise overview of developments in the European Security and Defence Policy see for example Mérand 2008; Vanhoonacker, Dijkstra & Maurer 2010). Officials of the member states got used to the different CFSP working groups (Juncos & Pomorska 2006), the Political and Security Committee quickly found its new role within the policy cycle (Juncos & Reynolds 2007; Duke 2005), and more generally, the member states learnt how to work within the CFSP framework..

But the CFSP pillar also increased in terms of policy output. As figure 1 shows, the quantity of CFSP instruments (decisions, common positions and common actions) increased steadily (see also Smith, M. E. 2004a: 51), especially with joint actions establishing ESDP missions since 2003.

⁹ With the treaty revision of Amsterdam member states could also decide with majority when their policies are based on a Common Strategy, like it is the case in the Mediterranean policy since 2000.

Figure 1: Number of EU common actions and positions, 1970-2004

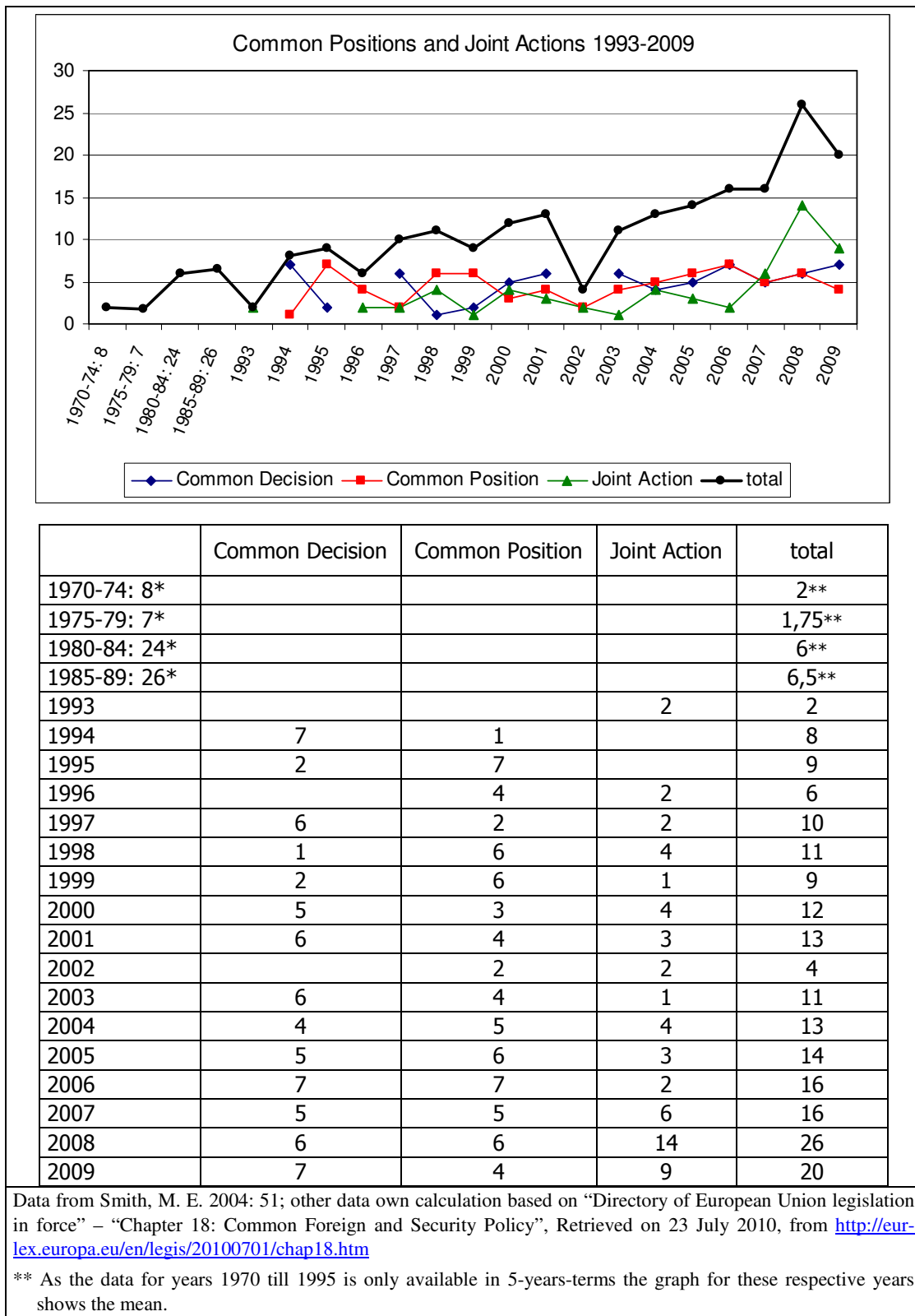


Figure 2: EC expenditure for „external action“ in % of general budget, 1982 – 2004
(data from European Commission 2009: 78-82 , own graph)

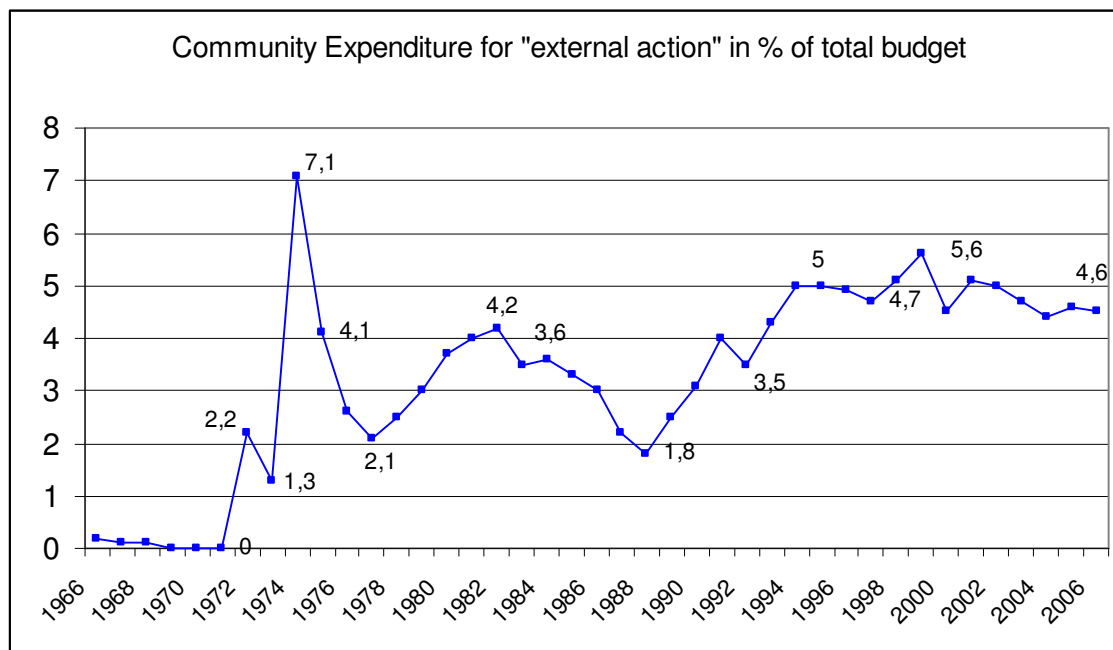
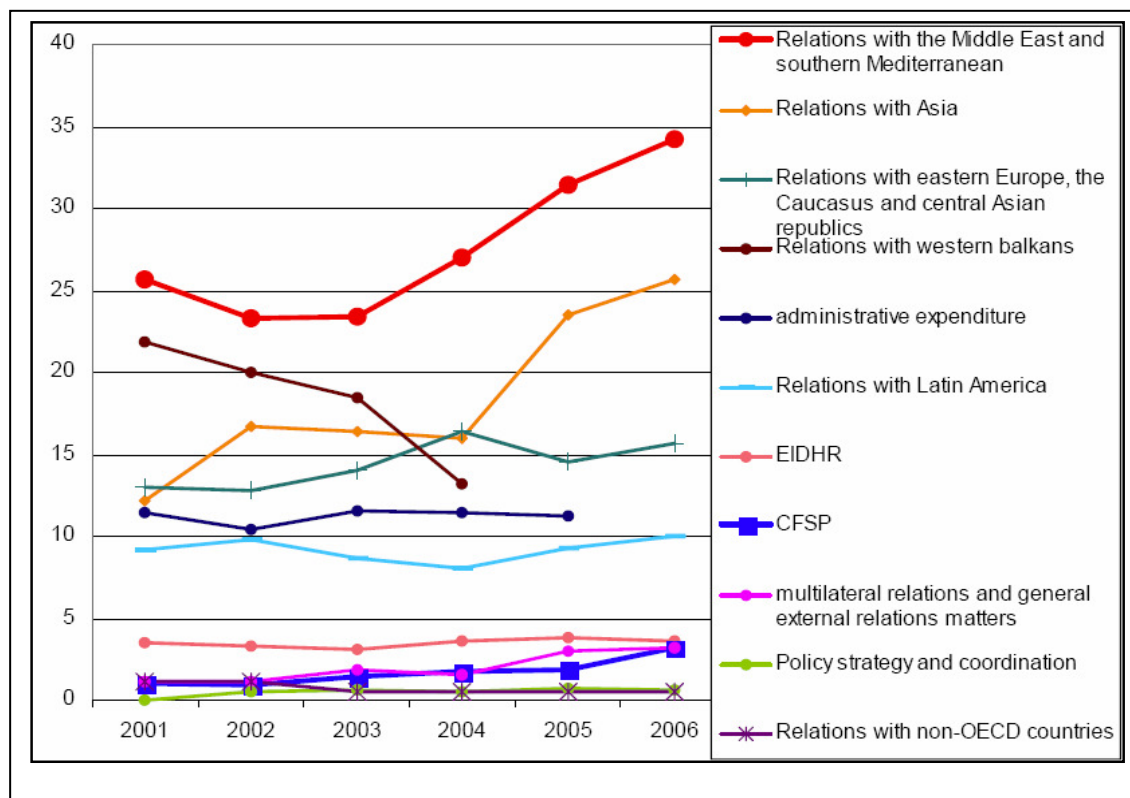


Figure 3: Proportional EC expenditure for “external actions” in subheadings, 2001- 2006
(data see Annex)



In regard of this strong development of the CFSP pillar some scholars argued that since the Maastricht Treaty the intergovernmental character of foreign policy at European level has got institutionalised, and that if anything such as a EU Foreign Policy (EFP) ever evolves, it does so within the intergovernmental CFSP. In their view the member states and their representations in Brussels are the decisive actors in EU foreign policy-making, supported by the CFSP institutions to overcome cooperation problems. Hence, they define EFP primarily through CFSP as the direct continuation of the EPC, i.e. the coordination of national foreign policies. They would explain the increase of the EU budget for the heading “external relations” as presented in figure 2 by claiming that it is mainly the growth of the second pillar that explains this development.

However, figure 3 shows the share of different subheadings within the budget line “external relations” and contradicts the assessment that the budget for external relations increased because of CFSP development. It shows that the share of CFSP expenditure within the external relation heading did not increase dramatically. In 2001 only 1% of the total EC budget for external actions was spent on CFSP what increased marginally in 2003 (1,4%), 2004 (1,8%), 2005 (1,9%) to 3,2% in 2006. The figure also shows that the emphasis of EC expenditure lies with the European neighbourhood, i.e. the relations with the Middle East and Southern Mediterranean and with Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and the Central Asian republics. The current financial framework 2007-2013 allocates 49.463 million EUR to the heading “EU as a global player” which is 5,7% of the total appropriated EU budget for this timeframe (European Parliament, Council of the European Union & European Commission 2006: 83).

It was, therefore, not only the second CFSP pillar that grew steadily over time, but also EC external relations developed further, leading also to an increasing involvement of supranational actors in regular policy-making towards third countries. Policies like the TACIS-programme towards Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the MEDA-Programme towards the Euro-Mediterranean partner countries, or development cooperation programmes have also been increasingly pursued within the first EC-pillar during the last ten to twenty years (Hix 1999: 345-346; Smith, M. 2006: 313).

At a later point in this thesis it will be shown that the ENP is supposed to overcome the pillarisation and to unite the different policies with external dimensions within one framework. However, does this mean that the different policy-making processes are just added up, or does this single ENP framework also change something in the processes of how policies are conducted towards the neighbours? This is one of the central question to which this thesis is contributing to, with the aim to contribute in a more descriptive manner to the understanding of how policies at EU level are conducted towards the neighbours, and how this might have changed over time.

With a more analytical intention in mind, this thesis is, however, also relevant to add to the discussion about who the most important actors are in EFP making towards the neighbours and about what roles different actors fulfil. As this brief outline above about different forms of EU foreign policy-making has shown, there is a number of actors involved, and their competences differ between policy areas. The RELEX-family of the Commission consists of DG Relex (External Relations), DG Development, DG Trade, DG Enlargement, DG Aidco (EuropeAid), as well as the humanitarian aid office ECHO¹⁰. Furthermore, units with an external dimension are also situated in other DGs, as for example in DG Agri, DG JLS etc. Next to these actors situated in Brussels, there are, of course, the member states as single actors, but also as a collective in the different Council formations and the Presidency. The treaty revision of Amsterdam also created new institutions within the second pillar. The Secretary-General of the Council took over the post of the High Representative for the CFSP (HR) who assists the Council in the formulation, preparation and implementation of CFSP-related decisions. Furthermore, the Presidency can request the HR to represent the Council in political dialogues with third parties. In close cooperation with the HR, the also newly established policy planning and early warning unit within the General Secretariat of the Council is meant to assist the member states by monitoring potential political crisis situations, analysing international development, assessing future areas of action, or even producing policy option papers for the Council (for general introduction to EU foreign policy making within the different pillars see Hill & Smith 2005; Keukeleire & MacNaughtan 2008) And although the European Parliament does not have much influence in foreign policy issues, it has also its own view and priorities that it primarily tries to support through its budgetary competences.

These different actors often share common views about certain policies, but at the same time they also have their own national or bureaucratic interests and their own perceptions about how a special policy should be pursued. Therefore, over time, a quite complex system of competences, legitimacies and interaction has evolved which is, of course, also exposed to constant pressure for change and adaptation. To investigate the network of actors in EU policy-making towards neighbouring countries, their positions, interests, competences but also perceptions is the wider rationale behind this thesis.

Both above described approaches of intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism may have a point, i.e. that the policy output of the EC external relations as well as of the CFSP increased at the same time. It is therefore not enough to analyze the CFSP and its political instruments solely when looking at EU foreign policy-making. Karen Smith warned that “*foreign policy is not just the product of the CFSP pillar*” (Smith, K. 2003: 2; for an analysis of the influence of the

¹⁰ Since the Lisbon Treaty, ECHO is also responsible for civil protection.

Commission on CFSP see also Krause 2003: 222), while Michael Smith goes still a step further and suggests “*to focus on the CFSP alone is fundamentally distorting, and leads us to exclude less dramatic but more consequential developments*” (Smith, M. 1998: 78; for similar conclusions see Smith, M. 2001: 787). Smith even argues that the EU can only be perceived as a foreign policy actor by analyzing the external economic policies of the first pillar, as only in this area strategic action is performed (Smith, M. 1998: 78).¹¹

It is, however, also indispensable not only to observe an increase in policy quantity but also to more carefully examine the interactions between the actors, because we must not automatically assume that these processes have remained the same since 1993. Hence, the question behind the research question of this thesis is not if the first or the second pillar is more active in foreign policy-making, or – speaking in theoretical terms – if foreign policy-making at European level is primarily intergovernmental or supranational. The core contribution of this research project is to desist from this rigid pillar-separation and to look more critically, if and how during the last fifteen years the interaction between the actors and the policy process changed, and what roles different actors performed at different points in time.

The second part of the research question about the reasons for a potential change in interaction relates to similar analyses about implementation processes or institutional change in the European integration literature. Why do member states delegate certain tasks to other actors or institutions, when it is quite logical to assume that these agents do not fully implement the decisions of their principals, i.e. the member states, but also impose their own interpretations of a “good” policy or their own institutional interests? What implications does the delegation not only have for the policy process itself, but also for the policy content? And if, as critiques often complain, there are no clearly formulated European interests, which goals do the European institutions pursue otherwise?

These kind of questions the thesis relates to, even if they are not the main focus of research and it will not always be possible to answer them completely, but at least the research findings of this thesis will allow for certain reflections and assumptions that might lead to future research. However, the research question of this thesis not only relates to European integration research, but also to more traditional Foreign Policy Analysis.

¹¹ This assumption is highly questioned by Dave Allen who argues that neither the Commission nor CFSP have the ability to control their own area of competences (Missiroli 2001: 178-182).

2.1.2. Contributing to Foreign Policy Analysis

Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) is a subdiscipline located between IR and comparative politics that aims to understand and explain how certain foreign policies emerge and are shaped within different actors (i.e. normally states). Within FPA there are three debates that help to specify the focus of this research project more clearly. First of all, FPA clearly differentiates between output and outcome:

“An ‘output’ refers to whatever the foreign policy machine does in the world – make a statement or give aid, for example. An ‘outcome’ is what happens as a result of it – general condemnation of the statement, or relief to the sufferers of famine, for instance.” (Clarke & Smith 1994: 172; for similar definition see Haftendorn 1990: 404)¹²

This thesis focuses primarily on the EU foreign policy *output* towards the neighbourhood, but does not take into account the outcome of EU Foreign Policy, i.e. the effectiveness of EU policies in the respective third countries. The selected countries are primarily research objectives for analysing how interaction and foreign policy-making works on EU level, but they are not the focus of my research. They are only interesting for this research in that far, as EU Foreign Policy is directed towards them and as different EU actors might pursue different interests or strategies to achieve the generally defined common goals towards these countries. The most ideal research design would, of course, take both into account, and check for certain feedback loops that a potential outcome on the ground might have on the decision-making and outcome at EU level (i.e. to what extent problems in the implementation on the ground might change the policy position of different actors in Brussels). However, comparing the output of EU foreign policy-making in Brussels with the outcome on the ground in the third country comprises a totally different research question and hence also a different research design, what would open the scope of this research too far. Hence, this thesis focuses on the EU policy output in Brussels (for a very good study about the effectiveness of European Foreign Policy see Ginsberg 2001). There is a well-elaborated bulk of literature that investigates foreign policy-making of nation-states, and adopting some of these concepts to the European Union might allow to clarify if these concepts are really only applicable to states or could also be used for other international actors.

¹² This is the common differentiation between output and outcome in FPA; However, in EU integration studies, also a different differentiation exists by Héritier who differentiates between *output*, *outcome* and *impact*. According to Héritier, policy *outputs* are the result of the policy formulation stage, defined as the content of the formal political decision-making; The implementation of the policy outputs leads to short and medium term programme results and institutional adaptations, which together are defined as policy *outcomes*. The long-term implications of these outcomes change the status-quo, what is then finally defined as the policy *impact* (Windhoff-Héritier 1980). Héritier differentiates more closely between outcome and impact, what in the definition above is not taken into account and just subsumed under “outcome”. As the latter, is not the focus of this thesis, this more detailed definition does not seem necessary.

Second, a clear distinction of different forms of policy decisions seems useful to more narrowly specify the research focus. Categorised according to political importance and the available time Haftendorn (Haftendorn 1990: 403-404) differentiates three types of decisions in foreign policy-making¹³:

1. long-term strategy decisions: no pressure of time, strategies and concepts for future problem-solving elaborated by special working groups, policy innovations are possible and probable;
2. routine decisions: moderate political importance and less pressure of time; no involvement of high politicians or special planning units; decided on working level by lower bureaucrats, often “standard operational procedure”;
3. crisis decisions: high-pressure of time and politically vitally important; often societal values involved, decided by high politicians.

There is also a similar differentiation from the EU context that seems useful: Peterson and Bomberg (Peterson & Bomberg 1999: 10) categorise EU decision making in history-making, policy-setting, and policy-shaping decisions that take place on different levels (super-systemic, system, and sub-systemic). History-making decisions are mainly related to treaty changes, involve the Heads of States and governments, and are highly political. At the system level, policy-setting decisions are taken by the member states (mostly in the Council) to agree on common policies that should be pursued. At the subsystem level, they argue that policy-shaping decisions are taken by a variety of subnational, bureaucratic and supranational actors that specify the agreed policy-setting decisions, that try to influence Council members from the system level and that create transnational networks and epistemic communities.

Most FPA studies focus on crisis decision-making, although this type of decisions represents just one form of foreign policy decisions while routine-decision making is especially present in day-to-day politics in terms of implementing and must not be neglected:

“foreign policy actions cannot be understood without an appreciation of their implementation phase, which is at least as important as that of decision-making, given that outcomes are so often markedly different from original intentions” (Hill 2003: 51)

This predominant focus in the literature on crisis decision-making, however, distorts the generalisation of results to a certain extent, as it overemphasises the importance of highly political actors (who are more involved in crisis decision than the other two forms) and downplays the engagement of more bureaucratic actors. Interestingly enough, also bureaucratic politics approaches (Allison 1971; Hilsman 1993; Allison & Zelikow 1999; Allison & Halperin 1972) focus often on crisis decisions, although crisis decisions are rather least-likely cases for this kind of approach: bureaucratic politics emphasises the importance of bureaucratic units

¹³ The categories of Haftendorn were translated from German; The original categories are “Planungsentscheidungen”, “Routineentscheidungen” and “Krisenentscheidungen”;

within the decision making process, while bureaucratic actors seem more prominent in routine decisions and to a certain extent in long-term strategy decisions. However, in the investigated crisis decisions, bureaucracies are assumed to not have too much influence, according to Haftendorn's categorisation.

Contrary to most FPA studies, this research focuses mainly on day-to-day politics, looking at routine decisions and long-term strategy planning. There are a few reasons for this focus. First and foremost, the ENP allows more for a focus on routine and day-to-day politics, as this is the kind of policy that is dealt with within this framework: While there are a few frozen conflicts in the neighbourhood (for example Western Sahara or Nagorno Karabakh, next to the Middle East Conflict), the ENP is less focusing on crisis management and crisis decisions, and repeatedly the Commission even emphasised that the ENP is not suitable to deal with the frozen conflicts. Furthermore, it is not history-making decisions that are necessary to look at when analysing the ENP, as the treaty texts itself have not been changed when the ENP was set-up. But it is mainly policy-setting and policy-shaping decisions that are of relevance to be analysed. This follows a research strand in EU public policy-making that researches "interstitial institutional change" and claims that "the daily operation of the EU, or its long-term institutional dynamics, cannot be known from the formal letter of the Treaties" (Caporaso 2007: 393). From a more general perspective, there is already much research about the EU as a crisis manager, while the other two forms of foreign policy decisions are taken less into account. Moreover, also scholars repeatedly highlight the necessity to focus on bureaucracy as well, as "*much of what happens depends on less glamorous bureaucratic interaction and bargaining*" (Peters 1992: 121) , and Christopher Hill (2003: 57) even argues that routine decision-making is even more important in foreign policy-making than high salient crisis discussions, because within the former the substance of foreign policy is pursued (for similar conclusions see Smith, S. 1994: 112; Spanier 1975: 410 cited by Rosati 1981: 249).

Hence, the main research focus is not the definition of general common goals in EU Foreign policy-making towards the neighbours but this thesis investigates how the broadly defined goal (e.g. creating stability and security in the near abroad) is implemented through several instruments, and how the different actors interact to specify these generally agreed goal.

Finally, FPA also deals with the role of different actors in foreign policy-making. Especially relevant here is the research by Christopher Hill on the role of the bureaucracy in foreign policy-making. Within states the ministries of foreign affairs perform three vital functions (Hill 2003: 77). First, they are important for routine information gathering. During crisis and war time journalists and the public media might have the same possibility to provide information, but bureaucracies are especially important in regard of information about day-to-day developments and the monitoring of policy implementation. Secondly, foreign policy bureaucracies assist

politicians to formulate their foreign policies. Although the latter might in the end have the sole competence to decide, the civil servants in the foreign ministers support them in analyzing the huge quantities of information, in predicting and interpreting actions of other states or in pointing out policy options. Thirdly and last, the foreign ministry ensures a certain amount of continuity in external relations, as the “institutional memory” does not allow easily for total changes in policies.

For a long time, bureaucracies were seen as loyal, apolitical agents that implement what politicians have decided (Hill 2003: 74-76), although this assumption might be questioned at least since Graham Allison’s theoretical approach of bureaucratic politics where he argues that bureaucracies also pursue their own organizational interest in increasing their role in policy-making (Allison 1971; Allison & Halperin 1972; Allison & Zelikow 1999). By looking at the motivations of different actors to set-up the ENP potential conflicts between politicians (from the member states) and bureaucrats (from the Commission) are going to be identified.

Why do we need to understand how EU foreign policy is emerging? Does it matter who is conducting EU foreign policy? In the end this debate also links back to the underlying logic of the research question of this thesis – do institutional frameworks matter, i.e. does the peculiar policy-making system of the European Union influence the way foreign policies are made towards the neighbours, and can we observe crucial differences from what we know how states formulate, decide and implement foreign policies. Such a comparison is (again) not the focus of this thesis, but only when we understand the institutional dimension and change of the EU foreign policy-making process we acquire a certain base from which the answer of such questions is possible.

After outlining how the research questions contribute to our understanding of the EU foreign policy system, to EU integration research but also to foreign policy analysis, a next crucial step is the link the research focus to the concepts of coherence and consistency in foreign policy-making.

2.2. Assessing Coherence in EU Foreign Policy-making

Coherence is an often emphasised demand asked for in EU foreign policy-making. The international performance of the EU is frequently criticised for its inefficiency and insufficiency, although the EU is one of the main trading blocs and the most important donor of development aid. The view of the EU as an “*economic giant but political dwarf*” (Schmalz 2000: 109) raises the question why the EU does not use its economic weight for political instances. However, while a comprehensive approach is asked for by scholars, most research

about EFP kept the separation along the pillars alive for the first 15 years (as also already outlined chapters 1.2.3 and 2.1.1), as also Wessel confirms:

“The three-pillar structure of the European Union [...] is often used as a justification for separate analyses of the three pillars. In the early days after the signing of the Treaty on European Union, the pillar-structure was the form in which the Union was perceived, and subsequently analysed by many authors.” (Wessel 2000: 1135)

Either scholars were experts in analysing the EC external relations that they often perceived as too apolitical and hence too technical, or scholars solely look at the CFSP output that in the view of the latter was often assessed as too highly political and ineffective. Or scholars only focused on the different national interests of the member states and mostly on high political crisis-decision making (e.g. Iraq) but the smooth running of day-to-day foreign policy-making at European level was mostly not the interest of research.

As already mentioned in chapter 1.2.3, I identified three exceptions in the academic literature who allow for a cross-pillar approach and whose results are of interest for this study. *First*, Winn and Lord analysed EU joint actions on the cases of Mostar, Dayton and the Southern Caucasus to investigate the interaction of European actors beyond the pillars in regard of foreign policy-making. In regard of the EU joint action in the Caucasus, Winn and Lord observed rational policy preferences that led to a high degree of cross-pillar coherence. The agenda setting was led by the member states in conjunction with the General Affairs Council (GAC) and several external relations DGs of the Commission. The different actors, nevertheless, functioned as agents of the GAC (Winn/Lord 2001: 168-169). They also found that the other two joint actions were not conducted in such a rational manner and did also not achieve such a degree of coherence. Regarding Mostar, no actor took the leadership, but at least the main actors shared common normative assumptions, what led to a certain degree of coherence. Concerning the Dayton joint action there was no well-formed preferences at all, what led to confusion and disagreement. The GAC tried to take the lead but was mostly challenged by the Commission or by NATO. This all led to little cross-pillar coherence (Winn/Lord 2001: 170-171). Winn and Lord conclude that the European Commission is granted a certain role as policy entrepreneur in EU foreign policy-making, but that it depends on the national interest constellations and the available information flow between actors (Winn/Lord 2001: 178).

Winn and Lords results are of interest for the research question of this project because they tested different theoretical models on their case studies, and found out that as long as all involved actors perceive more or less the same main goals of the policy, i.e. if they support the same policy idea, there is no problem with coherence. Nevertheless, they did neither look in detail at the process of interaction between the involved actors and institutions nor did they incorporate bureaucratic interests as a crucial factor.

A *second* exception to intentionally desist from the pillarisation is Krause's investigation of the EU's Africa policy. Krause (2003) argues that the EU-Africa relations became increasingly overlapping between external relations and political CFSP issues what allowed for "*a mutual influence of the central actors of the two pillars on each other's policy output*" (Krause 2003: 222). She argues that because of the overlap of EC and CFSP competencies and because of the fact that the two pillars need each other to implement a policy, they influence each other. To study this relationship two directions are possible, whereas Krause choose to analyse the influence of the Commission towards CFSP, whereas she perceives the Commission as a policy entrepreneur. This entrepreneurship occurs in two different ways: First, the Commission develops comprehensive policy concepts with cross-pillar solutions, which are periodically sent as Commission communications to the Council and other supranational institutions. Secondly, the Commission tries to intervene in Council discussions, where primarily informal procedures become important (Krause 2003: 224, 236). For this thesis, Krause's study is interesting as it applies a principal-agent approach to a single case study, and the results support the underlying assumption of this project that the intergovernmental-supranational divide does not allow for substantive understanding in foreign policy-making anymore. Because if CFSP would really be 'only' intergovernmental than the Commission should not have been able to influence outputs within CFSP towards Congo. In contrast to Krause's research that focused on a certain point in time the process of 'change over time' will be an important aspect of my research. In regard of the ENP it is interesting how Krause shows that the Commission intentionally used the argument of a comprehensive and coherent approach to strengthen its entrepreneurial position also in political issues.

The *third* exception in the academic literature so far is a more recent publication by Stephan Stetter (Stetter 2007) who in his book entitled "EU Foreign and Interior Policies: Cross-Pillar Politics and the Social Construction of Sovereignty" argues that the pillarisation since the Maastricht treaty "*has over time been replaced by a cross-pillar politics setting*" because of a "functional indivisibility" of the respective policy areas (see also Stetter 2004: 720). This finally led to the creation of highly-complex cross-pillar institutional structures within the examined two case studies of EU Middle East and migration policies. Although this extensive study is primarily concerned about the implications of the cross-pillar complexity on sovereignty, it impressively illustrates how to conduct a cross-pillar analysis on a respective case study.

The demand of taking into account both pillars, EC and CFSP, is not just a scientific demand, but also a requirement for successful day-to-day policy-making. The changes in the international system and a comprehensive security approach suggest that economic and political issues shall not be kept separate anymore, or even more radically, that a clear separation of

policy areas in economic and political issues is today not possible anymore. Scholars even claim that it is not only not possible anymore to differentiate between different external policies, but that also the division between internal and external policies got increasingly blurred (Eriksson & Rhinard 2009; Duke & Ojanen 2006; Weiss & Dalferth 2009). This also applies to the European Union and asks for an inclusion of the EC when dealing with EU external policies¹⁴ (Smith, M. 2003: 560; Schmalz 1998: 421, 425). Despite different processes and decision-making mechanisms, policies of the different pillars should appear unified towards the outside world.

In regard of formal treaty provisions, the two pillars were clearly distinct regarding decision-making procedures, actors and their competences, means and instruments until the Lisbon Treaty. To accomplish a good interaction between these two pillars and their actors nonetheless and to ensure an effective appearance of the Union in international affairs, Art. 3 of the TEU explicitly asked for coherence¹⁵ in the external activities of the European Union:

“The Union shall in particular ensure the consistency of its external activities as a whole in the context of its external relations, security, economic and development policies. The Council and the Commission shall be responsible for ensuring such consistency. They shall ensure the implementation of these policies, each in accordance with its respective powers.” (TEU, Art. 3)¹⁶

The literature views this article as a fundamental principle of the external action of the EU (Smith, M. E. 2001: 173, 2004a: 210; Nugent 2002: 154; see e.g. Gauttier 2004: 26; Nuttall 2001; De Wilde & Glume 2004: 2), which should guarantee that the external actions of different policy areas as well as of different actors do not contradict themselves, or even more optimistically, mutually support each other.

¹⁴ The claim that it is not enough to analyse only the CFSP also asks for an inclusion of the third pillar. Nevertheless, I only will look at policies of the third pillar that are external-directed, i.e. when they are addressed directly toward a third country like for example migration issues.

¹⁵ There is a clear-cut legal distinction between “coherence” and “consistency” (Duke 1999; see also Gauttier 2004: 23-26; Missiroli 2001: 178). Consistency focuses on the absence of contradiction, on compability and making good sense; it requires the absence of action that contradict already existing goals, for example that member states do not support countries where development aid from the EC is not granted because of human rights violations. On the other hand, coherence implies positive connections, a certain amount of synergy and the adding of value; it goes still a step further than consistency and asks for active support of already existing strategies. Furthermore, it is good to bear in mind that consistency can be achieved or not, whereas coherence is possible in different stages (For a more detailed discussion see Tietje 1997: 212-213). In practical terms, such a firm and clear distinction between these two concepts does not exist, and is also not used. The two concepts of coherence and consistency are used interchangeably in the treaties, especially in the translations of different languages (Nohlen, Schultze & Schüttemeyer 1998: 332-334). For my research a sharp distinction is not necessary and therefore I will use the term “coherence” in a broad definition.

¹⁶ With the Lisbon Treaty, this provision is replaced in substance, by Article 7 TFEU, and by Articles 13(1) and 21(3) TEU; Art. 13(1) TEU reads “The Union shall have an institutional framework which shall aim to promote its values, advance its objectives, serve its interests, those of its citizens and those of the Member States, and ensure the consistency, effectiveness and continuity of its policies and actions”;

Art. 21, paragraph 3, second subparagraph TEU reads “The Union shall ensure consistency between the different areas of its external action and between these and its other policies. The Council and the Commission, assisted by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, shall ensure that consistency and shall cooperate to that effect”

Art. 7 TFEU reads “The Union shall ensure consistency between its policies and activities, taking all of its objectives into account and in accordance with the principle of conferral of powers.”

The quest for coherence in external relations is not a new issue. Within national foreign policies incoherence is accepted and mostly not even perceived as a problem. Hill (Hill 2003: 84-85) identifies it as one of the most challenging tasks for governments in foreign policy-making to keep “*the major departments of state in harmony with each other along the way*”. For him, the term “foreign policy” incorporates automatically coherence as

“The very notion of a ‘policy’ in any field **implies conscious intentions and coordination**. It is the umbrella term under which huddle the myriad particular ‘decisions’ and routinized outputs of an actor’s behaviour. That very often the system of policy-making fails to live up to these aspirations is beside the point” (Hill 2003: 4-5)

In a similar vein, on European level more coherent action in external relations is already desired since 40 years, and there have been several attempts to improve the cooperation of the various actors. The incorporation of the European Political Cooperation within the institutional framework of the EU through the Maastricht Treaty was one of the first attempts to foster coherence, as also Smith confirms:

“Improving the effectiveness and coherence of the European Union’s (EU) external capabilities was a key motivation behind the Maastricht Treaty on European Union (TEU).” (Smith, M. E. 2001: 171)

The treaty revision of Amsterdam created the post of the High Representative for CFSP who should give impetus to the CFSP and be supported by the Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit in the Council Secretariat (for the development of Council Secretariat in CFSP see Juncos & Pomorska 2010). Furthermore, the instrument of “Common Strategies” should allow for a more coherent approach to important partner countries; Hence, these treaty revisions were a first attempt to invigorate CFSP and to allow for more coherent output.

Also the European Security Strategy, that was prepared by Javier Solana, the High Representative for CFSP, and was adopted by the European Council in Brussels end of 2003, highlights the need for a comprehensive security approach and therefore a more coherent external action of the EU and its member states:

“The European Union has made progress towards a coherent foreign policy and effective crisis Management. [...] Greater coherence is needed not only among EU instruments but also embracing the external activities of the individual member states. [...] we need to be more active, more coherent and more capable [...] The challenge now is to bring together the different instruments and capabilities. [...] Diplomatic efforts, development, trade and environmental policies, should follow the same agenda.” (European Council 2003b: 11 and 13)

This quest is also strongly reinforced in the Communication from the Commission to the European Council “Europe in the World – Some Practical Proposals for Greater Coherence, Effectiveness and Visibility” in June 2006 that also assesses convincingly:

“As in national administrations, even when there is sufficient political will, the EU’s impact falls short when there are unresolved tensions or a lack of coherence between different policies” (European Commission 2006b: 6)

Institutions were repeatedly adapted and policy papers formulated to improve the institutional set-up of the European Union in a way to allow for more coherence in the external performance of the EU. The draft for a constitutional treaty included several attempts for better and more coherent foreign policy-making, the most crucial probably the abolition of the pillar system. In the current Lisbon Treaty¹⁷ the pillars are said to be formally abolished, but CFSP is kept separately from other external relations provisions. Nevertheless, in terms of clarity a major improvement in contrast to the Treaty of Maastricht and of Amsterdam is the reference to all external relations provisions under one heading. In addition, the Lisbon Treaty brings about several adaptations that are meant to improve towards an effective and coherent EU foreign policy-making: the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy¹⁸ combines the posts as High Representative and Commission for External Relations (being Vice-President of the Commission at the same time), and this institutional double-hatting shall support the coherent interaction of external relations policies and more political CFSP output. The creation of a European External Action Service (EEAS) is supposed to incorporate officials from the Commission (primarily DG Relex), the Council Secretariat and from the member states (for list of units that will move to the EEAS see Presidency of the European Union 2009), and this new body is meant to support the work of the High Representative in all thematic areas. Nevertheless, most provisions in the treaty text are vague and their concrete implications are difficult to predict, as most will depend on their actual implementation. Furthermore, the Lisbon Treaty also reorganised the chairing of Council meetings on different levels, allowing for a more prestigious involvement of the HR or her substitute in CFSP and ESDP matters, while at the same time bringing the rotating presidency back in other areas like trade. Furthermore, while the Foreign Affairs Council is chaired by the High Representative, its preparatory body COREPER II is chaired by the rotating presidency (for exact list see Vanhoonacker, Pomorska & Maurer 2010; Council of the European Union 2009a). While it will work with some rotating presidencies out to establish a sound cooperation, this institutional design also creates potential for conflict. However, the overall assessment about the Lisbon Treaty so far is that it at least includes several possibilities for improving coherence and consistency in EU foreign policy-making, but that their success will primarily depend on what the respective officials make of it.

¹⁷ The original reference to this legal text – a ‘softer’ version of constitutional draft after refused by Dutch and French people – was “reform treaty”, but since its first formal recognition at the Lisbon European Council in December 2007 it is called “Lisbon treaty”. It is composed of The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU, i.e. the revised Treaty establishing the European Community) and the revised version of the Treaty on European Union. The latter incorporates the provisions on CFSP, while the external relations provisions are covered in Art. 188 TFEU.

¹⁸ In line with the wording of the constitutional draft this position was often referred to as “EU Foreign Minister”, but as these wordings too strongly forced the image of a federal political system, it was changed in the Lisbon treaty to High Representative for Foreign Policy.

This brief outline about EU treaty changes in the foreign policy realm over time shows that the quest for more coherent action was constantly a goal at EU level. However, while this clearly shows that coherence is a demanded characteristic of EU foreign policy, it is even more important to provide a clear **definition of coherence**. According to Simon Nuttall (Nuttall 2005: 97; for an earlier discussion see also Nuttall 2001), coherence in EFP may be achieved at different levels and either in terms of policies or in terms of polity. Vertical coherence (policy-level) occurs between the foreign policies of the member states as well as between foreign policies of the member states and the external actions of the European Union. Horizontal coherence (policy-level), on the other hand, applies to the dimension of policies and asks for coherent actions in different EU policy areas. Thirdly, on an institutional coherence (polity-level) shall occur between the different pillars (EC and CFSP) and their respective actors of EU foreign policy-making¹⁹. These categories of defining coherence show that coherence is a certain status-quo at a certain point in time at a certain level rather than a process. However, at the same time we can assume that a process of change has to occur to decrease or increase the level of coherence.

Nuttall argues that this differentiation becomes crucial when trying to improve coherence. In his view, institutional coherence can be solved more easily because “only” the structure of the system has to be adapted, whereas improvement of horizontal coherence, i.e. coherence between different policies, requires a more fundamental change and an *„uncomfortable debate about the nature of foreign policy and the quality of the EU as an international actor“* (Nuttall 2001: 3-6, 10, for similar conclusion see Gauttier 2004: 23).

My research question focuses on institutional coherence, i.e. the cooperation of actors between the pillars and within the pillars, and on how this cooperation has changed over time. There have already been several adaptations of the institutional set-up of the EU, but nevertheless there are still profound demands to improve coherence between the pillars. This thesis, however, questions Nuttall’s assumption that institutional coherence can be solved easily by adapting the structure of the system, because the repeated attempts to restructure the EU foreign policy system over time did not really convince in establishing an institutional that is coherent, effective and does not exclude one of the relevant actors like the Commission or the member states. Furthermore, I would argue that debates about the separation of tasks, competences and means, i.e. about bureaucratic power and financial means, between different bureaucratic units might be as “uncomfortable” and hard as a discussion about the nature of EU foreign policy in general. Like every institutional and every member states will try to enforce its own view about

¹⁹ In the literature mostly only two distinctions between vertical and horizontal coherence are made. Institutional coherence is then subsumed to horizontal coherence. Only Simon Nuttall makes this clear distinction that will be relied on in this thesis, as it helps to specify very clearly the focus of this research.

the desired EU role in international affairs, it will also look after its position in the political system of the EU.

The research question of this project primarily relates to the institutional coherence and to a certain extent also to horizontal coherence. Vertical coherence, i.e. the relationship between member states and the European level will only be taken into account in that far as the member states are perceived as crucial actors. And although this thesis mainly focuses on the institutional dimension of coherence it is important to think about the link between institutional and horizontal coherence, i.e. between the bureaucratic interplay of actors and the different policy contents. Why should the international performance and the foreign policy output of the EU rely on the improvement of cooperation between the different actors? First, I argue that purposive horizontal coherence in terms of policy content is only likely to be established if institutional coherence already exists. Secondly, the whole discussion of the EU speaking with “a single voice” is directly related to the issue of institutional coherence. And thirdly, the political part of EU foreign policy is often perceived to be performed within CFSP²⁰, but as the second pillar must for its policy implementation rely on the national foreign policies of the member states as well as on the action of the European Community, political issues will not be pursued successfully when the two pillars do not work together accordingly.

While this definition of coherence helps to pinpoint what this thesis is generally looking at and what is not taken into account, it has also be discussed how the concept of “institutional coherence” relates *exactly* to the question of “changing interaction” between actors. Why is the term “interaction” used in the research question, and not “coherence” or similar terms like “coordination” or “cooperation”? In more general terms it seems that the research questions relate to the general discussion about cooperation problems in the international relations and public policy literature. But it is really important to emphasise a clear differentiation between the here used “interaction” and the often-used term “cooperation”. I define interaction in very general terms as a “*mutually influencing relation between two or more entities*” (Kooiman 1999: 75) what differs from “cooperation” in that far as the latter implies equal, sovereign and independent actors who are able to reach their goals more easily by cooperating with one another, because they both gain advantages in their cooperation. In international relations, cooperation as a term was informed by liberal institutionalist scholars like Keohane (see for example Keohane 1989) that focused on the circumstances and institutional features that make

²⁰ This assumption about the CFSP being the political aspect of EU foreign policy and the (economic) external relations as the apolitical one, is often too easily made and should be more closely reflected and investigated. Michael Smith, for example, argues that the real strategic action in EU foreign policy happens in the former first pillar, and that the former EC often provides the direction for EU foreign action: “I think the flag does follow trade, in the sense that the development of the EC's engagement with the world political economy is more likely to lead to an activist and substantial foreign policy than the arguments about CFSP.” (Smith, M. 1998: 94)

states cooperate successfully. In the public policy literature, cooperation was mainly linked to game theory where different cooperative games were drawn up to feature the interaction between actors in negotiations (see for example Scharpf 1997). But these two strands do not seem to fit when we look at the relationship between the European actors in foreign policy-making. Their interactions are more hierarchically organised and the different actors/institutions do not have the same duties and responsibilities²¹. It is still the member states who decide in the end, and the term interaction in the context of this research project stands primarily for division of labour in the agenda-setting, drafting and policy implementation process. Hence, I do not use the term cooperation but interaction instead to catch the relationship between EU actors in policy-making.

Furthermore, the term “coordination” is often also interchangeably used for cooperation, although its narrow definition is quite distinct from cooperation. It implies different interests of the various actors and the process of finding common goals and defining common strategies (Nohlen, Schultze & Schüttemeyer 1998: 333-334).²² However, following addition of Nuttall clearly shows that coordination mechanisms are not related to institutional coherence:

“Inconsistencies which arise in this category [institutional coherence] are the result, not of different policy objectives, as it most frequently the case with horizontal consistency, but of different approaches to the same problem.” (Nuttall 2005: 97)

Hence, in Nuttall’s reading institutional coherence occurs not because the actors do not agree about the main goals, but because they do not agree on how to achieve these goals in more concrete terms, and – also more specifically linked to the EU – that the institutional structure does not allow the actors to work together in a coherent way. This dual understanding of institutional coherence relates to a long standing debate in International Relations between agency- and structure-focused explanations, and will be discussed in more detail in the theoretical framework.

This is exactly what this thesis tries to investigate in regard of the ENP: in the next chapters it will become quite clear that generally all EU actors agree that strong and successful relationships with the neighbours are needed to achieve the main goal of creating stability and

²¹ Nohlen et al. (Smith, H. 2002; Smith, K. 2003; Bretherton & Vogler 1999; Piening 1997; Schubert & Müller-Brandeck-Bocquet 2000; Carlsnaes & Smith 1994; Carlsnaes, Sijrsen & White 2004; Peterson & Sijrsen 1998; Zielonka 1998; Hill & Smith 2005; for further reading also see Allen & Smith 2005; Ginsberg 2001; Brown 1997; Hill 1998b, 1996, 1993, 1998a, 2004a; Manners & Whitman 2003; Manners 2002; Orbie 2004; Stavridis 2001; Tonra 2003; White 2001; Smith, K. 1998; Regelsberger, de Schoutheete de Terverant & Wessels 1997) argue that in the International Relations literature the term “cooperation” is often used differently than in the public policy literature. In International relations the term is also often used to describe the pre-stage of integration processes where the division of labour is organised. As the use of the term “cooperation” would cause unnecessary confusion, I will use the term “interaction”.

²² According to Nohlen et al. (333-334) coordination also means mechanisms that balance and adjust interactions between individual and collective actors. Both definitions of coordination, however, show that this is not the focus of this research project.

security for the European Union. But the rest of the thesis will also show that there is often disagreement about what the best policy would now be to achieve this goal, because of normative reasons that some actors believe in the success of some policies while others do not, but also because of more bureaucratic self-interest to establish or contain a certain power position in the EU political system and the different mechanisms used in the respective pillars.

But how does the in the research question used term “interaction” now relate to “institutional coherence”? First of all, I assume that institutional coherence represents a certain quality of a status-quo, while interaction is the process that might lead to this quality.

Secondly, a more careful reading of Nuttall’s elaboration about his different categories also helps to grasp the difference and linkage between the two terms. Nuttall argues that the differentiation in institutional, horizontal and vertical coherence is a more complex endeavour, while there is also a more “*restricted categorisation*” (Nuttall 2005: 96-97) possible that differentiates between banal, benign and malign consistency. *Banal* consistency Nuttall defines as the “absence of literal inconsistency”, i.e. that each pillar has its own policy output that do not overlap and touch upon each other, while *benign* refers to the “interaction” between EC/CFSP so that “*the instruments of the Community are made available for the accomplishment of policy objectives defined in the second pillar*“. While it seems at first glimpse that this category is the same like horizontal coherence, I would argue that benign consistency can also refer to institutional coherence, when we look how the different actors interact cross-pillar to use the different mechanisms for implementation. Most obviously related to institutional coherence and hence to this thesis, is the third category of ‘malign’ consistency that refers to the struggle for institutional power – the question as to whether the representatives of the member states in the second pillar should be able to give directives as regards EC external policies, and at its most base, the question as to which set of bureaucrats gets to decide” (Nuttall 2005: 96-97); Hence, this differentiation between benign and malign consistency seems to reflect to a certain extent the motivation behind (in)consistency: while benign consistency puts emphasise on the problems occurring because of pillarisation and a complex polity, malign constancy focuses on bureaucratic and institutional self-interest for power. This differences regarding motivation link well back to the second research question of the thesis, and we will come back to similar arguments in the theoretical framework.

Based on this categorisation and to sum up, the research focus of this thesis relates to benign and malign forms of institutional coherence. Interaction is seen as the process that leads to (in)coherence, and implies that on the one hand EU actors have to consult and interact to achieve a certain policy output, for example the Commission has the right of initiative in the first pillar, but only when it takes member states’ interests already at this stage into account its policy proposal will be successful, or another example would be member states that decide

something in CFSP but need EC instruments for implementation. However, interaction can also mean that each actor can achieve a certain policy output on its own, but that the actors have to interact to ensure horizontal coherence between their policies. An example for the latter could be civilian-military operations where the military aspect of the intergovernmental ESDP should be in line and mutually supportive with civilian measures taken by the Commission.

These elaborations show that the concepts of coherence and consistency relate closely to the research question of this thesis about the changing interactions of EU actors within the ENP. This will become even clearer in chapter 4 that will show that the single framework of the ENP was actually meant as a potential improvement in terms of coherence of EU foreign policy-making.

2.3. The EU as International Actor and the Nature of EU Foreign Policy

“In its relations with the wider world, the Union shall uphold and promote its values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens. It shall contribute to peace, security, the sustainable development of the Earth, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights, in particular the rights of the child, as well as to the strict observance and the development of international law, including respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter.”

Art. 3 TEU (Lisbon Treaty, former Art. 2)

Art. 3 of the Lisbon Treaty outlines the main objectives of the EU as an international actor. Coherence and consistency are a central topic in EU foreign policy-making, but the research question of this thesis also relates to the broader debate about the nature of the EU as an international actor. Bretherton and Vogler argue that the most important requirement to be perceived as an international actors is “*the ability to identify policy priorities and to formulate coherent policies*” (Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 38). By investigating how EU foreign policy is made towards the neighbours, this thesis also aims to shed light onto the question to what extent the EU can be perceived as an actor towards its neighbours.

For decades a longstanding debate has been going between scholars researching the external dimension of EU foreign policy-making about the fact if the EU despite not being a traditional state can be an international actor and if we hence also can term the external dimension of EU policies as something like a foreign policy of the EU.²³ Allen and Smith argue that the EC for a long time did not have a central authority that would be “*capable of identifying, articulating, legitimizing, and pursuing common interests.*” (1998: 46). The Maastricht Treaty and also the Amsterdam Treaty made the EU “*more state-like in the field of foreign and security policy*”, but according to their view political authority is still diffused (Allen & Smith 1998: 46). They,

²³ For good overviews of respective academic literature see for example (Hollis & Smith 1990: 147)

furthermore, introduced the concept of a “*variable and multi-dimensional presence*” (Allen & Smith 1998: 47-48) of the EU in contrast to traditional international actors, arguing that the EU is missing a more purposive external action to be conceptualised as an actor and that its impact results mainly from institutional presence and internal outputs (for a precise reflection on this line of argumentation see also Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 5).

Their differentiation between passive presence and active actorness pinpoints to the clear distinction between external relations and foreign policy. External relations comprise all different kind of impacts that a state, an organization, an enterprise or a citizen might have on the outside world. This can be purposive actions taken by those actors, but it can also include unintended externalities of internal policies. These impacts just exist next to each other and do not follow any superior goal. Foreign policy, on the contrary, implies strategic and intentional action, where priorities are formulated although there might exist different interests, for example in different policy areas (Hill 2003: 4-5). Foreign policy is “*the coherent, coordinated and consistent identification and pursuit of national interest*” (Allen 1998: 44; for a similar definition from a constructivist perspective see Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 38; Carlsnaes 2002: 335; for a detailed elaboration see also Webber & Smith 2002). Or as Christopher Hill formulates:

“Foreign policy is therefore both more and less than the ‘external relations’ which states generate continually on all fronts. It attempts to coordinate, and it is the way in which – at least in principle – priorities are established between competing externally-projected interests” (Hill 2003: 4-5)

But with this definition and its intentional implication in mind, is it possible that the EU conducts “foreign policy”? Or does the EU at best have external relations, ie. uncoordinated policies that are directed outwards but neither pursue a common goal nor any strategy? Can a hybrid political system like the EU even have anything like a foreign policy? There are two opposing strands of argumentation in the literature.

On the one hand there are scholars who even criticize the term “EU foreign policy” itself, because it is “*a contradiction in terms at best and a myth at worst*” (White 1999: 43). Lister (1997: 6-8 cited by White 1999: 48) among others argues that only states can have a foreign policy, but the European Union as a “*unique type of institution*” is not a state and can therefore neither have a foreign policy. Similar is the argumentation of Allen (Allen 1998: 44) who assumes that at European level there is nothing similar like a ‘government’ that formulates the European interests and goals, and therefore it is not accurate to talk about a EU foreign policy at all.

Absolutely contrary is the argument of Hazel Smith who assumes that the EU does “*have a foreign policy and that it can be analysed in pretty much the same way as we can analyse that of*

any nation-state” (Smith, H. 2002: 1-7; see also Smith, H. 1998: 153-154; for a detailed presentation of this discussion see a review article by Carlsnaes 2004). Other scholars also question the above described traditional state-orientated concept of policymaking that in their view does not seem accurate any more in a time of globalization. These developments do not imply, as Hill correctly argues, that foreign policy is not important anymore (Hill 2003: xviii-xix) but that the definition has to be adjusted to the transformed international environment. The international system has changed as well as the tasks of states what leads to a “*changing nature of contemporary foreign policy*”. According to Hill, the traditional concepts and definitions of foreign policy do not fit the current circumstances anymore, and hence ask for a redefinition of foreign policy so that it also includes the contemporary changes and also allows for non-state actors. Hill provides a refined definition of foreign policy that is “*the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually a state) in international relations*” (Hill 2003: 3). Although Hill also assumes that foreign policies are usually pursued by states, this definition does not exclude political systems as the European Union. In regard of foreign policy analysis this implies that the latter per se does not have to be state-centric or only applicable to traditional nation states.

These two different arguments perfectly demonstrate the shift in theoretical approaches that has taken place during the last years: not the state, its institutional set-up or its government are the important factors but the ability of governance and to produce policy output. In the current European integration literature it is not relevant to compare the European Union institutionally with a federal state but to look at the tasks that it performs, or as Richardson accurately formulates: “*the EU is state-like in the sense that it has acquired for itself the policy-making attributes of a state across an increasingly wide range of policy sectors*” (Richardson 1996: 3, cited by White 1999: 48). So although the EU is not a state, it is a political system that produces public policies that are similar to that of a state. Therefore political systems like the European Union might as well be analyzed like states although they do not have the same institutional requirements.

My research project builds upon these broad and policy-output orientated definitions. The examination of the changing roles of different actors in EU foreign policy implicitly incorporates this broader definition of foreign policy that focuses on the output rather the state-like features of an actor. But before we can assess if the EU meets the requirements of an actor towards the neighbourhood, we have to know how foreign policy is made at EU level, and also what kind of objectives this policy is following. Art 2 TEU²⁴ emphasises very generally that the

²⁴ This Article 2 TEU was replaced by Art. 3 in the Lisbon Treaty, and also the wording changed significantly to “In its relations with the wider world, the Union shall uphold and promote its values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens. It shall contribute to peace, security, the sustainable development of the Earth, solidarity

EU shall “*assert its identity on the international scene*” and Art. 11 TEU²⁵ outlined the more specific objectives of the CFSP²⁶. While these can be considered as the very broadly defined general objectives of EU foreign policy-making, this thesis investigates in more detail how the main aim of the ENP to strengthen the security of the Union is implemented toward the neighbours.

This second chapter has shown why the research questions of this thesis are relevant, especially in regard of three strands of academic research. First, answering the research questions allows for a better understanding of how policies at EU level are made towards the neighbours. In doing so, this research will contribute on the one hand to EU studies but also to classical foreign policy analysis. Its focus is mainly output-orientated (rather than outcome-focused), targeted at routine decisions and long-term strategy planning (in contrast to crisis decision), and it also takes other bureaucratic actors apart to the member states into account. Second, the research questions of this thesis contribute to the refinement of the concepts of consistency and coherence. And finally, this thesis relates to the long standing debate to what extent the EU can be considered an international actor and having a foreign policy.

and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights, in particular the rights of the child, as well as to the strict observance and the development of international law, including respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter”. While these objectives were to a certain extent already included in the treaties before Lisbon, these objectives were only mentioned in Title V about the CFSP, whereas now in the Lisbon Treaty this provisions apply to all external policies as well.

²⁵ Article 11 was deleted and instead another Art. 21(2) of the Lisbon Treaty outlines now in more detail the “general provisions on the Union’s external action”. Issues like poverty eradication and environmental protection were added. Furthermore Art. 21(1) emphasizes now explicitly lists the “Union’s action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement”.

²⁶ The objectives mentioned in Art. 11 TEU (until Lisbon Treaty) are: “to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests, independence and integration of the Union; to strengthen the security of the Union in all ways; to preserve peace and strengthen international security, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter, as well as the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the objectives of the Paris Charter, including those on external borders; to promote international cooperation; to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.”

Chapter 3: Research Design and Theoretical Framework

This thesis focuses on the internal aim of the European Neighbourhood Policy to provide a single framework for all EU policies towards the neighbours. It investigates if and how the ENP changed the interaction of EU actors in foreign policy-making, and why such a change took place. This part of the thesis outlines the theoretical framework that is used to answer these questions as well as the methodological considerations.

The first question to consider is what kind of discipline is most suitable to analyse how EU foreign policy-making is made. Scholars of EU foreign policy and CFSP experts mostly have a background in International Relations (IR). Security issues and foreign policy were (and still are) often perceived as directly linked to IR theories and as clearly distinct from broader EU public policy research that increasingly adapted ideas and approaches of comparative politics and administrative governance since the early 1990s.

However, when reflected more carefully the application of genuine IR might lead to unnecessary in clarity in analysing EU foreign policy-making. The main IR theories look like neo-realism at the relationship between different states within the international system and like neo-liberalism at the main interests that drive states. They do not specifically explain how foreign policies are developed within the states (or in this case – the European Union) but treat states' positions as given. Already Kenneth Waltz emphasised this need to clearly differentiate between three “levels of analysis” or “images” as Waltz re-termed them later (Waltz 1954: ix). He argues that a certain research question can be analysed by focusing on the level of the international system, the national state or also the impact of individuals (for a thorough discussion about the advantages and pitfalls of the different levels see Singer 1961; for reflections on how and when these different levels influence each other see Putnam 1988; for a refined application of Putnam's model to liberal theory see Moravcsik 1997). While the first image is predominant, for example, in neorealist accounts and seems suitable for questions about the EU as international actor in the international system, it is the second image of the national state that asks about how foreign policy emerges and develops. The latter is also the main focus of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA).

The location of foreign policy analysis (FPA) within the wider field of theories is disputed by scholars. Most foreign policy analysts argue that their work is a subfield of IR, while others, primarily international relations theorists claim “*that the subject matter of foreign policy belongs naturally to the empirical domain of public policy rather than of international relations*” (Carlsnaes 2002: 331). The argument of the latter is that IR focuses on the international system, where the anarchical structure of the international system and the permanent threat to national security are the most important factors to explain how states

behave. When individual state behaviour is the object of analysis, theories of foreign policy should be used but IR theories would not explain much at this level of analysis (Wendt 1999 cited by Carlsnaes 2002: 331). While IR mostly views states as “black boxes” and their preferences as given, FPA focuses on the development of foreign policy output by looking within the national political systems. The FPA scholar Haftendorn, for example, emphasises that foreign policy-making is not the decision of a single politician but is created by several outputs of cooperating or conflicting actors (Haftendorn 1990: 403). How foreign policy is created within states and what kind of different forces influence this output is of major interest, also for this thesis.

IR scholars are generally reluctant to perceive FPA as part of their discipline, but in contrast to these critical voices Hudson (Hudson 2005: 4) even suggests that IR gains a lot from FPA: first, it is able to provide a link between traditional IR studies and other areas of political science (e.g. public policy), and secondly IR theory explains a considerable amount on the level of structure, while it lacks an actor-approach. FPA, on the contrary, is an actor-specific theory and can contribute significantly to the disadvantages of the structural IR focus.

The implication of this discussion for my own research is that classical IR theories are not applicable, as they would treat the EU as black box, and the output of its “system of external relations” as given. IR assumptions might be of interest in that far as that profound changes in the international system create external pressures that influence and push for changes in how EU foreign policy is made. The main focus of the theoretical framework, however, has to allow looking how foreign policy is developed within a political system and help to identify factors that shape the foreign policy-making output. The application of FPA to the EU is disputable, as was shown in the last subchapter about the question if the EU can have a foreign policy at all. Hence, it is obvious that theoretical frameworks and concepts have to be adapted to the peculiarities of the EU multi-level governance system to suit the analysis of EU foreign policy-making. This need for adaptation is considered in this thesis in that far as it combines traditional FPA accounts with EU public policy theorising. However, before this chapter discusses in more detail the application of FPA to the EU, it is helpful for the better understanding to elaborate on another crucial distinction in IR and FPA: the relationship between actor and structure. Based on this long-standing debate, a model to explain a foreign policy action developed by Walter Carlsnaes is going to be introduced that is used in structuring the research approach of this thesis.

Jørgensen criticises already in 1993 that academic reflections on EC external relations and EU foreign policy are often too descriptive instead of applying a precise analytical focus with a clear theoretical foundation (Jørgensen 1993: 211-215). By reflecting at the state of the art, he differentiates between agency and structure, emphasising that agency-centred approaches

presuppose that actors constitute structures, while structure-centred ones emphasize that actors “*are shaped and shoved by structural factors*” (Jørgensen 1993: 216). Also Haftendorn (Haftendorn 1990: 403) applies this differentiation between structure and agency to foreign policy-making, and she elaborates in more detail that the actor-centred approaches conceive foreign policy as an active process, where different actors act rationally to pursue their preferences. Structure-centred approaches, on the other hand, emphasise the importance of the institutional setting and suggest that the decision-making is primarily dependent on the structure. Alternatives for decisions are therefore already given within the system, and foreign policy is passive (for similar arguments see also Carlsnaes 1994: 277).

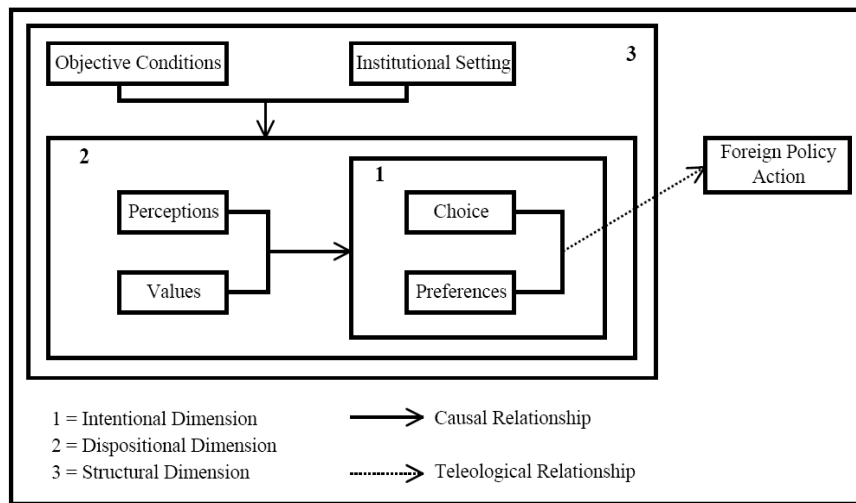
Reflecting on this differentiation adds an interesting dimension to the main research focus of this thesis. From an actor-centred approach (in)coherence in EU foreign policy has to be defined as an active, purposive action where actors intentionally decide for actions that are incoherent. This also means that the interaction of the actors is mainly shaped by their own decisions and motivations, and that potential conflicts in the interaction happen purposively. On the other hand, from a structure-centred perspective (in)coherence emerges because of the structure of the decision-making system, ie the institutional set-up does not allow for different actors to communicate, to coordinate and to pursue coherent policies. To overcome incoherence this would mean that the former actor-centred approach implies that the interaction between the actors only improves when they intentionally decide to do so, while a structure-centred approach assumes that only the improvement of the institutional set-up leads to more successful and coherent interaction.

Although this separation is helpful to start off with clear assumptions, it is also important to emphasise that the two categories of agency and structure are not independent from one another but constitute “*dynamically interrelated empirical entities*” (Carlsnaes 1994: 279; see also Hollis & Smith 1986: 269). The challenge of linking agency and structure is elaborated by Carlsnaes (1992) who argues that “*human agents and social structures are in a fundamental sense interrelated entities*”. In his view only a framework that includes both perspectives and that perceives both within an “*intertwined temporal process*” can best explain foreign policy-making (Carlsnaes 1992: 246; for similar conclusions see White 1999: 41). This necessary dynamic synthesis of structure-centred and agency-centred factors is nearly excluded in all common theoretical approaches, as they always take one perspective as major and do not allow a dynamic mutual influence. Starting from an actor-interpretative approach Carlsnaes hence establishes a tripartial model to explain foreign policy action (see figure 4).

Carlsnaes’ model to explain a foreign policy action differentiates between three dimensions: intentional, dispositional and structural. At the intentional level (box 1 in fig. 4), the different choices and preferences of the actors are analysed from a rational perspective. These choices

and preferences are then in a next step shaped at the dispositional dimension (box 2 in fig. 4) by perceptions and values. By taking this dispositional dimension into account (also called “interpretative dimension”), we can determine to what extent constructive approaches might add to the understanding of the possible choices made. Finally, the structural dimension (box 3 in fig. 4) adds objective conditions and the institutional setting as factors to our model to explain a foreign policy action, although the latter are not perceived as causal factors but as constraining conditions (Carlsnaes 1992: 255, 1994: 282-283).

Figure 4: Carlsnaes’ model to explain a foreign policy action (Carlsnaes 1992: 254)



Although not directly applicable, Carlsnaes’ model is useful to be adapted for the research focus of this thesis in two ways: *First*, he emphasises that the separation between agency and structure is not a black-white issue, but that in social sciences we should also consider that a combination of factors might lead to a certain outcome (for a methodological discussion of this issue of fuzzy sets see Rihoux & Ragin 2008). When establishing the theoretical framework it is useful to separate between agency and structure to make the argument most precise, but that should not imply that the two categories of agency-centred and structure-centred factors are mutually exclusive, i.e. that a potential verification of the structure-centred factors automatically leads to the conclusion that actor-centred explanations are falsified. It seems, furthermore, logical to assume that different factors might have a different impact over time, and it is the aim of this thesis not to primarily show which factors is able to predict the most variance, but to explain why a certain change happened and to trace this process over time. *Secondly*, Carlsnaes’ assessment of structural factors as constraining conditions rather than causal factors an interesting aspect to reflect upon, as the FPA scholar states:

“They [*structural factors*] do not ‘cause’ actors to behave in a certain way, but they certainly provide the constraining conditions under which contingent actors [...] necessarily have to operate.” (Carlsnaes 1992: 255)

Structural factors like the institutional set-up cannot directly cause a policy output but the action of different actors is dependent on the structural conditions that could hinder or support a certain way of action. Carlsnaes, furthermore, emphasises the need to be aware that social structures are intentionally established by the actors, and therefore have to be perceived as outcome, too. This could for example imply that the institutional set-up might be a constraining condition that does not allow overcoming incoherence, but then the actors can decide rationally to change the institutional structure in a way that more coherence is possible. The change of the institutional set-up hence then allows for more coherence, but it was not the institutional structure that triggered this change, but the actors that adapted the institutional conditions. On the other hand, the structure of the system feeds back to the actor's level, and so a "*continuous cycle of action-structure interactions*" is established (Carlsnaes 1994: 279, 284-285). This perception of structural factors as constraining conditions and the fact that Carlsnaes' model starts with the intentional dimension (actors' preferences and choices) is often criticised by authors that favour a structural approach. Carlsnaes himself openly admits this problem, but nevertheless he (Carlsnaes 1994: 285) argues that within this framework structural and agential factors can be combined in a comprehensive and manageable way to examine foreign policy *change*, what is not the case with other frameworks.

For this thesis the conception of structural factors as constraining conditions sounds worthwhile to consider. One research question of this thesis asks about the extent to which the single framework of the ENP changed the EU policy-making process towards the neighbours. Reformulated in the language of Carlsnaes' model, we want to find out if the structural change of the ENP institutional framework made a difference to the EU policy output (what Carlsnaes calls "foreign policy action"); Indirectly, however, we also have to perceive the ENP institutional framework as outcome and ask, why respective actors have changed the institutional set-up in a certain way. Understanding the motivations of change, might provide a useful explanation for the behaviour of the various actors after the institutional change. Following this logic of argumentation also implies that it is not the institutional structure per se that changes the way the EU is making foreign policy towards the neighbours, but that the (changed) institutional framework of the ENP enables/constrains the actors in the way they formulate and implement EU foreign policy. A similar logic can be applied when considering the quest for more coherence. While an institutional set-up can allow and support coherent interaction between actors, the institutional set-up in itself can not achieve more or less coherence. It is always the actors that might be enabled or constrained by the institutional setting to act in a coherent way. Hence, in this thesis structural factors will also be considered as constraining conditions rather than causal factors.

Carlsnaes himself repeatedly points out that his model to explain a foreign policy action is not a theory per se, but a framework that allows to be filled with different theoretical assumptions. Hence, this model is used as an instrument to structure the theoretical framework in a conclusive and plausible way by bringing together different theoretical reflections from bureaucratic politics, the organisational process approach, social learning and European integration studies. However, before elaborating in more detail on the single factors, we now return to the question set out at the beginning of this chapter about which theoretical approach is (best) suitable to answer the posed research questions, because next to Foreign Policy Analysis also EU integration theories provide useful aspects to be taken into account in setting up the theoretical framework.

EU studies and European integration theories focused for a considerable time on the classical debate between intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism and the question of why states cooperate or even integrate (Rosamond 2010: 105). While the former emphasised the role of sovereign states and their unwillingness to shift sovereignty to the supranational EU level (Moravcsik & Schimmelfennig 2009), neofunctionalism emphasised the process of spill-over, and the role of supranational institutions and elites within this process (Niemann & Schmitter 2009). From the 1980s onwards, however, scholars increasingly asked for a shift of the research question from “why states integrate” to “how the political system EU works” and to “analysing governance”, as Diez and Wiener formulate (Diez & Wiener 2009: 7). According to Rosamond, three distinct theoretical approaches tried to conceptualise these new set of questions: neo-institutionalism, social constructivism and multi-level governance (Rosamond 2010: 104). Neo-institutionalism brings together a subset of different approaches, ranging from rational choice institutionalism that focuses on the “changing relative power of institutions”, over historical institutionalism that emphasises path-dependency and long term effects of institutions to sociological institutionalism that defines institutions in a very broad way as interactions and norms and emphasises the importance of communicative action and socialisation. Multi-level governance, on the other hand, questions the hierarchical dispersion of power and the central role of national governments (see for example Marks, Hooghe & Blank 1996).

All three approaches are not unique to EU studies but the emergence of new debates in IR also influenced EU integration theories. Similar to Foreign Policy Analysis EU integration theories can be located between IR and comparative politics. While IR accounts were strong in the classical debate of intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism, especially the governance turn allowed for an increased incorporation of comparative politics in EU studies. Most phenomena that are dealt with in FPA also re-occur in the more general EU literature, although often with different labels and by using different terms. Hence, it is also no surprise that the agency-

structure debate also occurs in EU integration theories, again mostly as differentiation between theories than allowing for a combination as Carlsnaes' model suggests above.

This chapter now goes on in discussing the two main research questions respectively and in drawing up certain assumptions derived from existing theoretical accounts. First, we reflect upon the change in interaction in EU foreign policy-making, or to speak in methodological terms, on the dependent variable. In a second step, the chapter shifts its attention on the second research question, theorising the motivations and causes for change.

3.1. Theorising Change in Interactions in EU Foreign Policy-making: From Horizontal Coherence to an Integrated Policy Approach

Within foreign policy analysis (FPA) it is often argued that not only the existence of a certain policy is important but also how and why this policy came about (White 1994: 2). However, before we can move to the "why" it is indispensable to investigate the output itself. In the same vein, we can not only assume that there was some change in actors' interaction in EU foreign policy-making, but we have to critically reflect on what kind of change could be expected: what feature is the one to be observed to talk about change? This subchapter highlights the adapted approach to emphasise interstitial institutional change, and it considers this change in two ways: on the one hand it explains the differentiation between consensual and conflictual interaction, on the other hand between coherence and an integrated policy approach.

Change in itself, and especially the development and change of institutions was and is a major topic in IR, comparative politics and European Studies alike. The nature and triggers of this change are often also the major disagreement of opposing theoretical approaches. This thesis follows the argumentation of interstitial institutional change, as outlined by several authors in a special issue of *West European Politics* (Vol 30, No. 2, March 2007, see especially Caporaso 2007; Farrell & Héritier 2007b, a). This special issue discusses intensively the main approaches about institutional change within the EU/EC, and the main questions examined by the authors are first, under which conditions what kind of interstitial institutional occurs in different areas of decision-making and secondly, under which conditions informal interstitial institutional change is formalised to a latter point in time (Farrell & Héritier 2007b: 227, 236). Although the authors limit their research to European public policy, their results are quite interesting as a starting point to consider the nature of change in EU actors' interaction in foreign policy-making after the set-up of the ENP.

In line with the authors of the special issue, this thesis assumes that interactions between the actors change informally and through a slow process of day-to-day policy-making. Hence, this theoretical approach strongly opposes liberal intergovernmentalism that claims that institutional

change within the EC is intentionally decided by the member states during Intergovernmental Conferences in accordance with their national (primarily economic) interests:

“Intergovernmentalist theory seeks to analyse the EC as the result of strategies pursued by rational governments acting on the basis of their preferences and power.” (Moravcsik 1993: 496)

In Moravcsik’s view slow, informal change through day-to-day policy-making is not possible, and supranational institutions only play a role in that far as they can support the member states in controlling their domestic affairs (Moravcsik 1993: 507). In contrast, interstitial institutional change is based on the assumption that institutional change is a slow-moving but dynamic, adaptive process between institutions and actors that can not be adequately explained by solely looking at power relations between the member states (Farrell & Héritier 2007b). As outlined already beforehand, the set-up of the ENP can not be considered a history-making decision, as this change was not triggered by any formal treaty change, but was rather the result of several negotiations over time. The empirical investigation of this thesis also allows drawing certain conclusions if the ENP set-up was just the formalisation of already established practices, or if the ENP itself changed the way policies were made EU internally towards the neighbours.

In a next step, to differentiate between conflictual and consensual interaction allows us to consider the contentment that certain actors perceive in regard of the policy-making process. Within a consensual interaction an actor might not be totally satisfied with the way the policy is conducted (ie. it might not be his preferred way of doing policies), but at least he accepts the way it is done and does not oppose it – neither rhetorically nor actively by setting counterproductive actions. However, again the form of interaction is not a dichotomy between conflict and consensus, but there is a fluent transition between more and less conflict. This differentiation between conflict and consensus is especially important for the factor time, what will be introduced in the dispositional dimension. There it is assumed to be plausible that especially shortly after a change in interaction more conflicts occur, while the interaction might become more consensual after some time (either because actors realised that their resistance does not pay off, or because they learnt how to interact in a more consensual manner).

Within the European integration literature there is a huge amount of literature about the interplay of different actors and institutional conflict in public policy-making (see among others Christiansen 1997; Pollack 1997; Franchino 2000; Schmidt 2000). Multi-level governance and the principal-agent approach have a strong stance within this academic literature, although these models have only sporadically been applied to policies with an external dimension. Principal-agent relationships are a central question of EU public policy research (see for example Pollack 1997, 1998, 2003; Kassim & Menon 2003), and provide interesting assumptions about conflict in interaction between actors. Tallberg (2002) applies a rational-institutional approach to explain

why, how and when member states delegate certain tasks to other actors. He starts from the assessment that delegation entails a certain dilemma for member states, who on the one hand perceive a functional need to delegate, while on the other hand they feel threatened by doing so to loose control over the agent, so that this delegation leads to a policy that they actually did not want or intend. He concludes that the design and scope of delegation depends on what functional need is supposed to be satisfied: if member states aim at enforcing compliance, the agent (in EU public policy-making, the Commission and the ECJ) gets a large degree of discretion and can act rather independently, while member states try to control the agent when it is about providing policy advice in drafting and initiating legislation or when the agent is supposed to execute EU policy. Especially the latter is interesting for this study, as it is especially the execution of the previously agreed main goals that is relevant for day-to-day foreign policy-making. Tallberg argues that in EU public policy the Commission is strongly controlled through the comitology system where most policies still need the approval of the member states (Tallberg 2002). It is an interesting aspect to investigate, to what extent member states were also able to set-up certain control mechanisms within the ENP and if we can also observe some form of delegation within the ENP.

Potential conflicts about the pursue of EU foreign policies across the pillars have been often highlighted in EU foreign policy research:

“In general, I assume that governments attempt to balance their inherent desire for foreign policy autonomy against the external goals of the EU, and that EC actors like the Commission are generally ‘pro-integrationist’.” (Smith, M. E. 2001: 174)

Duke showed the nature and scope of these potential inter-institutional tensions between Commission and Council over time, illustrated for example by the action taken by the European Commission against the Council in the ECOWAS case that was decided by the European Court of Justice (Duke 2006a). On the other hand, also turf battles between the Commission and the Council Secretariat are inherent in the development of EU foreign policy-making, especially since the development of military and civilian crisis management within the ESDP (Dijkstra 2009). However, in this research I argue that the conflictual relationship is not only about formal competences and legal battles, but that conflicts are also visible in every-day policy-making between officials of the respective institutions.

Peculiar to the set-up of the ENP is that it brings together policy areas that vary in the way policies were conducted, as Smith and Weber exemplified on the role of the Commission: “*The Commission’s role, however, still varies greatly across issue-areas, especially in the realm of foreign and security policy.*” (Smith, M. E. & Weber 2007: 10). So what happens if policy areas with different governance systems are subsumed under one single framework?

As chapter 2.1. has shown, the quantity of foreign policy-making at European level has gradually increased since the treaty of Maastricht, in terms of scope on the one hand, as EC/EU established relations with more countries, and in terms of intensity on the other hand, as existing partnerships were extended to more or other policy areas. Within CFSP it is often argued that the policies follow solely the least common denominator of the member states, and that the recent cross-pillar approaches transport these least common denominator-strategies also to the first pillar. Absolutely the contrary argues Michael Smith who perceives the external economic EC-relations as the core of EU foreign policy-making with a high potential for strategic action. In his view, only a further development of the EC-external relations is able “*to lead to an activist and substantial foreign policy*” (Smith, M. 1998: 94), and the question is (in) how (far) political motives are incorporated in external economic policies or, as he formulates, to what extent the EC policies are politicised. This shows that this mutual influence of different ways to conduct policies is not a new topic in EU foreign policy research, but so far there were only few cases that allowed for such a study. The ENP that was set-up as a single framework towards the neighbours, however, allows for a more concise investigation, and it proves as an interesting case study to check what kind of impact it has when policies are merged that were pursued in different ways beforehand. This thesis allows researching to what extent this sectoral differentiation in terms of policy-making still exists after the ENP framework was set-up, or if one (new) form of interaction emerged of how to conduct policies towards the neighbours. To illustrate this differentiation in a more comprehensive manner, I suggest differentiating between horizontal policy-making (figure 5) and an integration policy approach (see figure 6). Again, this differentiation should not be perceived as a $\square$ nlargeme characteristic, but as two “ideal” types that also allow for variations in between.

Figure 5 shows the traditional way of conducting policies within the EU system of external relations. The different actors pursue their own policies that should not contradict the generally agreed goal and the policies of other actors. A certain level of communication between these actors is necessary, so that they know what the other policies look like, but they do not need to interact to formulate their own policy at all. This form of interaction also does not necessarily ask for a cross-pillar interaction as every actor can formulate and implement policies on their own, i.e. the EC pursues its supranational policies and the CFSP formulates its intergovernmental positions, actions and so on, but the actors of the different pillars do not need to interact as long as their policies do not show a strong contradiction to the general policy goal. At the same time institutional coherence could be possible at the lower level (but it is not needed per se), if actors decide to work together to design, implement or revise a certain policy. Horizontal coherence between the different policies, however, is generally perceived as the more necessary dimension, as this is mostly what is referred to when incoherence is criticised.

Figure 5: Coherence in EU policy²⁷

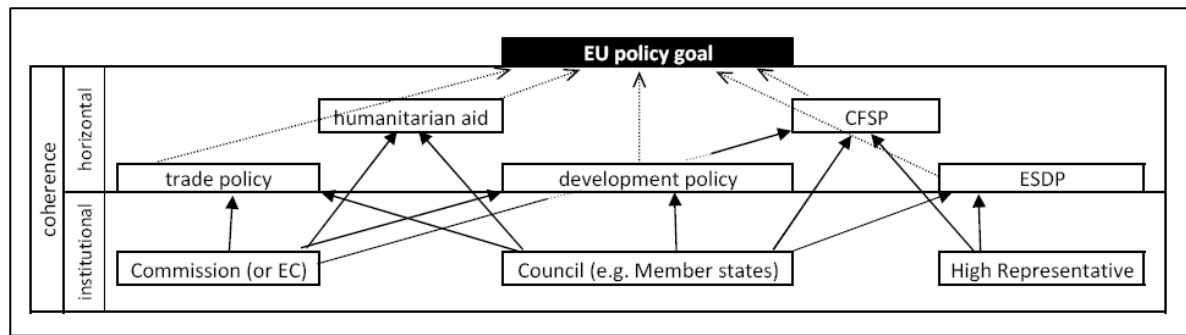


Figure 6: An „Integrated EU policy approach“²⁷

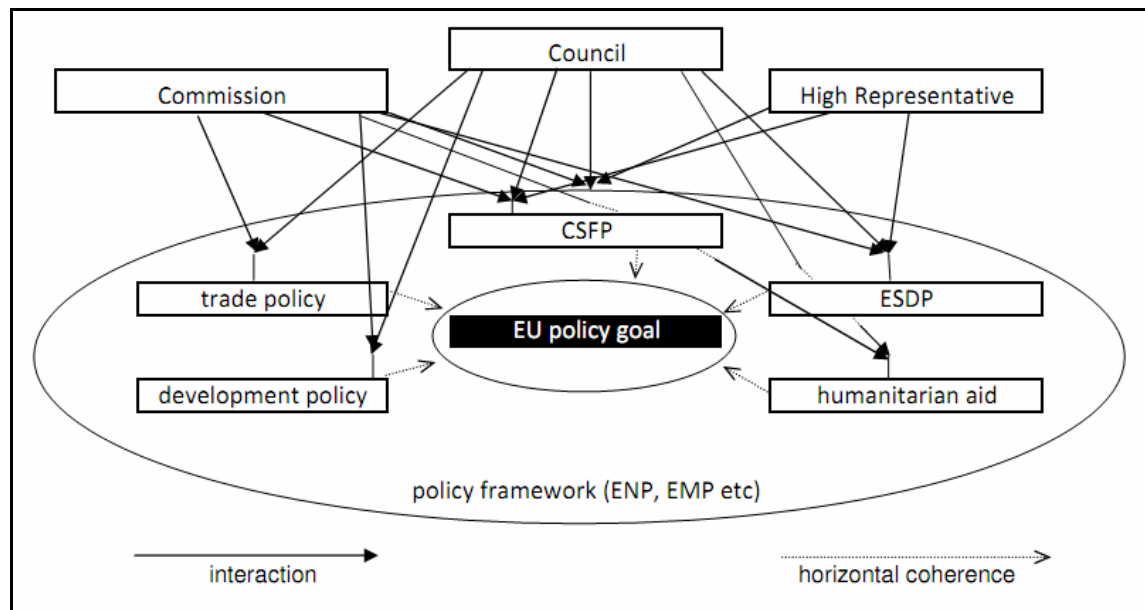


Figure 6, in contrast, shows an integrated policy approach where actors interact to formulate and implement different policies, pursued within a certain policy framework like for example the ENP. The EU policy goal is pursued by one or more policy areas that are subsumed within one single framework. The different actors on the one hand interact to set-up and shape this policy framework, but at the same time they also interact to formulate policies within the various policy areas that are targeted towards the EU policy goal. Generally for policies to be successful, these actors have to work together to formulate and specify a certain policy output. They do not have to cooperate in the sense that they are responsible and have competences for the same tasks. But instead of having a clear division of competences along the pillars that are clearly differentiated between technical cooperation and political issues, the interaction evolves along different stages of the policy cycle. During the different stages of the policy process the various actors perform to a more or less stronger degree certain tasks, and just a smooth linkage

²⁷ Please not in regard of this figure 5: This is a simplified illustration to show the difference between coherence and an integrated approach. The shown policy areas and actors are used as examples and not all-inclusive, as well as the size of the boxes or their positioning does not imply any deeper meaning;

of the various actions of the respective actors leads to a policy output. These interactions can occur simultaneously, but it might also happen that one actor takes the lead during a certain period of time, while the other one just supports and gives its input, and at another point of time the two actors switch positions. An illustrative example from conflict management in third countries might allow for a better understanding: During a military mission and a latent conflict situation in the country it is the Council, the member states and the auxiliary (military-related) bodies in the Council Secretariat that lead the policy. The Commission might at this point in time be already involved to a certain extent and might formulate its suggestions. When the mission is successful and the violent conflict flattens, the interaction between the involved institutions changes, as the Commission has strong competences and assets in civil post-conflict management. The member states and the Council bodies will still be involved, but they do not have this strong lead anymore.

Supporters of supranational EC-policy-making might now argue that this new form of policy-making looks similar to 'traditional' supranational (i.e. first pillar) policy-making. In my opinion, however, there is no added value in arguing along these traditional intergovernmental-supranational differentiation, and it even creates an unnecessary chance for misinterpretation to argue that the use of the policy cycle for the analysis of policy-making should automatically equate with supranational EU public policy-making, as the policy cycle alone is just an instrument to make the analysis more precise, but does not incorporate any theoretical argument for or against supranationalism. As already elaborated above, foreign policy is much more executive-orientated than regulatory or redistributive policies, what also implies that the implementation stage is crucial. Furthermore, in EU foreign policy it is still the member states that decide in the end, either with qualitative majority or unanimously²⁸. The Council and the member states are the central decision-makers, "*nevertheless allowing for a substantive role of EU actors, in particular executive actors*" (Stetter 2004: 726). This peculiarity of EU foreign policy-making will be further elaborated on when setting up the factor of "bargaining advantage" at the structural dimension (see p. 69).

Hence, while this potential shift from horizontal coherence to an integrated policy approach should not be misunderstood as supranationalisation, a critical reflection on public policy research like the principal-agent approach allow for interesting new questions. The mechanisms and causal relations that are examined with these approaches might to a certain extent also be visible in changing the way EU foreign policy is made.

²⁸ With the treaty revision of Amsterdam member states could also decide with majority when their policies are based on a Common Strategy, like it is the case in the Mediterranean policy since 2000.

The differentiation between consensual and conflictual interaction on the one, and between horizontal coherence and an integrated approach to policy-making on the other hand conceptualises the first more descriptive research question of this thesis about what kind of change in actors' interinteraction is observable in EU foreign policy-making after the set-up of the ENP. In a next step, the second research question about potential causes and motivations for change is reflected upon theoretically.

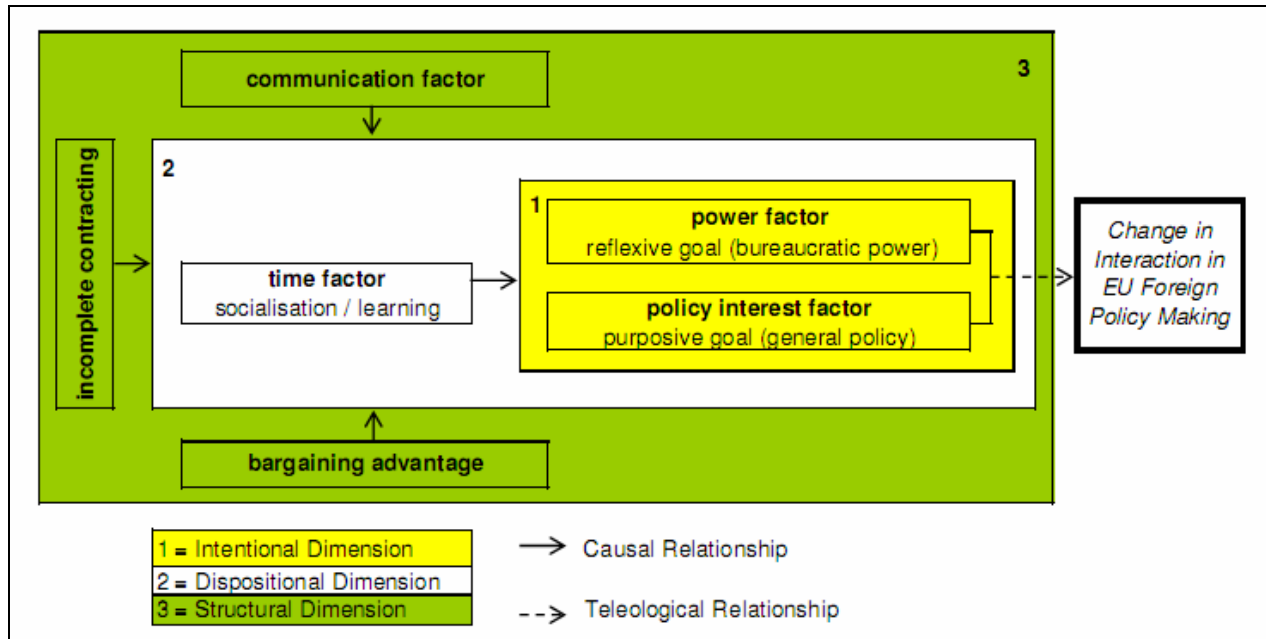
3.2. Theorising What Factors Explain the Change: Motivations and Structural Conditions

There are two possible lines of arguments in the literature about factors that might explain the change in interaction of different actors. On the one hand, the actors themselves might have certain motives why they intentionally want to change their roles and those of others (actor-argument; in Carlsnaes' model these would constitute the intentional and dispositional dimension). On the other hand and in opposition to the intentional change of roles, the institutional set-up could have been unintentionally changed in the past in such a way that its consequences allowed for a change of roles and interactions (structure-argument) to a later point in time. This differentiation will be also taken into account in the theoretical framework of this project.

In general it is assumed that the following formulated assumptions do not mutually exclude each other but that they also are applicable to different degrees at different points in time. The main aim is to explain and understand the process of change, i.e. not to pinpoint only what main factor triggered this change, but to show the mechanisms and the process that took place with the set-up of the ENP. Furthermore, while these assumptions are derived from the theoretical literature and explicitly formulated, they are not meant as strictly deduced hypotheses that are tested empirically afterwards, as this form of deduction is more useful in quantitative research. Qualitative research, however, as applied in this thesis does not mainly aim at testing theory (ie verifying/falsifying hypotheses) but at explaining and understanding how the ENP influenced the interaction of EU actors.

The model by Carlsnaes introduced earlier and his differentiation between the intentional, dispositional and structural dimension is used to structure the different factors that are assumed to have influenced the change in EU actors' interaction in policy-making towards the neighbours. Figure 6 provides an overview of these assumed factors that are going to be explained in more detail on the following pages.

Figure 7: The theoretical framework – Carlsnaes' model adapted to explain change in interaction in EU Foreign Policy-making



3.2.1. The Intentional Dimension: Bureaucratic Power and Policy Interest

Why do actors allow or even push for change? Why is change part of their preferred interest? The bureaucratic politics approach argues that the interests of actors and institutions can be differentiated in policy-interest goals (purposive goals) and organisational interests (also termed, bureaucratic power or reflexive goals) (Peters 1992).

The bureaucratic politics approach is vastly ignored within European political science and only slowly catches the attention of EU scholars by being incorporated in administrative governance research. It is, nevertheless, prominent and also highly criticized in the United States. Graham Allison presented the most developed and comprehensive analysis in his book "Essence of Decision. Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis" (Allison 1971). By analysing the decision-making process during the Cuban missile crisis he concludes that the classical rational actor model that perceives states as rational, unitary actors helps to explain certain parts in analysing foreign policy-making, but that this approach ignores certain important aspects, as it "*reduces the organizational and political complications of a government to the simplification of a single actor*" (Allison 1971: 252). Allison's critic on the traditional rational actors model is not rationality in itself but states are treated as unitary black boxes. His bureaucratic politics model also includes rational action in so far, as he assumes that different bureaucratic units decide rationally, but he emphasises that they primarily pursue their own interests. Also other authors (see e.g. Drezner 2000: 773) emphasise the weakness of rational models where governments are seen as black boxes that pursue certain interests and preferences and that can not explain how

certain preferences emerge. Therefore Allison suggests the application of two other approaches: governmental politics and the organizational process approach that focus on domestic determinants and primarily on the constituent bureaucracies as important players (Hollis & Smith 1986: 270; Smith, S. 1994: 110)²⁹. In his follow-up publications, Allison together with his colleague Halperin subsumed these two different approaches to the bureaucratic politics approach³⁰ where they set up following main propositions (Allison & Halperin 1972; see also Rosati 1981: 235-238):

- different (bureaucratic) units pursue competitive or at least not homogeneous interests.
- their priorities and perceptions are shaped by their position in the system.
- the solution of problems on these levels is far from straightforward and strategic, and diverse among the different units.³¹

To apply the bureaucratic politics approach the researcher must first identify the various players, then move on to the different interests that determine each player's stand, and finally analyse the different games that are played between the actors to reach an outcome in the end.

Furthermore, different types of interest influence a player's stand. On the one hand, there are general policy interests of the bureaucratic unit about what the pursued goal is and how it should be reached. On the other hand, Allison and Halperin identified also organizational interests of the bureaucracy to maintain influence, to fulfil its role and to secure the necessary capabilities (Allison & Halperin 1972: 48; Hudson 2005: 8).³² The player's probability to succeed in the policy games depends primarily on its skill and will to use certain bargaining advantages like its control of the implementation, its control over information (especially about which other policy outcomes are possible) and of its persuasiveness with other players. In this case, the possession of these bargaining advantages is not that important as the other player's perception over these. In action games the player's success further depends on the power of the bureaucracy, i.e. its formal authority, the control over the resources necessary to carry out the action, the responsibility for carrying out the action, as well as the control over information that enables one to determine the feasibility of the action and its consequences. Furthermore, standard operating procedures can constrain new policy actions (Allison & Halperin 1972: 52).

²⁹ Roger Hilsman labels the organisational process approach „political process model“, and in general it has to be noted that the different authors do not use the labelling of the different approaches as well as their concrete range consistently.

³⁰ As I do not perceive it necessary I will not differentiate between governmental politics and organisational process model any further but use the bureaucratic politics model presented in Allison and Halperin (1972).

³¹ As Hollis and Smith (see especially Conclusion: Götz & Meyer-Sahling 2009) summarized accurately „*decisions are not taken in accordance with some notion of a national interest, but result from pulling and hauling between bureaucracies*“.

³² In addition, they also incorporated „domestic interests“ and „personal interests“ but as these do not apply to my research I will not elaborate them in detail here.

Based on these assumptions they deduce four propositions. First, decisions within and between bureaucracies are compromises that must avoid to harm strongly felt interests of the participants. Secondly, absolutely new foreign policy content is decided by central players, but specific details depend primarily on standard operating procedures or already existing programs within the organizations. Thirdly, units that are not involved in the decision game feel less obliged to faithfully implement decisions. And last, organizations will try to maximize its own interests when the decisions taken leave room for such an action (Allison & Halperin 1972: 53-54). This assumptions will come back later when discussing the single assumptions of this theoretical framework.

The critics on Allison's and Halperin's approach are diverse (for a good summary of different critics see Smith, S. 1994: 112-122). Repeatedly Allison was accused that this approach is not new at all but that many other authors before him had discussed the importance of bureaucracies, and that his own contribution was only to subsume these different works and provide an empirical case study. His approach would totally exclude external political forces (e.g. election terms) and cognitive factors derived from constructivism (Brown 1997: 78).

Kegley and Wittkopf (Kegley & Wittkopf 1989: 56) also worked with the bureaucratic politics approach and suggested to further integrate two of their observations into the framework: on the one hand, bureaucracies emphasise the information that supports their own interests, and on the other hand bureaucracies do not like policy innovation as they prefer to rely on standard operating procedures. Information as a central feature of power between actors will be also an issue in the deducted assumptions, and standard operating procedures can be perceived as part of the unwillingness of bureaucracies for change.

Allison's fundamental study of bureaucratic politics as well as the above described reactions to this approach all deal with national foreign policy-making. An adaptation of the model to European Studies is rarely found. Ginsberg (Ginsberg 1989) partly used it for his analysis of why the EC moved or stagnated, and remarked that the model is useful to explain the Commission's role. Guy Peters (Peters 1992: 82) conducted the most comprehensive study on the rule of bureaucratic units within the EU. Although he admits that the EC is less bureaucratized than many nation states, he concludes that European civil servants play an important role in substantial policymaking. The DGs developed "*their own organizational cultures and approaches*" and they compete for policy space where competences are not precisely stipulated (Peters 1992: 107). The latter relates directly to the concept of incomplete contracting that is considered a structural factor that influences change.

Based on these theoretical accounts of bureaucratic politics, two assumptions can be drawn in regard of the research questions of this thesis, hereby differentiating reflexive organisational interests and between purposive policy goals. The first assumption relates to the former:

Assumption 1 (bureaucratic interest): The more actors believe that a change in interaction would enhance their bureaucratic status quo (e.g. competences, financial means), the more they are willing to support and accept a change in tasks, roles and interaction.

In the above mentioned special issue of West European Politics the bureaucratic interest of different actors is also identified as one of the most important factors. Farrell and Héritier argue that “*conflicts over competences between the key actors [...] will be a key driver of institutional change*” (Farrell & Héritier 2007b: 235), and it occurs because of incomplete contracting in the EU treaties. The principals of EU policy-making, i.e. the member states, are not able to draft treaties that cover every detailed contingency, and hence, between formal treaty changes the involved institutions (e.g. Commission, Council or European Parliament) try to enforce their own interpretation of the formal treaty regulations to maximise their control and bureaucratic power in the policy process. Farrell and Héritier assume that (2007a: 227-231) the involved actors are “*competence maximisers*” as they use the situation of incomplete contracting to enhance their bureaucratic power.

Caporaso highlights that the issue of incomplete contracting is analytically a problem because it is empirically very difficult to differentiate clearly from the phenomenon of power that he defines “*as the capacity [or] as the ability of an institutional actor to get its way against the will of others*” (Caporaso 2007: 395). In my view, it would therefore be useful to differentiate between maximisation of bureaucratic power as a goal in its own right and maximisation of bureaucratic power as a medium-term instrument to have in the long run enough institutional power in the policy process to enforce the policy that is preferred by the respective actor without having to make crucial compromises with other actors³³. This differentiation basically highlights if the actor has a short-term or a long-term view, but it does not really make a profound change in the theoretically assumed causal relationship. Therefore I propose to keep in mind that the maximisation of bureaucratic interest can have different short- and long-term reasons, but that it does not in itself change anything about the assumption of actors’ interaction.

In regard of the research interest of European policy-making towards the neighbourhood, it seems quite logical to assume that the Commission and the Council Secretariat have bureaucratic interests to maximise their competences. The Commission was for a long time kept out of foreign policy-making, as it was only “associated” (Duke 2006b). After the successful

³³ This differentiation of power as a mean and power as a goal in itself has a longstanding tradition in International Relations realist theoretical discussions.

enlargement in 2004 and 2007 the Commission repeatedly emphasised that these accessions were the “most successful EU foreign policy” and officials repeatedly stated their conviction that the Commission could contribute very positively to EU foreign policy, especially towards the neighbours, as the empirical chapters will show later on. In a similar vein, the Council Secretariat was from its beginning mainly meant to be supporting the presidency, without providing any advice and input in terms of content. However, especially with the development of EU crisis management, a change in its role perceptions could be observed (Juncos & Pomorska 2010) that would allow for a more prominent role of the Council Secretariat. Conflicting role perceptions and turf battles, nevertheless, have already been recorded before between EU actors, especially between the Commission and member states:

However, it must also be recognized that governments and the Commission are not monolithic; they have conflicting goals and their officials compete with each other to pursue those goals (Smith, M. E. 2001: 174).

It seems hence quite rationale to assume that the Commission and the Council Secretariat would support a change in interaction that enhances their role in ENP policy-making. But what motive could member states have to change the interaction, as this would mean that they allow for more involvement of other non-state actors in such a sensitive area like foreign policy-making? Here a more complex explanation is required. On the EU level member states encounter the problem that the CFSP pillar does not have any executive means to pursue its policies. If the member states decide common actions they can on the one hand try to implement them via their national foreign, or they have to rely on the first pillar to support their policies by implementing them. Hence, the task of implementation is with the member states or they have to rely on the benevolence of the EC-institutions to follow their policy. In regard of the latter possibility, bureaucratic politics approaches assume that “*units that are not involved in the decision game feel less obliged to faithfully implement decisions*” (Allison & Halperin 1972: 53-54). These problems have already been repeatedly experienced at EU level, what lead to the criticism that the political CFSP does in reality not have any impact despite issuing mere rhetorical declarations. With the acceptance of member states to integrate the different areas and change the involvement of (supranational) actors, they might also have the chance to use information, expertise and means of the EC-pillar and to critically control the faithful implementation of their decided policies. In this regard, also delegation theory and the earlier mentioned principal-agent approaches provide useful insights. Tallberg had elaborated on different motivations for principals to delegate to agents (Tallberg 2002) of which one was the reduction of information asymmetries. Tallberg argued that supranational institutions are able to provide policy expertise that is not accessible to all member states in the same degree.

Hence, I assume that as long as the actors, such as the Commission and the member states benefit to the same extent, the change in interaction will be consensual. But as soon as one actor

has the impression that it loses more than it gains or that another actor benefits to a larger extent than it does, a conflictual situation will occur. The Commission, for example, might be more involved in the policy process, but as the member states then might have made sure to gain also more control over implementation, Commission officials might end up with the impression that the new form of interaction is not advantageous. Therefore they might try to set limits to the control possibility of the member states and switch to a more conflictual form of interaction. On the other hand, the member states and the Council might first get the impression that they now have more possibilities to control the implementation process, but they might experience that through the stronger involvement of the Commission in the policy process, it is not solely their preferred policy anymore that they want to be pursued. Hence, they try to limit the involvement of the Commission in the specification stage, what would cause a conflictual situation again.

Next to the bureaucratic interest, the bureaucratic politics approach identifies policy-interest goals that actors try to pursue (Peters 1992). The second assumption of this thesis is linked to this second form of interest by incorporating the factor “policy demand” in the theoretical framework:

Assumption 2 (policy interest): The more the involved actors acknowledge the demand for functional linkages of policies and for an effective policy in a changing international environment, the more they are willing to change their interactions with other actors.

The main argument of this hypothesis is that actors recognize that they have to adapt their form of interaction to a more effective and “good” policy-making to satisfy a certain policy demand. Two reasons might explain why the old form of interaction is not appropriate anymore. *On the one hand*, I argue that changes and developments in the international arena (fight against terrorism as high salient issue or further increase of complexity, functional linkage between policy areas) cause strong demands for a more comprehensive form of policies, i.e. for integrated approaches (Christiansen 2001: 762; Stetter 2004: 721). Hence, the European actors acknowledge that in the new situation policies are functionally linked and that the best way to achieve successful policies also means to adapt to these developments in the way policies are pursued. Therefore they decide intentionally to change their pillarised and sectoral form of policy-making to a cross-pillar politics setting (Stetter 2004: 720).

On the other hand, a new policy demand might occur because of rational cost/benefit calculations or efficiency reasons. The member states intentionally decide to involve supranational actors for more efficient policy-making and under a strict control mechanism, because the quantity and complexity of foreign policy output on EU level has grown and they

lack the ability to pursue their policy ideas on their own. In the end, this growth of complexity and quantity might also lead back to changes in the international system.

Nevertheless, I think it is necessary to emphasise that this new form of policy demand does not automatically lead to the formation of a “European interest”, like it might be argued from a constructivist perspective. The motives for delegation and changes in the interactions that are used here are based on rational choice interpretations that the member states want to pursue the policies that are the best possible in their view and that do not cause extra costs. Hence, the motivation follows a rational cost-benefit calculation. Furthermore, I assume that it is important that this new policy does not essentially harm core national interests of the member states. This limitation is based on the proposition of the bureaucratic politics approach that compromises within and between bureaucracies “*must avoid to harm strongly felt interests of the participants*” (Allison & Halperin 1972: 53-54). Therefore I assume that the member states will accept the role of the Commission in their interaction, as long as they do not suspect that the newly pursued policy threatens their national interests. It does not have to be the case that a national interest is actually harmed, but it is crucial if the member states have the *impression* or the *feeling* that the Commission wants to push through a policy that might not go in line with the interest of the member states.

The idea of a rational motivation through policy demand can also be identified in EU studies, incorporating delegation theory and principal-agent accounts. As already mentioned within the first assumption of bureaucratic interest, Tallberg (2002) identified the reduction of information asymmetries as one potential factor that motivates member states to delegate certain tasks to supranational institutions, like the Commission. Member states delegate because the Commission provides policy expertise, and this way they can balance certain disadvantages that they might have opposite other member states, what hints to a bureaucratic interest. At the same time, a rational explanation might also show that a certain policy demand might trigger this motivation, in that far as the supranational institutions are perceived as more suitable to draft technical details in policy proposals than the politicians in the Council. Officials in the Commission and in the delegations in the third country might just have better knowledge about the best policy that should be pursued in certain circumstances. In addition, Tallberg argues that also the question for more efficiency in policy-making might motivate member states to delegate, as it has proven successful in other public policy areas that the European Council gives strategic guidelines, the Council adopts the rules and guidelines, but that the details for implementation are filled in by the Commission. In the end the latter describes well the shift from a pillarised way of achieving horizontal coherence to an integrated policy approach, but it has to be observed in detail to what extent this kind of motivation might also be visible during the set-up of the ENP.

In more concrete terms it could be expected that generally agreed common goals like for example creating security and stability in the near abroad are accepted by all the involved actors, but that differences exist in how to reach these goals. In the literature it is argued that the Commission often prefers trade and development as the primary means to achieve stability in the near abroad. In contrast to this more long term view, the member states often prefer short and medium term solutions that go more in line with their national preferences. The latter are mostly also more politically motivated, what might create a conflictual situation of interaction. Christiansen (2001) analysed how coherence between the pillars (inter-institutional) but also within the pillars (intra-institutional) changed, and he showed that inter-institutional coordination is increasing, but that coherence within the pillars is decreasing. His main explanation for this process is that increasing inter-institutional interaction causes specialisation and policy fragmentation, what in the long run leads to intra-institutional incoherence. He draws the conclusion that *“this happens because the identification with and knowledge of specific policy environments, i.e. the inter-institutional relations, are becoming more important for policy-makers than their institutional identification.”* (Christiansen 2001: 747). Especially in regard of the Commission and the Council Secretariat it will be interesting to test empirically, if this kind of shift is observable in EU policy-making towards the neighbours.

In theories about organizational management the willingness of the involved actors to contribute action and to accomplish a common purpose are even seen as prerequisite to establish an organisation (Barnard 1970: 65). The same applies to cooperation. In broad terms the involved actors must agree about the main intended policy goal, as otherwise cooperation between them will not be probable. At EU level these broadly defined goals are already incorporated in the treaties, or as in regard of the EU policy towards the neighbourhood have also been formulated in the ENP strategy (European Commission 2004b). But it is the task of the different actors to decide and implement more concrete policies that support these general goals, and there might be quite different perceptions about the most successful way to do so.

3.2.2. The Dispositional Dimension: Socialisation and Learning over Time

Carlsnaes assumes that a causal relationship links the second dispositional dimension to the intentional dimension. He argues (Carlsnaes 1992: 254-255) that in explaining a foreign policy action it is useful to start with the intentional dimension (preferences, choices), but that we can *“deepen the analysis by providing a causal determination [...] in which the factors characterizing the intentional dimension are themselves explained [...] how a particular intention has come to be a particular actor’s intention”*. After identifying the bureaucratic and policy interests of the diverse actors at the intentional level, factors of the dispositional dimension derived from socialisation and learning based on a constructivist perspective help to

explain why actors took certain preferences, and why these might have changed over time. The main assumed rationale here is that the factor “time”³⁴ is crucial in shaping change in actors’ interaction, especially in terms of moving from a conflictual to a consensual interaction.

Assumption 3 (time factor): The longer the actors are able to adapt to the new form of interaction and the longer they have time to experience their new roles, the better the interaction will become over time. Hence, their new form of interaction improves over time.

Contrary to rationalism and its ‘logic of consequentialism’, constructivists argue that actors follow a ‘logic of appropriateness’ where they “*try to ‘do the right thing’ rather than maximizing or optimising their given preferences*” (March and Olson, 1989, 1998 cited by Risse 2004). Furthermore constructivism “*focus on the causal processes of socialization by which particular agents acquire their identities and interest*” (Fearon & Wendt 2002: 57). The actors subordinate their individual self-interests to the importance of cooperation and coherent action as they are convinced that cooperation between them is expected from the other EU actors, but probably also from their citizens. Closely linked to this logic of appropriateness, is the mechanism of learning and socialisation (Beyers 2005; Checkel, J. 2005; Johnston 2005; Lewis 2005). Once provided that the actors are willing to cooperate, it is also important that they learn how to cooperate successfully.

Learning and socialisation as applied here, however, do not draw on those sociological strains of constructivism which assume that actors through their interaction create totally new preferences in terms of the pursued policy. In contrast, it is assumed here that the actors’ perception about what is appropriate in terms of the interaction with other actors is shaped in a certain way, ie they learn to more clearly define their own and others’ roles and responsibilities. This implies that the process of learning and socialisation does not automatically lead to the formation of a “European interest”, like it is often argued from a more superficial, constructivist perspective. It seems plausible to assume that generally the EU actors want to interact and achieve an EU policy output, especially when they already agree on the general objectives of certain policies, but that changes in interaction, introduced for example by the ENP, might cause distortion and the need of time for the actors to get used to the new form of interaction.³⁵ Adebahr, for example, argues that for organisational learning “*a change of organisational routines*” (Adebahr 2007: 8) is essential. Actors learn within the ongoing process of interaction

³⁴ For the importance of conceptualising and theorising “time” as a factor, see Special issue of the Journal of European Public Policy, entitled “The EU Timescape”, Vol 16(2), March 2009 (Checkel, J. 2001).

³⁵ A similar argument about the strategic use of norms and appropriate behaviour is formulated by Juncos/Pomorska (2006) in their paper about socialisation in the Council working groups. They argue that officials in these working groups that the pressure for appropriate behaviour in to account when they block certain decision making processes, but that this is not done because of socialisation or Europeanization but because of strategic long-term calculations.

what their role is and to what extent they can expand this role without getting sanctioned by the other actors. Information processing is during this stage the main element of learning (Adebahr 2007:10). Furthermore, the involved actors primarily experience how to best communicate and how to behave without creating conflict with others. At the same time, of course, actors might also learn from negative experiences, for example when they realise after some time that resistance to a certain form of interaction does not pay off.

3.2.3. The Structural Dimension: Restraining Conditions of Bargaining Advantage, Unintended Consequences and the Ability to successful Communication

In addition to the intentional and the interpretative dimension, Carlsnaes' third structural dimension takes constraining conditions into account. It has to be emphasised, however, that structure-centred factors do not per se mean institutions, but that, quite on the contrary, institutions (like the Commission) are considered as actors in the theoretical framework of this thesis. Structure-centred factors imply relationships, division of competences, institutional settings etc. They grasp the relationship between institutions or between an institution and the member states, explain the "rule of the games" and shape interactions either in enabling or constraining a certain form of interaction between actors.

Once more it has to be emphasised that the structural dimension does not constitute causal factors, ie they are not able to shape the change in interaction themselves, but they might be needed to achieve a certain change (for example from conflictual to consensual interaction). Hence, in methodological terms it can be argued that they are necessary but not sufficient conditions for changing the interactions of EU actors in foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood.

Three aspects are taken into account as structural factors that constrain and enable a change in interaction in EU foreign policy-making: the ability for successful communication, bargaining advantages, and incomplete contracting. The first factor is more drawn from common experience than a clear theoretical school, but I nevertheless think it is an important aspect to keep in mind.

Assumption 4 (communication factor³⁶): the more the institutional set-up asks for direct contact between the actors and exchange of their opinions, the more likely a consensual (change in) interaction between these actors gets.

³⁶ The idea of „argumentative persuasion“ is in more detailed elaborated by Jeffery Checkel (See Kingdon 1984) in his working paper about “Theorizing social interaction in European Institutions”. Checkel follows a purely constructivist approach he argues for the change in preferences as the dependent variable (what this thesis rejects). However, the processes that he describes are interesting to reflect upon also here.

This assumption is based on the idea that officials who know each other, meet and perhaps also work together for a longer time develop a more friendly understanding for each others' positions than officials that never met each other face-to-face. Juncos and Pomorska, for example, show evidence that officials in CFSP working groups in Brussels “*were exposed to a spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding*” what they labelled as “*esprit de corps*” (Juncos & Pomorska 2006: 6). This does not automatically imply that national officials in Brussels after interacting with other actors do not defend the national position of their member state anymore, but at least these officials feel a certain need not to unnecessarily offend their partners in the respective working groups and institutions. Furthermore, it seems plausible to assume that actors who meet each other regularly also have more opportunities to explain their positions, i.e. to make the others understand why they act in a certain way. This structural condition is closely related to the factor “time”, and it also links to a certain extent back to research about general decision-making in the Council that showed that member states' representatives that meet in COREPER every week have a quite different relationship among each other, than for example the ministers of the respective Council formations that meet only once per month (see for example Fouilleux, Maillard & Smith 2005).

In addition to this factor of successful communication, it seems indispensable to also theoretically highlight that the involved actors are not the same, but that each of them has certain advantages and disadvantages vis-à-vis others in the EU political system, hence that they might have certain bargaining advantages in the interaction with others, but also when changing these interactions.

Assumption 5 (bargaining advantage): If an actor is aware that it has certain bargaining advantages vis-à-vis others, it is more willing to change interaction, as it is more likely that it might gain even more advantages.

It was already elaborated beforehand that the member states are of course the ones who have the final say in terms of decision making in foreign policy-making, especially in the realm of CFSP and ESDP. However, while legal competences might provide a certain advantage for the member states as principals of EU foreign policy-making, other factors like easier access to information (from the EC delegation) or financial means (from the EC budget) might be advantageous for the Commission. The different actors involved hence are not equal in a sense that they have the same powers and means at their disposal. These factors, on the one hand, might create a certain bargaining advantage for the respective actors in their interaction, but they might also influence the way the interactions are changed.

The third structural assumption that is taken into account refers to the idea of interstitial institutional change (as outlined in chapter 3.1) and historical institutionalism (Pierson 2004)

Assumption 6 (incomplete contracting / unintended consequences of institutional change): The interaction of actors was not intentionally and in detail decided during treaty changes, but is shaped through incomplete contracting and unintended consequences of institutional change that took place at an earlier stage.

This assumption rests on the main idea that there was no master-plan underlying the change, but that the latter was triggered by certain institutional arrangements that were not directly meant to restructure EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours. On the one hand such decisions might have been taken earlier in other circumstances what in the end resulted in unintended consequences of prior (institutional) change in regard of the ENP interaction, or on the other hand those might be explained by historical institutionalism in that far as that all changes at EU level are path-dependent on prior arrangements and that institutions are reluctant to change.

The idea of path-dependency is central to historical institutionalism, arguing that “time” has to be taken into account to understand politics at a certain point in time and that “*political development must be understood as a process that unfolds over time*”(Pierson 2004: 29). These processes, in addition, leave their marks on formal rules, institutional structures and norms at different stages in time. Furthermore, this theoretical approach rests on the idea of “incomplete contracting”, as “*the current functioning of institutions cannot be derived from the aspirations of the original designers*” (Pierson 1996: 126-127). Incomplete contracting assumes that the principals of EU policy-making, i.e. the member states, are not able to draft treaties in a way that they cover every detailed contingency, and hence, between formal treaty changes the involved institutions (e.g. Commission, Council or European Parliament) try to enforce its own interpretation of the formal treaty regulations to maximise their control and bureaucratic power in the policy process (Farrell & Héritier 2007b: 235; Caporaso 2007: 393). In regard of the research question of this thesis, this implies that member states during treaty negotiations did not have in mind to create intentionally this form of interaction in EU foreign policy-making as it evolved after the ENP was set-up. Furthermore, they do not even have the ability to do so because historical institutionalists also assume that actors decide under bounded rationality, i.e. that the member states were not able to calculate all the implications of their decisions at the point in time when the treaties were changed.

Incomplete contracting is relevant for the alternative strand of explanation: Structural conditions in terms of *unintended consequences of prior (institutional) change* are derived from approaches that assume change as interstitial institutional change or from principal-agent accounts. For example, the Commission often argues that it should have a stronger role in EU foreign policy-making because of its successful input in the pre-accession process of the 2004/07 enlargement. The Commission was given this strong role to monitor and evaluate the

accession process, and there was no intention of the member states to also spread this Commission tasks to other policy areas.

Undesired consequences are, for example, highlighted in Tallberg's principal-agent model. They are part of the consequences of delegation that Tallberg tries to explain on the one hand by neo-functional accounts in that far that an initial delegation of power from the member states to the agent lead to unanticipated delegation effects so that supranational institutions could independently shape the integration process (as they got out of control from the principals' perspective). On the other hand, Tallberg also delivers an intergovernmental explanation that assumes that supranational institutions are as "passive devices facilitating intergovernmental bargaining" who "simply fulfil functions delegated to them by member governments, which remain firmly in control of process of delegation" (Tallberg 2002: 33). In opposition to Tallberg I assume that the term "unintended consequences" is better suitable than "undesired consequences", as it must not be automatically assumed that certain actors totally oppose developments that they did not foresee and that they did not purposively decide about.

While all six factors fit well in the adapted version of Carlsnaes' model, the factors provide assumptions towards two different aspects of the research question: while the factors from the intentional dimension (bureaucratic interest and policy interest), the factor of bargaining-advantage and incomplete contracting are motives that explain why certain actors asked for a change in interaction or at least allowed it, factor 3 about socialisation and learning over time, as well as factor 4 about communication target primarily the question in what mode this change took place, i.e. those latter two factors might explain if this change was conflictual or consensual, but they are not factors that should be considered as primary motivations of actors.

3.3. Research Strategy and Methodology

This thesis so far outlined the research focus of this study, the relevance and linkage to current academic research as well as the theoretical framework. The aim is to investigate the EU internal objective of the ENP to provide a single coherent framework for EU foreign policy-making, and the theoretical framework showed that the research approach draws on bringing together traditional Foreign Policy Analysis and EU public policy scholarship. On the next pages I briefly outline four aspects that give insight in how the research questions are going to be tackled: First, process-tracing as the main approach will be explained and its advantages for this kind of research emphasised. Furthermore, the way of collecting and selecting evidence and empirical material is presented, by also discussing the idea of explorative expert interviews. Thirdly, it is necessary to explain why this thesis does not follow a strictly comparative approach but uses the EU relationship with two countries (Morocco, Georgia) as illustrations.

Finally, a short overview about the selected timeframe helps the reader to be able to put the investigated change in a time-perspective.

- Process-tracing as a Method to investigate Mechanisms and Processes

This research project is not set-up in a way to be a “theory testing case study” (for the definition and differentiation of different kinds of theory-building research objectives in comparative politics see George & Bennett 2005: 74-76) where different theoretical approaches are tested for their validity through the elaborated variation of independent variables. The aim of this project is to explain the change in interactions in policy-making towards the neighbourhood by using established theories that have been adapted accordingly. Hence, in accordance with the categorisation of George and Bennett this research project could be labelled a “disciplined configurative case study” (2005: 75) This rationale of understanding a process rather than testing a theory fits well with the application of the qualitative method of process which is defined as following:

“The general method of process tracing is to generate and analyse data on the causal mechanisms, or processes, events, actions, expectations, and other intervening variables, that link putative causes to observed effects” (Bennett & George 1997).

Process-tracing allows deducing from collecting rich empirical material about one case and investigating this case in detail. Bennett and George also highlight that process tracing rather contributes to our understanding of causal mechanisms, while a more quantitative method of co-variation mainly focuses on causal effects (the latter being the rationale behind more quantitative research projects). Hence, while the latter mainly tries to explain what factors are the most relevant to explain the observed outcome, process tracing looks at the processes and mechanisms that led to the outcome (for more elaborations on process tracing as method in the social sciences see also Checkel, J. T. 2003: 213; Brady & Collier 2004: 300; Bennett & George 1997: 4). This thesis traces how the role of the different actors has changed over time, i.e. it looks at the process of change and what mechanisms have led to a conflictual or consensual interaction. It furthermore intends to trace and reconstruct empirically how the process of change occurred and what factors impacted on this process at different points in time. It does so by not only investigating the causal relationship between variables (A causes B, i.e. the socialised norm of good cooperation with the Commission caused a more consensual behaviour of the Council Secretariat), but process-tracing also allows to take necessary but not sufficient variables into account, as for example the unintended consequences of institutional changes and other as “structural” termed factors.

Apart from the special focus on explaining a process rather than explaining an output, process-tracing as a method also inherits two other advantages that suit this thesis well. First of all, scholars argue that process tracing is especially suitable when the research design is “time-

sensitive” (Exadaktylos & Radaelli 2009: 510). This argument is of course closely linked to the idea of focusing on a “process” rather than a “status quo”, and it fits neatly with the theoretical framework where time is conceptualised as a relevant factor on the interpretative dimension. In addition, Checkel argues that one significant advantage of process-tracing is that it allows to *“move us beyond unproductive ‘either-or’ meta-theoretical debates to empirical applications in which both agents and structures matter”* (Checkel, J. 2006: 636). The set-up of the theoretical framework of this thesis based on Carlsnaes’ model to bring together structure and agency-related arguments, hence, seems another argument for the suitability of process tracing.

The disadvantage of this method, however, is that it needs to look in very much detail into certain processes, what requires a detailed examination of a huge amount of empirical material. Hence, it is not possible to examine in detail within this thesis if the exactly same process of interaction change occurred towards all neighbours across all policy areas. This draw-back is one of the reasons why this thesis focuses on two illustrative case studies instead of applying a strictly comparative design. But before we move on to reflect on the case selection of this thesis, the more general approach to evidence collection and selection of empirical material is discussed.

- The Collection and Selection of Empirical Evidence

First of all, this thesis relies on relevant primary documents of the EU actors themselves about the ENP but also on documents that were intended to improve the interaction of actors in more general terms. In regard of ENP primary documents those have been taken into consideration that deal with the set-up of the ENP but also those that contribute to the implementation and monitoring of EU foreign policy-making within the ENP framework³⁷. In addition, of course, secondary literature is used to provide relevant data for the analysis. This bulk of literature mostly either relates to academic analyses of detailed country studies, or to reports from NGOs, think tanks or other actors in Brussels or in the respective third countries that observe and commentate on EU policy-making towards the neighbours. While reports of the latter are less theoretical and more descriptive in nature, they provide interesting empirical material and observations that can be used to trace the process of change in EU actors’ behaviour, even if those reports do not focus on the internal aim of the ENP to change the interaction of EU actors.

The analysis of this thesis also focuses to a large extent on the motivations of the actors to prefer the ENP set-up in a certain way and to allow for a specific kind of change. To be able to identify these motivations it is therefore indispensable to engage with these actors and identify their underlying motivations and reasoning. Hence, empirical evidence for this research was

³⁷ For both categories of ENP documents see for a good starting point the ENP Website of the European Commission at http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm

also conducted by way of expert interviews with the relevant actors themselves in Brussels. The conducted interviews were semi-structure to allow for following up on certain information gained during the interview and to allow for adaptation to the aspects that were perceived as most important by the actors themselves. This way of allowing flexibility during the interview relates directly to one observed advantage of elite interviews compared to standardised interviewing (Dexter 2006: 3), i.e. it is not the researcher who defines what is perceived as important for the interviewee, but it is the interviewee him/herself who defines what the problem or the main motivation behind a certain position is. Hence, potential answers to questions are left open-ended first, to be interpreted by the interviewee. Only after the interviewee indicated certain preferences and motivations, more detailed question about the background and explanation for these perceived motivations were asked.

All interviewees had been identified according to their institutional position in the EU Directory³⁸ and contacted beforehand per Email. These emails contained a short and general elaboration about why they have been contacted by outlining that this research aims at finding out more about the set-up of the ENP and the institutional dynamics within this framework. At the same time, this outline did not go too much into detail, as doing so could have pushed interviewees to answer in a biased way or to feel intimidated to speak openly about their motivations (for more reflections of how much to reveal to interviewees beforehand and some other ethical issues about interviewing see Dexter 2006: 37). At the beginning of each interview, it was explained that just the institutional position would be used for the research and that notes and recordings would not be handed over to third persons without the explicit agreement of the interviewee. This should guarantee anonymity to the interviewees and at the same time allow them to speak more openly without having to fear repercussions from their superiors for providing certain information during the interview³⁹. While this aspect was taken into account, it was rather surprising how open and reflected most of the interviewees behaved during the interviews. Furthermore, interviewees could choose not to be recorded on tape, but only a few of them decided for this option. In addition, notes were taken after each interview about the situation, off the record elaborations, observed behaviour of the interviewee, and other issues that might be relevant for the study⁴⁰.

³⁸ See <http://europa.eu/whoiswho/public/index.cfm?lang=en>; For the more detailed directory of the European Commission see also http://ec.europa.eu/staffdir/plsql/gsys_page.display_index?pLang=EN

³⁹ Dexter made an interesting observation about how interviewees behave during elite-interviews: "it is the interview that is making the elite feel more special and willing to give information that they might not give under different circumstances." (Dexter 2006: 5)

⁴⁰ These notes and tapes are stored with the author, and will be shown if requested. However, because anonymity had been guaranteed, no transcripts of the interviews have been included in this thesis.

At the beginning of the interview the respective expert was asked about the time that would be possible to take for the interview. In general, interviews lasted between 35 and 70 minutes.

In total, 23 experts interviews were conducted during two research trips to Brussels in May and November 2006 with officials of the Directorate General for External Relations (RELEX), of the Directorate General AIDCO (EuropeAid), of the Council Secretariat, with representatives of the Presidency as well as several other officials of the permanent representations of the member states. In addition, two follow-up interviews were conducted in February 2008 with representatives of the third countries under investigation, and in 2009 two final interviews with an official working in the Cabinet of then Relex-Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner and with one official of the German Permanent Representation were used to triangulate and cross-check few observations that could not be cross-verified otherwise.

- The Units of Analysis: an illustrative Case Selection

It was already elaborated above that this chapter follows the logic of a disciplined configurative case study, as categorised by George and Bennett (2005: 75). In contrast to cross-case studies this implies that the research design only uses a limited number of cases and it focuses on explaining the within-case variation, i.e. it aims to explain the processes and mechanisms that took place within the case rather than showing which variable is able to explain most of the variation. Cross-case studies, on the other hand, would be more interested in the cross-case variation, while the within-case evidence is only secondary. Gerring argues that both “*have the same object in view – the explanation of a population of cases – but they go about this task differently*” (Gerring 2007: 20-21). In a similar vein like process-tracing, the advantage of a configurational case study is the focus on mechanisms, while cross-case studies focus mainly on effects (Gerring 2007: 38). Moreover, Gerring emphasises that especially “*when studying decisional behaviour*” case study research allows for discovering and investigating “*the intentions, the reasoning capabilities, and the information-process procedures of the actors involved in a given setting*” (Gerring 2007: 45).

This shows that a case study approach together with process-tracing seems a suitable research approach to the research questions under investigation. The question, however, remains which and how many cases to select (for a concise overview for the different possibilities of how to select cases see Gerring 2007: 89). Ideally, of course a systematic, theory-testing (quantitative) comparison of EU relations towards different countries/regions and within different policy areas would be interesting on the long run and as follow-up project (for discussion about advantages of quantitative design and pitfalls of single case studies see also Pickel, Lauth, Jahn & Pickel 2003; Keman 1999). But as long as there are no single empirical studies that give a comprehensive picture about this internal ENP aim, it is just not feasible to embark on such a

design. We just know too little about the mechanisms but also about the potential single cases to apply a quantitative design. Furthermore, it has to be kept in mind that the emphasis of this research project is not that much the comparison between different countries but the comparison over time, as I am primarily interested in the process and causes of change in interactions.

In terms of unit of analysis, this thesis of course focuses on the adaptations in Brussels when setting up the ENP. Hence, the ENP as a single framework and the changes brought about in the formal relationship with 16 EU neighbours is the first object for a case study that has to be considered. However, as this thesis also asks about the motivations for change (as for example the policy interest in general but also in more particular terms like national interests towards a certain country) and takes into account implementation, it is also necessary to investigate how the ENP worked out in practice. While it is possible to make some general observations about the ENP framework, it seems therefore also necessary to focus on the EU relationship with few specific countries that allows drawing conclusions about how the interaction of EU actors changed/did not change when the ENP had been implemented. This means that next to the general ENP framework, the EU relationship with a few countries is the unit of analysis. By way of selecting two specific countries this thesis is able to become more concrete in analysing the actual implementation of the ENP policy without staying at a very abstract and general level.

But which two countries would be most suitable to be selected from the 16 neighbouring countries⁴¹ that take part in the ENP? To investigate how and why the interaction of European actors changed and how this process developed cases have to be selected where actors of both pillars are involved and where the European interest to achieve effective interaction is salient. I assume that the EU will especially strive for coherent action towards countries and regions that constitute a priority for the EU and its member states. Generally, the ENP is of course aimed at achieving coherence towards all countries, as it is supposed to establish one single framework, but we have to assume that this was not achieved right from the beginning but that this transition took some time. By looking at countries where the EU showed a strong interest, we look at most likely cases, as especially in those cases the EU actors can be expected to strive for a smooth transition and consensual cooperation. This also implies that by looking at these most likely cases this thesis assesses the potential that the ENP inherits for coherence and a smooth change in EU actors' interaction.

⁴¹ The countries involved in the ENP are Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan as well as the Mediterranean countries Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Palestinian Authority, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. Furthermore, Libya participates in the ENP but not in the EMP. Contrary to that, the ENP is not directed towards Cyprus and Malta (who became members of the EU in the meantime) and Turkey (where negotiations about a possible membership are in progress).

Two priorities in the EU external relations have been identified after the end of the Cold War: the Central and East European Countries (CEEC) and the Mediterranean Region⁴² (Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 138; Smith, K. 2003: 59). The importance of these regions for the EU is explicitly emphasised in various documents, but it is also shown in the EC expenditure for external actions (see Figure 3, p. 26). The EC expenditure for the Southern Mediterranean and the Middle East increased steadily from 25% in 2001 to 35% in 2006 of the overall financial means for external actions. According to figure 3, the expenditures for the Eastern neighbours did not increase but it has to be kept in mind that with enlargement relations with several countries were not financed through this financial framework of external actions anymore but through a separate budget heading.

Relations of the European Community and the European Union to the Mediterranean Countries already have been well established over time. Since 1995 the multilateral Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) has been established, and since 2003 the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was meant to bilaterally complement these relations. The relations with Israel and Palestine are highly politicised. Both are dealt with in addition and even more prominently within the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP), but choosing this special relationship as research focus would distort our findings in terms of generalising observations and hence is not suitable for a case study for this research. Libya and its leader Gaddafi also constitute a special case within the ENP, where the EU and its members are torn between cooperating because of migration pressures and sanctioning a rogue regime. Lebanon and Syria developed stronger relationships with the EU especially since the Lebanon war in 2006, but were rather left aside in the early years of the ENP, although they were of course part of the ENP. After a first literature review it became quite clear that from the Southern neighbours it is the Maghreb countries Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia that have a most stable relationship with the EU. In regards of Algeria the problem occurs that this country is not very keen to cooperate with the EU, as it does not need these relations as much as other countries in the region because of oil and gas deposits and a high world market price for these commodities. Being left choosing between Morocco and Tunisia for the Southern dimension, I decided to choose Morocco as case study, as the EU relations with this country seem more intensified, Morocco repeatedly asked for a special relationship with the EU, and the EU repeatedly labelled Morocco as its model partner.

However, the ENP is not only made up of countries at the southern shore of the Mediterranean, but its main aim was to re-structure the relations with countries in the East after the big enlargement in 2004. The main rationale of selecting a second case from the East is not to compare these two dimensions, but to allow for a more general picture of how the EU works

⁴² Twelve countries of the Mediterranean region participate in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Cyprus, Malta and Turkey.

towards both, the South and the East. Selecting one case from the South and one case from the East ensures that no bias is included in the research design because of only focusing on one dimension. In the East Belarus, similar to Libya or Algeria, constitutes a difficult case for the EU and its member states, as its autocratic ruler only sporadically seems willing to cooperate. Moldova is considered the trouble-case in terms of poverty and slow development, while Ukraine right from the beginning voiced its discontent of not getting a clear accession perspective. The Southern Caucasus countries of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, on the other hand, were at the beginning ignored and only considered to be added to the ENP after an intervention of the European Parliament. As Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova seem special in different regards, the Southern Caucasus countries were chosen as the main focus, and within them especially Georgia. The reasoning behind this choice will be explained below.

Next to selecting two concrete country cases, it seems also necessary to draw a closer focus in terms of policy content. Keeping in mind that the internal aim of the ENP is to overcome the strict differentiation along policy areas and to engage in a cross-pillar but also cross-policy approach, it would be inappropriate to select according to policy areas. Hence, the decision was taken to look at a specific policy objective and at how different policy areas contribute to this more general goal. As central general policy goal the broadly defined objective of conflict prevention and creation of stability and security in the neighbourhood is selected. Security promotion and conflict prevention ask for a comprehensive approach that draws not only from military action but also incorporates a wide range of civilian means and a broad definition of security. Furthermore, this objective is highlighted as one of the most important objectives by the EU but also by its member states, and its salience increased dramatically after the terrorist attacks in New York in 2001 and Madrid in 2004.

To sum up, this thesis will emphasise three different aspects to be investigated. On the one hand it looks at the more general changes in policy-making in Brussels, but on the other hand it investigates changes in EU policy-making towards Morocco and towards Georgia. Cross-cutting for all three aspects a special emphasis is laid on the general ENP objective of conflict prevention and security promotion in the neighbourhood. While the two country cases are similar to a certain extent, they also differ in a few other aspects what is going to be shown in more detail in the empirical part of this thesis. However, we should also be aware of some general features right from the start, as those allow for interesting assumptions in regard of the theoretical framework. We can expect that the change in interaction of EU actors might be slightly different in these two cases, because of following similarities and differences:

- In regard of possible unintended consequences of institutional change the two case studies have the same conditions as formal treaty changes of course would be applicable to relations with all third countries. But the interesting question in this regard is if the interactions of the

actors towards Morocco changed at an earlier point in time than towards Georgia, as the South Caucasus was not included in the ENP from the beginning but just incorporated in this policy framework in 2003.

- In a similar vein, the EU relations with Georgia started at a later point in time, and when the ENP was set-up there was not much that would have to be taken into account from earlier experiences. Hence, the factor of time is different in the two case studies.
- Although the institutional set-up was the same for all neighbouring countries, the relations with Morocco developed as the most intense, and hence this relation seems the best observable case to examine the mechanisms and causes of change in the interplay of the European actors in day-to-day policy-making. Georgia was included into the ENP only in 2003, but the interesting feature of this case is, that here a Special Representative was nominated, the EU conducted a CFSP law-mission in 2003, and that since then an intense interaction between the different actors and their policies was required.
- The relationship with Georgia has a more politicised and conflict-driven background than the relations with Morocco. Hence, in the past policies towards Georgia were primarily pursued within the CFSP pillar what also implies that the Council and its auxiliary bodies (a special representative for this region and his team) were more involved in policy-making towards the South Caucasus than towards Morocco. The starting point of bureaucratic influence differs in the two cases, although I expect that in general the bureaucratic interest of the actors to get involved in policy-making towards these two countries is similar. Hence, it can be expected that the EU-Morocco relationship is more technical and spread over different policy areas, while the EU-Georgia relationship is still highly politicised.
- The general EU policy goal of creating security and stability is the same in both cases, but towards Morocco single member states (especially Spain and France) claim stronger national interests to preserve what is not the case towards Georgia. Hence, the general policy demand is the same in the two case studies, but the national (economic) interests that might get in conflict with this policy demand are much stronger in regard of Morocco.
- Both Morocco and Georgia are involved in frozen conflicts, but while the Georgian dispute with Russia about the autonomous regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia constitutes a direct threat and hence a salient topic for the European Union, the Western Sahara conflict does not seem high on the agenda of the European Union.

These elaborations show that we can expect that the EU-Georgia relationship is newer (i.e. in terms of not having a long past to have to be taken into account), more politicised and concentrated on security issues, while the EU-Morocco relationship is longstanding, well developed in a variety of policy areas and more technical in nature. Hence, this also leads to the assumption that a change in EU actors' interaction might be expected to be smoother in the

Moroccan case, but that the more politicised and newer relations with Georgia might lead to conflicts, also because more diverse actors are involved.

Before we, however, can now move on to check these assumptions with the empirical evidence, it is also crucial to be very clear on the timeframe under investigation to avoid confusion. The ENP was formally established with the Common Strategy in 2004, but debates about this policy framework already started in 2002. Furthermore, as the aim of this thesis is to investigate the change in EU actors' interaction, also the situation before the ENP has to be taken into account. For the Southern neighbourhood partners, hence, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership that was established in 1995 has to be considered. Furthermore, we can not stop with the establishment of the ENP, but as we also want to find out how the policy framework was implemented in practice, it is extremely important to look at the first years of the ENP implementation. In total, hence, the main timeframe of investigation of this thesis runs from 1998 to 2007. Figure 8 provides a short overview about the main timeframe under investigation, highlighting the main developments in regard of the EU relations with its neighbours, other EU internal changes that are relevant for this thesis, but also EU external events that are considered of having left their marks on EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours⁴³.

Figure 8: The timeframe under investigation

year	EU relations with neighbours	EU internally	EU externally
1995	Barcelona process EMP established		
1996			
1997			
1998			
1999		Amsterdam Treaty in force	
2000	Common Strategy for the Mediterranean		
2001			9/11 US terrorist attacks fight against terrorism starts US Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan
2002	ENP discussion starts	Convention to draft treaty establishing Constitution for Europe	
2003	Wider Europe Communication COM(2003)104	Nice Treaty in force	US invasion Iraq

⁴³ In regard of EU-Georgia relations, please keep in mind that the Georgian War with Russia over South-Ossetia is not part of the timeframe under investigation anymore.

2004	ENP Strategy paper COM(2004)343	2004 enlargement & constitutional treaty discussion	Madrid train bombings
2005	10 years of EMP 7 ENP Action Plans adopted	Negative referenda on EU constitution	London public transport bombings
2006	Strengthening the ENP COM(2006)726 ENPI discussion starts 3 ENP Action Plans adopted		Lebanon War
2007	ENPI adopted 2 ENP Action Plans		
2008	12 Progress Reports “Union for the Mediterranean” “Eastern Partnership”		<i>Georgia-Russia war over South Ossetia</i>
Please note: the first stages highlighted in grey show the status-quo of the EU relations with the neighbours and is therefore not the central timeframe under investigation but provides the starting point of this research project.			

3.4. Conclusion: Summing up the Research Design

This chapter presented the theoretical framework and the assumptions deduced from European integration literature and foreign policy analysis. In addition, it discussed the methodological approach of process tracing, the way of selecting cases and the collection of empirical material.

First, the change in EU actors' interaction was defined as the dependent variable, and two different categorisations were used to differentiate between consensual and conflictual change, but also between a more traditional coherent EU approach and an integrated EU policy-making approach. For structuring the independent factors that are taken into account in this study, an adaptation of Carlsnaes' model to explain a foreign policy action was used as a framework that inherits three distinct dimensions: The intentional dimension draws on a differentiation in foreign policy analysis between reflexive and purposive goals, and hence brings together the factor of “bureaucratic power” and “policy interest”. On the dispositional dimension, the factor “time” is added to allow for explaining certain socialisation and learning mechanisms. The structural dimension, at last, adds a “communication factor” to “bargaining advantage” and “incomplete contracting”. While the latter are not considered as sufficient factors to lead to change themselves, they are conceptualised as constraining conditions that might be necessary to allow for change.

In terms of methodology, this thesis follows a qualitative design of process-tracing and a disciplined configurative case study, as defined by George and Bennett (2005). It is explained how the empirical material was collected and selected and also elaborated in more detail on the three different levels that the empirical investigation is focusing on: on the one hand, this thesis of course focuses on the general changes that occurred in Brussels during the set-up of the ENP, but at the same time a change in EU actors' interaction in policy-making towards Morocco and

Georgia are more closely observed to allow for an understanding of how the actors' interaction changed when the ENP was put into practice and implemented. The timeframe under investigation is 2002 to 2007. While looking at these three different levels, the main emphasis is on how the EU manages to achieve its more general set objective of conflict prevention and security promotion in the neighbourhood. Different kinds of data (primary documents, secondary literature and expert interviews) are used for process tracing to examine the process and causes of change in this particular area of EU foreign policy-making.

This thesis so far specified the design of the research, the special focus but also the theoretical and methodological approach. The next main part II moves to the empirical investigation of the assumptions made, and it starts off with chapter 4 that provides a concise overview about the development, main features, objectives and also instruments of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Part II - Presenting the Empirics

Chapter 4: THE ENP – how it came about, what it is, and what it does

“The Union shall develop a special relationship with neighbouring countries, aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness, founded on the values of the Union and characterised by close and peaceful relations based on cooperation.”

Art. 8 TEU (Lisbon Treaty)

In its relations with the wider world, the European Union and its member states have created different frameworks to handle the relationships with third countries. The immediate neighbours of the European Union thereby have been repeatedly emphasised as a priority for EU strategic action, especially since the end of the Cold War (Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 138; Smith, K. 2003: 59). It was, however, for the first time with the Lisbon Treaty that the relations with the neighbourhood are even explicitly emphasised in the treaty text (see quote above).

Yet, the relations with the immediate neighbours of the EU are arranged in different, sometimes overlapping frameworks that developed at different points in time and with different pace and intensity. Since 1994 a European Economic Area has been set-up with the EFTA countries Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein to allow these countries to participate in the EU common market without membership. Iceland is at the same time a current candidate country for EU accession, together with Croatia, Turkey and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). The latter two are dealt with within the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) that is the general instrument towards the Western Balkans and hence also incorporates the EU relations with all the current potential EU candidates, which are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo. The EU-Russia relationship, on the other hand, is organised as a strategic partnership that is built up upon four common spaces⁴⁴. Next to these frameworks, the rather broad framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) covers all other countries in the EU proximity from Morocco to Ukraine, and it is supplemented by the more current initiatives of the Union for the Mediterranean and the Eastern Partnership.

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was launched as a policy framework between 2003 and 2004, with the main objective “*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*” (COM 2004,

⁴⁴ For background information see for example about Russia: http://eeas.europa.eu/russia/common_spaces/index_en.htm, about Western Balkans http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/index_en.htm, about EFTA members <http://www.efta.int/legal-texts/eea.aspx>;

373 final: 3). Initially, the ENP was established to govern the relations with the EU's new eastern periphery, but was geographically extended to the whole "near abroad" when the set-up of the new framework was debated in 2003/04 (Fernández, H. A. & Youngs 2005: 17).

The respective ENP partner countries do not primarily have the potential for membership, but the EU offers them a privileged relationship within the framework of the ENP initiative, which builds on mutual commitment to common values, such as the rule of law, good governance, human rights, the principles of market economy and sustainable development. The countries involved in the ENP are Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Palestinian Authority, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco.

This chapter is meant to provide an introduction to the European Neighbourhood Policy, outlining its main features, formal development and set-up, its goals and instruments. By providing detailed background knowledge about the European Neighbourhood Policy, this chapter is more descriptive in nature but indispensable for the better understanding of the analysis in the subsequent chapters. At the same time, it shows clearly that the ENP set-up did not follow a general master plan, but that this new initiative was negotiated, adapted and changed over time by various actors.

In a first step the evolution and development of the ENP as a policy framework will be investigated, putting special emphasis on the road towards the 2003 Commission Communication and the 2004 ENP Strategy paper. In a next step, the ENP objectives and aims are scrutinized, before we move to the set-up as a single framework and the instruments (action plans, European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument), as outlined in the policy documents and emphasised by EU actors. This background information shall provide a sound knowledge of what the ENP is and how it developed formally, as this understanding is crucial to investigate the interaction of EU actors in setting up this policy framework and working within it later on.

4.1. Towards the ENP Strategy Paper: To the "Wider Europe" Initiative and beyond

The End of the Cold War and the subsequent EU preparations for the "big bang" enlargement in 2004 created a momentum for reflection on how to deal with the new neighbours, especially with the ones in the East after enlargement. The main idea was that the widening of the European Union towards the new member states and the move of the EU border to the East would present opportunities but also challenges in terms of security, political and economic relations.

In terms of security, regional conflicts, terrorism and organised crime were perceived as challenges, while the success of the EU impact on its new member states was perceived as an

opportunity to expand the EU model for stability also to the new neighbours in the East and the South (Boniface & Duke 2008). Politically, these new neighbours were, however, also perceived as a challenge, sometimes even as a threat, because of their often less democratic record. These reflections have most prominently been documented in the European Security Strategy of 2003 that had been prepared by the High Representative Javier Solana's team and finally approved by the Brussels European Council in December 2003 (European Council 2003b). This strategic document identifies five key threats and challenges for EU foreign policy, namely terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure, and organised crime. In a second step, the European Security Strategy also emphasises two strategic objectives that the EU has to take into consideration to be a successful international actor in the future: to support an international order based on effective multilateralism, as well as building security in its neighbourhood. It is especially the latter that shows the new mindset within the EU towards the neighbouring countries at this point in time:

“Even in an era of globalisation, geography is still important. It is in the European interest that countries on our borders are well-governed. Neighbours who are engaged in violent conflict, weak states where organised crime flourishes, dysfunctional societies or exploding population growth on its borders all pose problems for Europe” (European Security Strategy, European Council 2003: 7).

While good relations with neighbours in the South were already emphasised when setting up the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in 1995, this was the first time that the EU was emphasising its neighbours as a strategic priority in a general EU document. Also the Commission President Romano Prodi as well as the European Council repeatedly highlighted that this focus on the new neighbours was especially crucial next to the accession process of the new member states, as *“enlargement should not create new dividing lines in Europe”* (European Council 2003b: 7).

At the same time, also EU internal considerations accompanied this special emphasis on establishing strong relations with the neighbours (Boniface & Duke 2008). First of all, a certain enlargement fatigue was said to have taken place in Europe (Dannreuther 2006), and governments tried to push for alternatives that would ensure to keep especially Ukraine out (Molchanov 2004; Interview No. 7, COM). Additionally, some Southern and West European member states feared that with enlargement the attention would shift too much to the Eastern neighbours and disregard the Mediterranean dimension. Finding an equal balance between East and South created a tension between member states that did also not dissolve after the set-up of the ENP and can also be observed in the set-up of the Union for the Mediterranean and the Eastern Partnership.

Next to these more general motivations, the evolution of the initial idea for the ENP was presented as *“Wider Europe”* in various documents that was finally adopted as Commission Communication COM 2003(104). In the following 14 months several actors presented their

ideas and amendments, some of which were taken into account while others were discarded. This in the end resulted in the ENP strategy paper that was adopted as Commission Communication COM 2004(373) in May 2004 and is widely considered as the founding document of the ENP.

The remaining part of this subchapter shows that the ENP set-up did not follow a fixed blueprint that suddenly emerged, but that the set-up of the ENP was a process that was shaped by a variety of informal and formal mechanisms, actors and various stages.⁴⁵ This part of the thesis traces the evolution of the ENP and shows the various proposals that shaped the ENP strategy paper. This is done in two stages: first, we look how concrete ideas around the “Wider Europe” idea emerged and culminated in the Wider Europe Communication in March 2003 (European Commission 2003c) (for overview see also table 2 on p. 88). In a second step, the adaptations and changes of this 2003 Communication until the final ENP strategy paper (COM 2004, 373 final) are investigated and an overview is provided in table 4 on p. 97.

4.1.1. Initial Ideas taking Shape: on the Way to the “Wider Europe” Communication

The first official EU document outlining the idea to consider a special relationship with the neighbours were the Council Conclusions of the General Affairs Council (GAC)⁴⁶ in April 2002 (General Affairs Council 2002a). Under the heading “*Wider Europe: Relations between the future enlarged EU and its Eastern Neighbours*” the General Affairs Council welcomed the promised contribution of High Representative Javier Solana and the Relex Commissioner Chris Patten to examine

“the possibilities for strengthening these relations, taking into account the different state of relations between the EU and the countries involved, as well as their level of political and economic development” (General Affairs Council 2002a: 10)

As the intention of the Commission and Solana were already highlighted in the draft minutes for this GAC that were circulated in March (General Affairs Council 2002c) it has to be assumed that this was not an outcome of the debates during the Council meeting but that Solana and the Commissioner had actively proposed to take up this task of leading the way already before the foreign ministers had gathered to discuss this issue at the Council meeting. In July 2002, the General Affairs Council (General Affairs Council 2002a) once more repeated the same statement as presented in April 2002.

⁴⁵ From a theoretical and conceptual point of view, this idea of multiple layers that merge when a certain „window of opportunity“ is provided relies on the multiple stream model by Kingdon that is often used for analysis of public policy-making (Johansson-Noegués 2007: 22).

⁴⁶ Before the Lisbon Treaty, the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAC) met always two days on a row, one day in the formation of General Affairs Council (GAC) and one day in the formation as External Relations Council (ERC). Both times it was mostly the Foreign ministers of the member states who met (despite for defence issues they were often replaced by the defence ministers). The External Relations Council was renamed to Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) with the Lisbon Treaty

Table 2: The advent of an idea: “Wider Europe” from April 2002 to March 2003:

	Institution / level	Main Observations
April 2002	2421 st General Affairs Council (7705/02) Repeated by GAC in July (7978/02)	• Entitled “<i>Wider Europe: Relations between the future enlarged EU and its Eastern Neighbours</i>” • Ask for follow-up preparation of Commission and High Representative
August 2002	Joint Letter by Relex Commissioner Chris Patten and HR Solana	• Geographical coverage: has to be clearly defined; no one size fits all approach; no explicit mentioning of East/South apart from initial focus should be on East; • Objective: potential accession not specified; just mentioned that accession alternative or preparation should be clarified; • Potential conflict of different goals: overriding objectives are “stability, prosperity, shared values and rule of law along our borders”; • Poses question if new contractual arrangements are needed;
September 2002	2450 th External Relations Council (12134/02)	• Differentiated approach for Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus • Potential conflict of different goals: creating stability and narrowing the gap at the new borders • General focus still on “EU and its Eastern neighbours” but additional statement that “beyond the question of Eastern neighbours, the broader question of “wider Europe” deserved consideration
August 2002	Commission President Prodi presents Work Programme 2003	• Geographical coverage left open: Relations with East and South – but in contrast to Council before no differentiation but emphasis on both regions; • Relations with enlarged EU’s neighbours as one of three major challenges for EU in 2003
November 2002	Wider Europe – Draft council conclusions COEST Working Group (13967/02) and PSC	• Eastern neighbours but potential usefulness for Southern neighbours recognized • Differentiated approach • Russia still as part of neighbourhood initiative
November 2002	2463 rd General Affairs Council (14183/02)	• Same as above – adopted as A point (be aware representatives of Commission; Chris Patten and Günter Verheugen)
December 2002	Commission’s legislative and work programme 2003	• relations with enlarged EU’s neighbours as one of three challenges for 2003 • no geographical restriction – no differentiation between East and South
December 2002	Speech by Commission President Prodi entitled “A Wider Europe – A Proximity Policy as the key to stability”	• projecting stability beyond borders and share prosperity – that is what neighbours expect because of successful enlargement • “ring of friends” [...] from Morocco to Russia and Black Sea • “everything but institutions” • Commission in leading role: “And we also pleaded for a strong commission [during Convention], which, as guardian of the community interest, will strengthen the Union” and “It is the Commission’s responsibility to come up with a way of improving relations with all these countries”
December 2002	European Council Copenhagen	• enlargement will bring new dynamics in European integration = important opportunity “to take forward relations with neighbouring countries” • “avoid new dividing lines in Europe and to promote stability and prosperity within and beyond the new borders of the Union” • Reference to Balkans • “strong relations with Russia” and “enhance its relations with Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and the southern Mediterranean” • Commission and HR to bring forward proposals to that end • Explicit mentioning of cross-border and regional cooperation as last point
March 2003	Wider Europe Communication COM(2003)104	• Prepared by COEST and PSC • Most detailed blueprint so far (approx 25 pages) • All neighbours without current membership perspective (apart from Southern Caucasus at this time) • Need for comprehensive and coherent security approach • Differentiation within one framework and benchmarking to monitor progress • Next step: discussion with third countries, development of action plans, annual evaluation of implementation of action plans

Following up on this invitation by the GAC, Javier Solana and Chris Patten published a joint letter in August 2002 addressed to the then Danish presidency of the Council of Ministers (Patten/Solana 2002; see also Johansson-Noegués 2007: 25), outlining five main questions that are necessary to be answered before considering to develop more concrete ideas about the initiative of “Wider Europe”. Interestingly enough, these questions represent some of the main discussion points and criticism that accompanied the set-up and implementation of the ENP for years, (and most of these points are still up for criticism even today), or as Johansson-Noegués formulated:

“The Solana-Patten memo was the first coherent blueprint outlining the new policy. The letter is visionary, revealing a willingness to look to the medium and long term.” (Johansson-Noegués 2007: 25)

First, Patten and Solana argue that the geographical coverage has to be clearly defined, while there can not be any “one-size-fits-all approach” but that a balance has to be found between flexibility and coherence. They also highlight the need to clearly define the objectives of this new policy. In their view, the EU

“should aim towards regional stability and co-operation, closer trade links and approximation and/or harmonisation of legislation and progressive extension of all relevant EU policies. Looking to the medium and longer term, we could foresee a gradually evolving framework for an economic and political space surrounding the Union, which would nevertheless stop short of full membership and creating shared institutions.” (Patten/Solana 2002: 1)

Secondly, in their 2002 letter Solana and Patten already mention the question of potential accession of certain neighbours. Should the new policy framework towards the neighbours also allow for deepening the relations to the EU what in the end might lead to accession, or should only those country be covered, for which accession is out of question? In the latter case, the new policy framework would be an alternative to accession, not the way leading to potential membership. While Patten and Solana assess the Balkans as potential candidates and the Mediterranean neighbours as clearly excluded, they already foresee that the Eastern neighbours “*fall somehow uncomfortable in between*”. Their third concern is the potential conflict of different goals. As overriding objective they identify that “*stability, prosperity, shared values and rule of law along our borders*” as “*fundamental for our own security*”, and they link this aspect closely with their fourth point focusing on measures to achieve these goals. Surprisingly, they have already in 2002 identified cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs, border management and migration issues as one of the few measures that are necessary to achieve the EU objectives in 2002. Last, they reflect on the more legal aspect of creating the new contractual agreements, questioning if the existing agreements are sufficient for deepening and strengthening the relationship with the EU neighbours. While Solana’s and Patten’s reflection concern the EU neighbours in general, they put a special emphasis on the Eastern countries in

the last part of their letter, emphasising that the “*initial focus*” should lie “*on the eastern neighbours*”.

Following up on this joint letter by Solana and Patten, the “new neighbours initiative” was the next time discussed by the foreign ministers in the External Relations Council end of September 2002 (External Relations Council 2002). Again the main objective of “*creating stability and narrowing the gap at the new borders*” was reiterated, while special emphasis was placed on the idea that a differentiated approach should be developed for Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus. Finally, the foreign ministers agreed that the relevant bodies should furthermore elaborate on the details of the initiative, so that it can be put forward at the forthcoming European Council in Copenhagen.

As instructed, the Council Working Group dealing with Eastern Europe and Central Asia (COEST) put forward the first draft for the “Wider Europe” Conclusions (COEST Working Party 2002) to the Political and Security Committee on 7 November 2002, asking the PSC to adopt the drafted text as an ‘A’ item for the GAERC on 18/19 November 2002, implying that all remaining issues of disagreement between member states had been resolved in the Working Group already.

However four days later the Council Secretariat also submitted its revised version to the PSC, mainly the same in terms of content but with some minor changes in terms of language. However, few changes seem to go further than just a semantic improvement and linguistic correction. For example point 3 in the COEST version (COEST Working Party 2002) reads

“the speed of progress in the development of relations with the countries concerned will depend on their will to implement further reforms and to respect international commitments and common values”

while the Secretariat version says

“The development of relations with the countries concerned will, of course, depend on their implementation of further reforms and their willingness to respect international commitments and common values” (General Secretariat 2002).

While the version of the Council Secretariat reads smoother, it now not only needs the willingness to implement reforms of the partner countries, but the actual implementation while the willingness refers to the respect of international commitments and common values. At the same time, the original text emphasises the third countries’ willingness for reform will impact on the “speed of progress” to develop relations with the EU, while the version of the Council Secretariat deleted the “speed” and implies that relations will only be started from the side of the EU, if these countries already embark on certain reforms and can show their progress. While these differences seem rather small differences, the latter version implies that countries already have to embark on reforms and that a sole commitment for reforming might not be enough to

start a closer relationship with the EU. This last draft by the Council Secretariat was fully adopted by the General Affairs Council in November 2002 (General Affairs Council 2002b).

It was, however, not only the Council who was working on this “Wider Europe” initiative, but also the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi increasingly reflected on the need to intensify the relations with the new neighbours and put forward his ideas for this new framework. When presenting the work programme of the Commission for 2003 to the European Parliament in November 2002, Prodi for example emphasised:

“We must define what policy we intend to follow with the neighbouring countries to the East and to the South in the Mediterranean Basin (...). We must put the question to know what the spirit of Europe and what its borders are” (Romano Prodi at EP plenary in November 2002, as reported in Agence Europe No. 8343 2002)

The interest of the Commission in these new ideas towards the neighbourhood is also prominently reflected in the Commission’s legislative and work programme 2003 (European Commission 2002: 5) where the “*relations with the enlarged EU’s neighbours*” are explicitly elaborated as one of three major challenges that the EU will be facing in 2003, the other two being “*preparing for enlargement*” and “*defining the future of Europe*”. The geographical coverage is left open, and reference is also made to potential future candidate countries in the Western Balkans. However, in contrast to the Council documents the European Commission does not differentiate between Eastern and Southern neighbours, but puts an equal emphasis on both geographical regions⁴⁷.

The Commission’s strong perception of having to play a salient role in the Wider Europe initiative becomes even more strongly visible in a speech that the Commission President Romano Prodi delivers at an academic conference in Brussels in December 2002 that is entitled “A wider Europe – A Proximity Policy as the key to stability” (Prodi 2002). In his speech Prodi emphasises the “*need for a new political perspective on relations with our southern and eastern neighbours*” (Prodi 2002: 3), as the current successful enlargement policy creates certain legitimate expectations with the EU neighbours. He then goes on outlining his idea of “*sharing everything but institutions*” in detail, and he emphasises that he would like “*to see a ring of friends surrounding the Union [...] from Morocco to Russia and the Black Sea*”. In terms of geographical scope Prodi does not differentiate clearly between Eastern and Southern dimension of this Wider Europe policy, but he puts equal emphasis on both regions.

However, even more interesting is Prodi’s repeated emphasis of the important role of the Commission in this Wider Europe Initiative. The conference where Prodi was presenting his

⁴⁷ According to Johansson-Noegués it was also the Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh who was emphasising the need and pushing to incorporate also the Southern neighbours into this new neighbours initiative (Presidency of the Council 2004a)

speech was not specifically targeted towards the EU relations with the neighbours but a more general conference of EU foreign policy scholars, and nevertheless the Commission President had made a deliberate choice to talk about the new policy ideas for the neighbourhood. Also in terms of content, Prodi emphasises several times that he considers the Commission as most important actor in shaping the future EU relations with the neighbours, as the following quotes of his speech show:

“And we also pleaded for a stronger Commission [to the Convention set up to draft the Constitutional draft treaty], which, as guardian of the community interest, will strengthen the Union” (Prodi 2002: 2)

“It is the Commission’s responsibility to come up with a way to improving relations with all these countries” (Prodi 2002: 4).

“We identified relations with our neighbours as a strategic objective of this Commission in February 2000. The job of the Commission is to seize this opportunity to find a comprehensive solution to the question of the Union’s relations with its neighbours” (Prodi 2002: 7)

The Commission President clearly uses the strong involvement of the Commission in the successful enlargement process as an argument to ask for a strong role of the supranational institution in the new initiative towards the neighbours.

A few days later on 12/13 December 2002, the European Council in Copenhagen reiterates the main objective of the new initiative:

“The Union remains determined to avoid new dividing lines in Europe and to promote stability and prosperity within and beyond the new borders of the Union” (European Council 2002a: 6).

The Copenhagen European Council also repeats that the current enlargement round strengthens the EU’s relationship with Russia and that the EU wishes to upgrade its ties with Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and the southern Mediterranean countries. It, furthermore, refers to the leadership of the Commission and the High Representative in putting forward concrete proposals for this new initiative.

This reiteration of the European Council shows that the idea of a Wider Europe initiative slowly manifests itself as a necessary project but that the concrete shape and ideas are still vague. Especially in regard of the geographical coverage there does not seem to be any consensus among EU actors and member states, and it will be shown later on that EU actors had not even considered that Russia might not be part of this initiative towards the neighbours, while they totally ignored the Southern Caucasus countries that were added to the ENP only at a later stage and after insistence of the European Parliament.

The following three months the Wider Europe initiative was not discussed anymore in Brussels, but the next document taking up a more concrete perspective was a Commission Communication on 13 March 2003, entitled “**Wider Europe – Neighbourhood. A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours**” (European

Commission 2003c). This Commission Communication was perceived as the first concrete template of the ENP framework, as it was with 25 pages the longest and most elaborate blueprint of this new policy towards the neighbours.

This Commission document reiterates prominently the main objective of the new initiative as outlined by the Copenhagen European Council: *“to avoid drawing new dividing lines in Europe and to promote stability and prosperity within and beyond the new borders of the Union”* (European Commission 2003c: 4). Throughout the first pages of this communication, enlargement is framed as the main trigger that creates the need to consider how to improve the EU relationship with the new neighbours. The Commission Communication is especially interesting in raising three fundamental questions and aspects for the future ENP that remained and still remain hot topics of debate: the geographical coverage, the need for a comprehensive and coherent security approach, as well as the need for differentiation within a single framework.

First, in terms of geographical coverage, the Commission communication is quite clear: all neighbours that currently do not have a membership perspective (ie all apart from Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria and the Western Balkans) should be part of the Wider Europe initiative. What is interesting, however, is the mentioning of the Southern Caucasus countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) in a footnote that states the following:

“Given their location, the Southern Caucasus therefore also fall outside the geographical coverage of this initiative for the time being.” (European Commission 2003c: 4)

As we will see later, the Commission had to change its approach to the Southern Caucasus countries during 2004, when the European Parliament and some member states insisted that they should be part of the new initiative towards the neighbours.

Second, under heading 1 and 3 the Commission Communication 2003(104) final emphasises the need for a coherent and comprehensive security approach. The achievement of security, stability and sustainable development for EU citizens is closely linked to the close cooperation with neighbours, as there is a strong interdependence between their well-being and the well-being of the Union. Next to that more rational argumentation, the Commission also calls upon the moral obligation that the EU has to support the sustainable development of its neighbours. The Commission outlines this need to justify its strong emphasise of a comprehensive security approach that should comprise the *“whole range of Union’s policies (foreign, security, trade, development, environment, etc)”* (European Commission 2003c: 3) and that should be build upon a *“clear vision for the development of closer and more coherent relations”*(European Commission 2003c: 9). In the following, the Commission outlines different policy areas in which enhanced cooperation should be considered, ranging from internal market and trade measures, to fight against poverty and democracy promotion to migration management and

therelike. In chapter 7 on the motivations for changing the institutional set-up with the ENP, we will see that the Commission used this concept of “coherence” and “comprehensive security” very deliberately to emphasise its own importance in this new framework and to get a stake in a policy area that by some member states was still considered as traditional foreign policy-making within the second CFSP pillar.

Third, the Commission Communication discusses in detail although still in more broad and undefined terms the idea of differentiation within a single framework and the need for benchmarks to evaluate implementation and progress in an objective manner (heading two and four of COM 2003(104)). The respective heading title reads “*different countries – common interest*” and it emphasises that “*a new EU approach cannot be a one-size-fits-all policy*”. This terms are supposed to indicate that while the new initiative is aimed to solve common problems for the EU and all neighbours, this new framework also has to be sensitive and take into consideration the different needs and various levels of development of the third countries, especially as these neighbours in the East seem to have quite different priorities than those countries in the South. This idea of “differentiation” received a strong emphasise throughout the whole set-up and implementation of the ENP, and to a certain extent the peak of this emphasis can be considered the demand of the Polish and Swedish foreign minister in October 2010 to separate the financial instrument for the ENP again into two different financial instruments – one for the East and one for the South (see Sikorski & Bildt 2010).

To show the different interests and positions of the respective third countries more clearly, the Commission also included various statistics and data in the Annex of the Wider Europe Communication (see for example table 3 below) that provide clear evidence for the argument that one single approach and one specific policy alone might not be suitable to tackle all these different countries. Furthermore, the Commission also highlights the different forms of formal agreements that exist between the EU and its new neighbours: While the EU has established Partnership and Cooperation agreements with Russia, Ukraine and Moldova, those do not allow incorporating specific free trade agreements and the like, because such issues are not covered by the scope of these agreements. On the other hand, there are already association agreements in force between the EU and Tunisia, Israel, Morocco, the Palestine Authority and Jordan respectively, while the association agreements with Egypt, Lebanon and Algeria still have been waited for ratification. Furthermore, Syria is still in the process of negotiating its association agreement with the European Union.

However, the Commission Communication not only asks for differentiating between the position and interests of the third countries incorporated in the new initiative. But by prominently pointing to the need of clear and objective benchmarks, the Commission also clearly demands to differentiate according to performance in implementation. The

Communication points towards the application of some form of soft conditionality, ie that the implementation and progress of third countries in their cooperation with the EU should be monitored and those countries rewarded that are in line with the agreed goals.

Table 3: Economic Indicators of potential ENP countries

Table 1: Basic economic indicators							
	Population	GDP	Overall	Overall	Imports from	Exports to	FDI
	in million	per capita in EUR	Imports EUR million	Exports EUR million	the EU EUR million	the EU EUR million	EUR million
Israel	6.4	19 578	36721	32 032	15 557	8 544	3 397
Algeria	30.7	1 974	12882	21 788	8 234	14 473	1 335
Egypt	65.3	1 663	14063	4 614	4 191	1 453	569
Libya	5.4	1776 ⁽¹⁾	4867	12 548	3 247	10 331	- 112
Morocco	29.2	1 296	12192	7 945	6 302	5 562	2 966
Tunisia	9.7	2 301	10622	7 379	7 563	5 892	543
Jordan	5.2	1 901	5344	2 553	1 535	98	189 ⁽²⁾
Lebanon	3.6	5 284	7072	1 030	3 366	274	278 ⁽²⁾
Occ. Palest. Terr.	3.0	1591 ⁽¹⁾	3339(1)	653 ⁽¹⁾	31 ⁽³⁾	6 ⁽³⁾	57 ⁽²⁾
Syria	17.1	1 292	6970	6 121	2 287	3 747	229 ⁽²⁾
Belarus	10.0	1 352	8966	8 286	1 387	917	189
Moldova	4.3	417 ⁽¹⁾	998	636	278	136	167
Russian Fed.	144.8	2 382	41006	91 864	16 597	35 703	2 835
Ukraine	49.1	855	18665	16 139	5 437	3 316	862

Source: WDI 2002 (World Bank), IMF (GDP per capita), IMF (trade data), EIU, UNCTAD/DITE for FDI data. Data refers to 2001.

⁽¹⁾ 2000 data

⁽²⁾ estimates

⁽³⁾ Inversion of data reported by EU

Source: European Commission (2003, 104 final): Wider Europe / Neighbourhood: A new framework for relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours. Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament (11.03.2003). Brussels.

Please note about this table: this table give a quick overview about what countries were supposed to be included in the new neighbourhood initiative according to the Commission; Russia was assumed to be an important partner within this framework, while the Southern Caucasus countries were left out. In addition, this table clearly shows the economic discrepancy between the different third countries under question.

This very pragmatic approach is also visible in the suggestion of the next three steps at the end of the communication. The Commission suggests that in a next step these more concrete ideas should be discussed with the neighbours within the existing frameworks (Partnership and Cooperation Councils, or Association Councils), that action plans for each individual country should be developed, and that an annual review progress should be established that monitors the implementation of action plan. While it took more than another year before the ENP was formally set-up, these suggestions for a pragmatic implementation of the ENP were taken up at a later point in time.

While this Commission Communication “Wider Europe” is considered as the first concise document discussing some of the main ideas behind the future framework with the EU neighbours, there is still no single term used for the new ideas, but names for the new initiative vary and are used interchangeably. Next to “Wider Europe initiative”, “New Neighbourhood Initiative (NNI)” and others, the term “EU neighbourhood policy” is for the first time used in

this Commission Communication (COM 104), although it seems rather an undeliberate choice of wording than an intentional way of choosing a name for this new framework. As we will see, the term European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was only officially introduced with the ENP Strategy paper (COM 2004, 373 final) in May 2004.

4.1.2. From “Wider Europe” (March 2003) to the ENP Strategy Paper (May 2004)

The Commission Communication on “Wider Europe” was considered as the first blueprint of the new policy framework towards the neighbours and was welcomed by member states and EU institutions alike, although it was not the final document to set-up the European Neighbourhood Policy. The next fourteen months between March 2003 and May 2004 before the ENP Strategy Paper was finally adopted witnessed again a mix of ideas and plans that emerged from different institutional backgrounds and member states. Table 4 provides an overview of the different proposals, sorted in terms of time of their publication and emphasising the most important aspects of these policy documents.

The first reaction to the Commission Communication came from the Nordic member states Sweden and Finland (Finnish Delegation 2003; Swedish Delegation 2003) as well as from the still candidate but prospective member Lithuania (Lithuanian Delegation 2003). The Swedish proposal was the most elaborate, but generally all three countries emphasised the need for a new financial instruments for regional and cross-border cooperation. They convincingly argued that the current interplay between the special sub-instrument for cross-border projects from INTERREG, and the TACIS and PHARE⁴⁸ are not sufficient and not working, as in practice it is too complicated to draw on both budget lines and as it includes too much bureaucratic hassle to combine the different procedures and timetables. Hence, they asked for a new multi-annual instrument that would allow EU member states as well as partner countries to submit proposals and apply for tenders for specific projects and also to work more closely together across borders, without differentiating between EU members and non-members of the EU neighbourhood.

⁴⁸ INTERREG is the Community financial instrument for regional development.

TACIS was the financial instrument of the EU for the “Technical assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States” and covered the EU financial assistance to all of its Eastern Neighbours before the set-up of the ENPI. For more info see http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/regional-cooperation/enpi-east/documents/annual_programmes/tacis_success_story_final_en.pdf

PHARE is the financial instrument to support applicant countries in their reforms for joining the EU. The original abbreviation stands for “Poland and Hungary: Aid for Restructuring of the Economies”. For more info see http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/how-does-it-work/financial-assistance/phare/index_en.htm

Table 4: From “Wider Europe” to the ENP – March 2003 till May 2004

Starting point: March 2003	Wider Europe Communication COM(2003)104	• Prepared by COEST and PSC • Most detailed blueprint so far (approx 25 pages) • All neighbours without current membership perspective (apart from Southern Caucasus at this time) • Need for comprehensive and coherent security approach • Differentiation within one framework and benchmarking to monitor progress • Next step: discussion with third countries, development of action plans, annual evaluation of implementation of action plans
March 2003	Proposal from Swedish delegation „The New Eastern Neighbours and the Community Instruments. A two-step Approach	• With enlargement risks (security, trafficking) and benefits (economic and trade related potential) for border regions • Key actors: local and regional authorities • 2 tracks: short term and medium term • Short term: alignment of CBC/TACIS and INTERREG • Medium term: new proximity instrument needed to invest in local and regional projects and to promote transfrontier integration and economic development and EU eastern border
March 2003	Proposal from Finnish delegation „A framework for relations with the new eastern neighbours“ and „A neighbourhood / proximity instrument“	• Emphasis need of cross-boarder and regional cooperation • For Finland especially important: Russian-Finnish border • Special emphasis on programming and projects – hence ask for new financial instrument next to INTERREG (EU instrument of structural fund – only for EU members) and CBC (Cross border cooperation element of TACIS) • Finnish experience: timetables and programming in different financial instrument does not go together; too much hazzle • New instrument should be multi-annual, decided on regional level with decentralised implementation;
April 2003	Greek Presidency “food for thought”paper	• Reiterates common interests, privileged relations and concept of differentiation; • Asks for establishment of new neighbourhood Instrument • Differentiates between Eastern neighbours (Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus) and Southern neighbours (describes link to Barcelona Process, and suggests to use institutional framework of Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements to integrate neighbourhood policy. In total rather general and without substance;
May 2003	Proposal from Lithuanian delegation (sent as non-paper to Solana and Patten already in February)	• Outlines main areas of cooperation for country action plans with Russia, Belarus and Ukraine • Cross-border cooperation especially need in Justice and Home Affairs, environmental issues, economic cooperation, people to people contact, education and health
June 2003	Draft Council Conclusions from Presidency to Coreper (10302/03), and from COREPER to Council (10447/03)	• “The Council invites the Commission with the contribution, where appropriate, of the High Representative “ – present action plans proposals, launch dialogue with third countries • Emphasis again of “differentiated framework that responds to progress made by partner countries”, common challenges, complementary instead of substitution of existing frameworks,
June 2003	(Draft) Council Conclusions from COREPER to Council (10447/03) – “A item”	All the above plus • Libya is mentioned with footnote referring to fact that it was invited to accept Barcelona acquis • No explicit mentioning of “facilitation of legal migration” as mentioned in presidency draft but just “ enhanced co-operation on matters related to legal migration” • Commission is asked to prepare Communication for new financial instrument
July 2003	Paving the way for a New Neighbourhood Instrument. Commission Communication COM 2003 (393) final	• Geographical coverage: East – 4 countries: Russia & Western NIS (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova), Southern Mediterranean (ie. no Southern Caucasus) – also mentioning of Western Balkans; • Emphasis on cross-border project financing – intersection of Interreg, Tacis, Phare – how to synchronise them • Two-step approach: stronger coordination in existing instruments; establishment of new ENPI that combines cross-border and regional co-operation

September 2003	EU Committee on Foreign Affairs (European Parliament) Report, 12628/03	• Presentation of three experts criticising Commission proposals • Geographical diffusion: Wider Europe should also embrace Southern Caucasus • Also in debate – need to include Caucasus and Black Sea region into strategy – supported by EP rapporteur, Ms Napoletano • More concrete incentives needed in Action Plan; differentiation not sufficient; no sensitivity towards diverging needs of third countries • More multilateralism, more emphasis on democratic values and human rights (especially in framework of Barcelona Process) – too much focus on economic issues (especially within Euromed) and on security (in more recent Commission documents) • Need of new contractual relationships that are more flexible and provide more assistance in transformation process
October 2003	External Relations Council, Conclusions 13099/1/03	• Already agreed upon on Working Group level (COEST Working Party & MAGHREB Working Party 2002) • Reviewing progress of Wider Europe Initiative • Asks Commission in cooperation with HR to prepare detailed proposals for action plans early in 2004 “in order to take this matter forward by June 2004” • Asks Commission for feasibility study of new financial neighbourhood instrument
October 2003	Brussels European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 15188/03	• European Council welcomes work done so far by Commission and Council, and asks all parties involved to follow up, especially on the idea of a new financial instrument • “welcomes progress made on the <i>Commission’s</i> Wider Europe – New Neighbourhood Initiative.”; • asks Commission and Council for follow-up to “ensuring a comprehensive, balanced and proportionate approach, including a financial instrument”
November 2003	European Parliament Report on “Wider Europe – Neighbourhood”. Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy	• Geographical coverage - include Southern Caucasus (and emphasis conflict resolution and prevention); include also Turkey without negatively impacting on its accession candidate status; should later also be extended to Middle Eastern region and Gulf states; on long run to Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran; • Initiative should “evaluate existing EU policies and agreements in order to represent a step forward irrespective of, and not in contradiction with, the present and future aspiration of some of the countries concerned to join the EU in the long term or to establish special contractual relations,” • Notes that the Communication expressly mentions “increased financial assistance”; • More financial means are needed and not just re-shuffle from other areas;
November 2003	General Affairs Council, 14486/03	• Presentation of Commission legislative and work programme for 2004 – two priorities, one of which “stability – developing the EU’s new neighbourhood policy”
January 2004	Irish Presidency priorities in regard of EU common strategy on Mediterranean region (5313/04), noted by General Affairs Council, 5518/04	• Irish priorities in regard of EU common strategy on the Mediterranean region (Presidency of the Council 2004b) includes among others support for Commission in ensuring rapid progress on draft Action Plans under New Neighbourhood policy • Ireland also promises in this document to work closely with upcoming presidencies of the Netherlands and Luxembourg
January 2004	External Relations council, 5519/04	• Comments on Rose revolution in Georgia and statement that would like to consider inclusion of Southern Caucasus countries until June 2004.
February 2004	External Relations Council, 6294/04	• Heard progress report by Commission and asks for drafts of action plans until June • Emphasise on coherence with existing foreign policy, and tasks COREPER to look into more details for future suggestions;

February 2004	European Parliament resolution "EU policy towards South Caucasus"	• Recommendation to the Council to establish a set of initial minimum requirements for the South Caucasus countries to fulfil, in order to be included in the 'Wider Europe - New Neighbourhood' policies; • to give the South Caucasus region a defined status in the 'Wider Europe - New Neighbourhood'
March 2004	External Relations Council, 7383/04	• Council considers Presidency Interim Report on an EU strategic partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East – outlines state of relationship, challenges, • Interim report: "Neighbourhood Policy – Deepening the EMP"
May 2004	European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper, Commission Communication COM (2004) 373 final	• "Wider Europe" finally renamed to "European Neighbourhood Policy" – ENP • Provides fundamental background, discusses main objective and scope of ENP, fundamental principles (joint ownership, differentiation but common values, consistency); discusses instruments and main priority policy areas • Geographical coverage: all non-EU participations of Euro-Mediterranean partnership with exception of Turkey; Libya with currently no contractual relations with EU but awaiting ratification of Barcelona acquis; Eastern dimension no Russia (strategic partnership), Belarus only light-version focusing on people to people and citizens' support;
June 2004	General Affairs Council Conclusions, 10189/04	• Approved without debate as "A" item by Working parties, approved by COREPER (Council of the European Union 2004, 10380/04) • Approved Presidency Final Report on the "EU strategic partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East" (Presidency of the Council 2004a), where it also says "The Barcelona process (and its enhancement through the European Neighbourhood Policy)" • Endorses main orientation of ENP strategy paper as presented by Commission, and welcomes decision to include Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia; • Russia as key partner for EU with whom to deepen specific strategic partnership as agreed at St. Petersburg Summit in May 2003. • Confirms EU approach of joint ownership, common values, action plans and monitoring of implementation • Underlines added value through ENP to existing cooperation; hence coherence and continuity needed; • Repeatedly invites "Commission, with the contribution of the SG/HR on issues related to political cooperation and the CFSP"

After these interventions of single member states, the then Greek presidency of the Council of ministers put forwards its work programme for its time at the helm of the Council of the European Union during the first half of 2003. They presented their proposal as "food for thought" (Presidency of the Council / Greece 2003), and while it reiterates and supports the idea of the Swedish and Finnish delegation, the document stays rather general and does not present any new ideas in terms of substance. It still clearly differentiates between the Eastern and Southern neighbours, and it suggests that for the Southern neighbours the already established institutions and bodies of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership should be used. When compared to the French and Spanish leadership during their presidencies in 1995 during the set-up of the EMP, it clearly shows that the Greek presidency was not able to show any leadership or shape the debates with its own ideas, but that it was mainly single member states next to the Commission and the European Parliament that gave their input about the specific set-up of the ENP.

Despite the lack of clear leadership by the Greek presidency, the Wider Europe initiative was again discussed in the relevant Council bodies in June 2003. The COEST and COMAG working groups had agreed on reiterating some of the principles in this Council document: the Wider Europe initiative shall establish a “*differentiated framework that responds to progress made by partner countries*” and it shall rather complement than substitute current institutional relationships. The overall goal should be economic development or reduce poverty and conflict prevention (Presidency of the Council 2003; Committee of Permanent Representatives 2003). Furthermore, the working parties had agreed to invite the Commission to present draft action plans and to launch a dialogue with the respective third countries. Where appropriate, it should be supported by the High Representative, what means that political and security related issues should not be discussed under the guidance of the Commission but of the High Representative for CFSP.

At the same time there were three issues left for COREPER to negotiate that had not been solved at the lower Council level: Libya, an explicit mentioning of legal migration and a potential new financial instrument. In regard of the latter some member states like France feared that the development of a new financial instrument would mean a weakening of already established financial and institutional instruments like the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. However, COREPER in the end agreed that this reluctance of some member states should be taken into account in future discussions, but they would nevertheless ask the Commission to prepare a Communication on a potential future financial instrument for the neighbourhood. In addition, COREPER had in the end included Libya in the list of third countries, although it mentioned in a footnote that it was not yet part of the Barcelona process but that given the better relationship between the political leadership in Libya and some EU governments it was expected to ratify the Barcelona acquis in the upcoming months. While some member states did not see a problem with mentioning the “facilitation of legal migration” as one policy area that closer cooperation would be useful with partner countries, member states in the end agreed to a more general formulation of “*enhanced co-operation on matters related to legal migration*” (Committee of Permanent Representatives 2003). COREPER was, hence, able to solve all of these remaining issues, and the Council Conclusions were adopted as an A-item at the June Council meeting, without any discussion of the ministers.

The Commission reacted to the plea of the ministers to put forwards its ideas for a new financial instrument and published its Communication “Paving the way for a New Neighbourhood Instrument” in July 2003 (European Commission 2003a). In terms of geographical coverage, the Commission document refers to four countries in the East (Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova) as well as the Southern neighbours. There is no mentioning of the Southern Caucasus, but the Commission refers to the special status of the Western Balkan countries. It emphasis the

need for efficient cross-border project financing that is dependent on a strong synchronisation of the currently intersecting instruments of INTERREG, TACIS and PHARE.

The first EU institution to react to the Commission's proposal was a new player that got involved: the European Parliament. In September 2003, the Committee on Foreign Affairs organised a workshop with three experts to comment on the Commission's communications on Wider Europe and on the new financial instrument (EU Committee on Foreign Affairs 2003). In geographical terms there was a strong plea to also include the Southern Caucasus and the Black Sea region. Furthermore, the experts supported by the MEPs criticised the lack of concrete incentives in the action plans that could be offered to the partner countries, as well as the lack of stronger contractual relationships that would also allow more financial support in times of transition. Another point of critique was the insufficient degree of flexibility in regard of setting goals in that far as the European Union did not consider enough the needs of third countries. Last but not least, the MEPs demanded a stronger emphasis of democratic values and human rights, as in their view the current institutional frameworks like the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership were too much dominated by economic aspects. In this meeting it was the first time that the European Parliament asked for an inclusion of the Southern Caucasus, and it was especially the EP rapporteur, Ms Napoletano who also in the upcoming months pushed for this idea (what was also confirmed in Interview No. 20, EP).

In comparison to the EP, the reaction of the member states in the Council and in the European Council in regard of the Commission proposal was rather short and general. In their External Relations Council in October 2003 (External Relations Council 2003), they suggested a review process of the Wider Europe initiative, and instructed the Commission to prepare a more detailed proposal for action plans in early 2004, so that the member states can take these ideas forward in June 2004. Additionally, the Commission should conduct a feasibility study of the proposed financial neighbourhood instrument. The Brussels European Council at the end of October 2003 (European Council 2003a) also just briefly welcomed the initiative and progress done by the Commission and Council, and asked them to follow up on these ideas and especially on the proposal of a new financial instrument. The Heads of States and Government in their European Council conclusions also emphasise once more the need to ensure "a comprehensive, balanced and proportionate approach", and it is interesting that they refer to the neighbourhood initiative solely as "Commission's Wider Europe" proposal, while member states in the Council always emphasise that it is a common proposal that stretches over external relations and traditional foreign policy-making within the second intergovernmental CFSP pillar.

It was again the European Parliament that came up with a very detailed and encompassing evaluation of the Commission's proposal. However, this time it was not just an expert report,

but the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy under rapporteur Pasqualina Napolitano submitted a draft for an EP resolution to the plenary on 5 November 2003. This draft was adopted by the European Parliament on 23 November 2003 as resolution 2003/2018(INI). In this draft (European Parliament 2003), the EP committee gives a detailed account of its proposals for the EU relations with its neighbours after enlargement. One important element that was reiterated several times is the need to also include the Southern Caucasus countries Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in the new neighbourhood initiative. The argument of the EP is that those three countries are also members of the Council of Europe and of the OSCE, and that especially in this region the EU's support is needed for conflict resolution and conflict prevention, whereas in return stable countries in this region will enhance the security for the EU as well. However, the draft resolution also shows that the EP follows a quite different definition of "neighbourhood" than the Commission or the member states do. First of all, the EP suggests to also include Turkey as a third country in the neighbourhood initiative, while at the same time emphasising that this should not harm Turkey's accession prospective. Secondly, the EP draft also wants to extend the neighbourhood initiative gradually over time:

"Whereas it is necessary to see to that the Mediterranean dimension is at a later point extended to the wider Middle Eastern region and account is taken of the Gulf states and, in the medium to long term, of other countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran" (European Parliament 2003: 7)

Next to the geographical coverage, the EP also emphasises the issue of added-value and financial means. It repeats several times that this new initiative should serve as a review of existing policies and upgrade the existing relationship "*in order to represent a step forward*" (European Parliament 2003: 7). Furthermore, it highlights that for this initiative to be successful increased financial support will be needed to help partner countries in their transformation and reforms, but also to set strong enough incentives. The EP warns that it will not be sufficient to just re-shuffle existing financial means, and it indicates that it will not agree to discard money from other regions to be able to finance the new neighbourhood initiative.

At first neither member states nor the Commission did refer at all to the proposals made by the Members of the European Parliament. In their General Affairs Council in November 2003 the only mentioning of the neighbourhood initiative is in relation to the Commission's legislative and work programme for 2004, where "*stability – developing the EU's new neighbourhood policy*" is categorised as one of two priorities for 2004. However, it is interesting to note that the Commission always refers to the new neighbourhood initiative in security terms, as it does in its 2004 work programme where it links the initiative to stability creation.

The neighbourhood initiative was also a topic in the Presidency programme of the Irish presidency in the first half of 2004, when the Irish presidency presented its priorities in regard of the EU common strategy on the Mediterranean Region (Presidency of the Council 2004b;

also noted by the General Affairs Council 2004a). Among other issues, this document strongly emphasises the support for the Commission in drafting the action plans as soon as possible, and Ireland promises a strong and smooth cooperation with the succeeding Council presidencies of The Netherlands and Luxembourg.

However, finally in January 2004 the suggestion of the European Parliament to also consider including Southern Caucasus countries was for the first time mentioned by the External Relations Council. Just two months after the Rose Revolution, the External Relations Council commented on the situation in Georgia and asked the Commission and the High Representative to reflect on an inclusion of those countries in the new neighbourhood initiative:

“The Council invites the Commission, in contribution with the High Representative, and taking into account of the EUSR’s proposals, to bring forward a recommendation on the relationship of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to the European Neighbourhood Policy. The Council looks forward to considering this recommendation before the end of the Irish presidency” (External Relations Council 2004a)

One month later, the External Relations Council heard a progress report by Commissioner Verheugen and reminded the Commission to draft action plans until June. Furthermore, the ministers put a special emphasis on the need to ensure coherence and coordination with existing policies and “other foreign policy developments” (External Relations Council 2004b), and hence they asked COREPER to investigate some issues related to the neighbourhood initiative in more detail, so that the Council would be in the position to provide its input in more detail and ensure coherence with existing CFSP policies is guaranteed.

Just a few days after this External Relations Council in February, the European Parliament issued a resolution entitled “EU policy towards South Caucasus” (European Parliament 2004a), in which it once more reiterated the needed support for the Southern Caucasus region and its clear position that Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia should be given the opportunity to participate in the neighbourhood initiative. However, the focus of the Council during this time was more on the Mediterranean Policy, as after four years the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean that had been adopted in 2000 had to either be prolonged or revised. This was also the reason, why the Irish presidency put a special emphasis on the EU relations with the Mediterranean and brought it up on the agenda during their presidency. After the Irish presidency had presented its priority programme in January 2004, the External Relations Council in March 2004 (External Relations Council 2004c) considered the Presidency Interim Report on an EU strategic partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East⁴⁹, in which the current state of institutionalised relationship and challenges have been outlined. One

⁴⁹ The final report on an EU strategic partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East was presented by the Irish presidency only in June 2004, when it was also approved by the European Council (Schumacher 2004: 58-197).

subsection of this report also considered “Neighbourhood policy – Deepening the EMP” what again shows the complementary contribution that the new neighbourhood initiative was supposed to add to existing policy frameworks with third countries.

It was finally in May 2004 that the Commission published its Communication COM 2004 (373 final) entitled “European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper” that set out the final blueprint for the new neighbourhood initiative and is considered as the founding document of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The fundamental principles and content of this document will be discussed in detail in the remaining parts of this chapter, but it was this document where the final term of “European Neighbourhood Policy” was finally introduced. The document lines out the fundamental background of the ENP, discusses the main objectives and the scope of this new framework, the fundamental principles and the instruments that should be used to achieve the set goals. In terms of geographical coverage the ENP strategy by the Commission now encompasses in the South all non-EU participants of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (with the exception of Turkey, while Libya is considered as formal ENP partner country, although it does not have any contractual relations with the EU at that moment), and in the East the neighbouring countries Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova as well as Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. However, for Belarus it was noted that there should only be a light-version focusing on people-to-people contacts and support for citizens’ initiatives, while it also had become apparent that Russia did not want to participate in a Neighbourhood Policy, as it considered itself rather as a “strategic partner” than any other neighbour at the borders of the European Union.

In June 2004 the General Affairs Council approves the European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper as presented by the Commission (General Affairs Council 2004b). All issues up for discussion have even been able to be solved at Working Group level, so that the Council conclusions on the ENP could be put forward to the Council as A-item (Council of the European Union 2004), what shows that there was a strong agreement between member states to endorse the Commission’s proposed strategy. The Council welcomes the general orientation of the ENP strategy paper, and confirms the main mechanisms of joint ownership, common values, action plans and monitoring of implementation. It also welcomes the decision to incorporate Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia into the ENP framework, and it emphasizes the special relationship with Russia with whom instead of participating in the ENP a specific strategic partnership had been agreed at a summit in St. Petersburg in May 2003. Furthermore, in its conclusion the GAC also approves the presidency final report on the “EU strategic partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East” where it also says that the Barcelona process is “enhanced” through the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Additionally, there are two aspects that are especially interesting to be mentioned, as they go further than just reiterating ideas and concepts that have already been discussed in detail beforehand. First, the Council underlines the “*added value*” of the ENP which is “*going beyond existing cooperation, both to partner countries and to the EU*”. To achieve this added value the GAC also emphasis the need to “*maintain coherence and unity of this policy, in its content, instruments and final goals*”. Secondly, the GAC conclusions clarify for the first time formally and in a written document how exactly the share of labour between Commission and High Representative should look like, by referring to the “*Commission, with the contribution of the SG/HR on issues related to political cooperation and the CFSP*” (General Affairs Council 2004b). While it was quite clear for the actors involved that the Commission should focus mainly on the aspects of external relations and the High Representative on political issues, this division of tasks was never beforehand explicitly mentioned. It was for the first time in this Council conclusions that it was clearly stated that political issues are to be dealt with by the High Representative.

This detailed overview of the different policy documents that commented on the Wider Europe draft and the new neighbourhood initiative clearly show that the set-up of the ENP was not an hierarchical endeavour following a clear strategic idea at the very beginning, but that ideas emerged slowly, were shaped by different actors, and most of them found its way into the ENP strategy paper. This outline over time also shows that the Commission played a crucial role in putting forward its ideas and drafts in the Wider Europe Communication, and drawing up the follow-up Communications on the ENPI and the European Neighbourhood Strategy Paper. Next to the Commission, it was mainly the Council and the member states that contributed their ideas, especially in the relevant Council Working Groups or also more formally as Council Conclusions. Member states observed in detail what implications the ENP proposals would have for their position in this system of EU foreign policy-making. When the Wider Europe initiative was discussed in the first half of 2003, the rotating presidency (Greece) did not show any strong interest in providing leadership and input in this dossier, but it left it more up to the member states.

The European Council played a more supervisory role, and only referred twice to the Wider Europe initiative. In December 2002 in the Copenhagen European Council the Heads of States and Governments had asked the Commission and the HR to prepare their ideas for the Wider Europe initiative, and in its Brussels European Council in October 2003, they welcomed the work done by the Commission, the Council and the HR and asked them to follow-up on the undertaken steps.

The European Parliament only became involved at the end of 2003, but it was its contribution mainly that the Southern Caucasus countries were finally also incorporated into the ENP framework (next to the external trigger of the Rose Revolution in Georgia, of course). And the Council showed clearly with its call for more coherence and tasking of COREPR to check to what extent the new policy ideas are in line with existing policies in February 2004 that it does not consider the ENP a mere Community project, but that it will keep it under close observation.

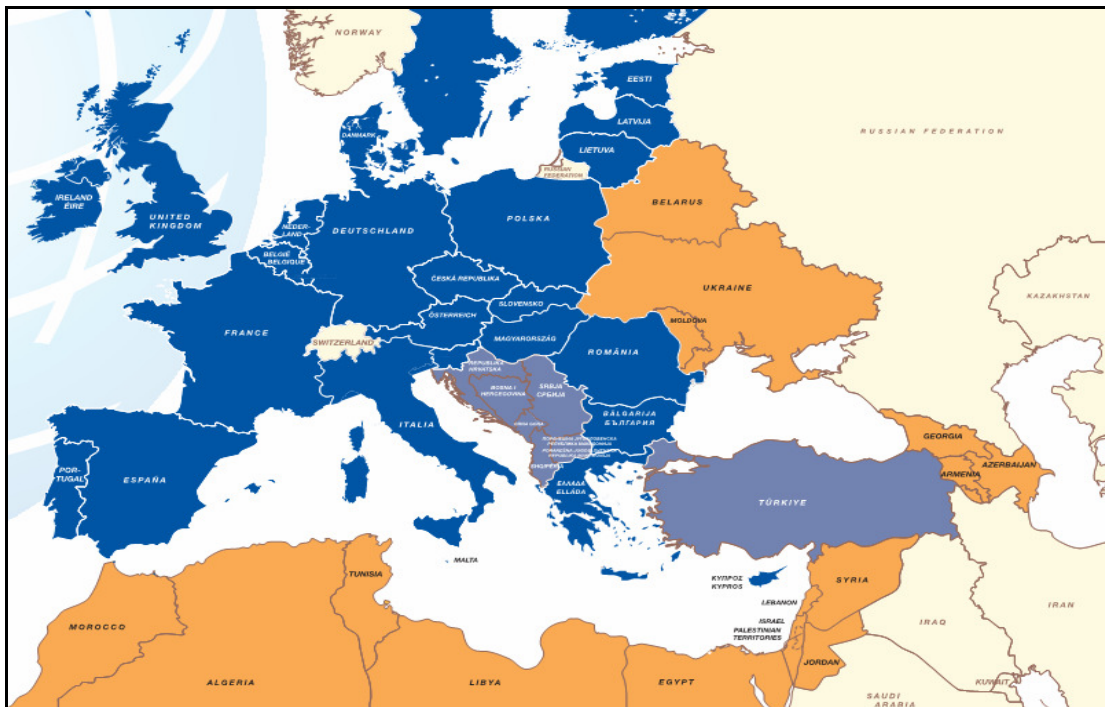
A similar pull and push could also be observed in the way the actors re-arranged their tasks in the ENP framework, but before this is going to be elaborated on in more detail, it is important to get a first grasp of what the ENP is. Hence, the remaining parts of this chapter will present the main principles and objectives, the instruments and polity, as it was laid out in the ENP strategy paper in May 2004.

4.2. The Objectives and main Principles of the ENP

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was launched in 2003/04, with the main objective *“to avoid drawing new dividing lines in Europe and to promote stability and prosperity within and beyond the new borders of the Union”* (European Commission 2003c: 4). It was recognised especially in the early months of negotiating the EU wider Europe initiative that there was a need for intensified links with the EU’s *“ring of friends”* (European Commission 2003c: 4) to guarantee security and stability for the Union’s citizens. Making sure that the danger of *“Fortress Europe”* does not become a reality towards the EU neighbours was one of the main objectives, as this could only be avoided if the EU would *“offer them [its neighbours] the chance to participate in various EU activities, through greater political, security, economic and cultural co-operation”* (European Commission 2004b: 3).

The ring of friends encompassed in 2004 finally 16 partner countries (see Figure 9). The three neighbours in the East (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova), the three South Caucasus countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia), and ten countries in the South (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria); The relationship with Libya and Belarus was, however, still strained at this moment compared to the other partner countries, because of their authoritarian regimes. EU member states, nevertheless, had decided to include those countries in the ENP to be able to support civic projects and to enable people-to-people contacts.

Figure 9: The ENP partner countries⁵⁰



The main objective of the ENP is, hence, to create stability for the European Union by creating stability in its near abroad. This also follows closely the underlying logic of the European Security Strategy of 2003 (European Council 2003b) where it is outlined that security should be achieved by exporting EU prosperity, norms and the European model instead of importing problems and threats from the neighbours to the EU. Solana as well as other EU officials repeatedly emphasize that “*we either export stability or import instability*“ (see also Ferrero-Waldner 2006: 2; for a scientific discussion see Christiansen, Petito & Tonra 2000: 390-391). Closely linked to this main objective are three other issues that are perceived as crucial to achieve the main objective that are briefly discussed in more detail below: The sharing of benefits of enlargement and added value through ENP; enhanced interdependence that leads to peace in the long run; as well as the idea of a comprehensive cross-pillar framework;

First, the ENP strategy paper emphasises that the ENP should reinforce existing relationships and bring added value for the European Union but also its partner countries. By sharing the benefits of enlargement the “*stability, security and well-being for all concerned*”(European Commission 2004b: 3) should be enhanced. At the same time, the question was raised especially by partner countries, if this added value implies an alternative to potential accession or if it should rather be considered a first step to becoming an accession candidate. At the beginning the European Union was not very explicit on this link between the new

⁵⁰ This map was taken from European Commission, Publication Office, ENP Small Leaflet, Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/information/enp-leaflet_en.pdf

neighbourhood initiative and potential enlargement, and the ENP strategy paper also very vaguely only formulates:

“Since this policy was launched, the EU has emphasised that it offers a means to reinforce relations between the EU and partner countries, which is distinct from the possibilities available to European countries under Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union.”(European Commission 2004b: 3)

European Union also communicated that participating in the ENP does not automatically imply a potential for future EU membership, while at the same time it did also not totally discard the idea towards the Eastern neighbours. It was especially observable with Georgia in 2004/05 and still is with Ukraine that for them the ENP is considered as a first step to becoming an accession candidate, while the EU was more reluctant in its follow-up messages to go in this direction. In the long run these different perceptions created a lot of frustration and disappointment with the neighbouring countries, because they did not understand the reluctance on the EU side. However, the Commission since then repeatedly emphasises that the ENP countries do not primarily have the potential for membership, but the EU offers them a privileged relationship through this initiative, which builds on mutual commitment to common values.

Second, enhanced interdependence by enforcing political, economic and cultural links and networks between the EU and its neighbours is considered as the most important mechanism to achieve security and stability.

“The Communication argues that enhanced interdependence – both political and economic – can itself be a means of stability, security and sustainable development both within and without⁵¹ the EU”. (European Commission 2003c: 4)

The idea behind this concept is straight forward: By creating a privileged relationship with the neighbours there will be more interaction in economic, political and cultural issues. This cooperation in the long run will create a certain degree of interdependence between the EU and its neighbours, what furthermore will lead to more prosperity and hence peace. The argument, hence, is that interdependence in itself can guarantee security and stability.

While this is a very idealistic approach it seems also naïve and just emphasising the positive side of more interdependence. It clearly follows the same logic as is inherent in the EU integration process in economic issues: that more trade and more free exchange of goods, services, capital and people will lead to more prosperity and understanding. But at the same time, it seems necessary to consider that there might also be losers in this stronger interaction, and that more interdependence can also imply more vulnerability to the problems of the partner.

⁵¹ “without” in this context seems a wrong translation or mistake, as the correct linguistic version should read “beyond the EU”.

Third, the ENP strategy paper repeatedly emphasises the need for a comprehensive and coherent approach that would make the EU an efficient actor in the world, or as it is formulated in the ENP strategy paper:

“A comprehensive neighbourhood policy, integrating related components from all three ‘pillars of the Union’s present structure, will enable neighbouring countries to share the benefits of EU enlargement in terms of stability, security and well-being. [...] In the implementation of the ENP it is the utmost importance that the institutions and member states act in a consistent and coherent way” (European Commission 2004b: 6)

Coherence and consistency as a goal that the EU is internally striving for already for decades is repeatedly emphasised as a strong argument to ask for treating trade, development and political debates with equal attention and by mutually reinforcing each other. Perceiving the ENP as a single framework that brings together all policies of the European Union from the different pillars is especially a concept that the Commission was often referring to.

In its Wider Europe-Communication of 2003 the European Commission emphasised that the new policy framework towards the EU neighbouring countries should encompass the “*whole range of Union’s policy*” (European Commission 2003c: 3). However, during the set-up phase the term “single framework” was not at all used, and there showed a slight confusion if the ENP is now going to be a new set of policies that abolishes and reforms the old EU policy areas, or if the ENP is just going to be a general framework that subsumes the existing EU policies. This, for example showed very strongly in the position of the European Parliament that asked for a review of the existing policies and an upgrade of the existing relationship (European Parliament 2003: 7).

However, the Commission did not take up this perspective of the European Parliament in its Communications about the neighbourhood initiative, but its position on ENP and coherence showed strongest in its 2006 Communication that was entitled “Strengthening the ENP”:

“The European Neighbourhood Policy, is a priority of the EU’s external relations which seeks to harness the attraction and influence of Europe, with strong emphasis on institution building and reform. Its success depends on the active involvement of a wide range of external and internal policies and offers a stake in the EU’s internal market to the countries concerned.”(European Commission 2006b: 3)

In the first official documents there was no notion of the “single framework” but an emphasis for the need of coherence and an integrated approach. At the same time the perception of the Commission and the Council of the ENP seemed consistent and showed in various documents, even although they did not use the term “single framework” yet:

“to formulate an ambitious, long-term and **integrated approach** to each of these [*neighbouring*] countries. [...] For the EU’s part, the whole range of the Union’s policies (foreign, security, trade, development, environment and others) will need to rise to meet this challenge. [...] The EU should act to reinforce and **unite its existing neighbourhood policy** towards these regions [...]” (Wider Europe Communication, European Commission 2003c: 3 and 9)

“Principles and scope - A Neighbourhood Policy for a European Union acting **coherently and efficiently** in the world - A comprehensive neighbourhood policy, integrating related components from all three ‘pillars’ of the Union’s present structure.” (ENP Strategy Paper, European Commission 2004b: 6):

The term “single framework” was not part of the ENP jargon right from the beginning, but was only officially introduced after more than two years. In its December 2006 Communication “Strengthening the ENP” the Commission praised for the first time the “single framework” in addition to joint ownership, concreteness and the better use of funds as the strength of the ENP:

“It provides a **single, clear framework** covering the neighbourhood as a whole in which to discuss and handle the **whole range of issues** between the EU and each partner.” (European Commission 2006f: 3, emphasis added by author)

Coherence and the “single framework” are meant to work in two ways: First, it should provide a framework where all neighbouring countries are covered, i.e. that all relations with third countries of the Eastern as well as the Southern shore are covered within this framework to achieve a certain level of coherence *between* different third countries. At the same time this coherent approach should, nevertheless, also allow for a differentiation in regard of the need, specific situation and respective national interests of the partners. Secondly, the single framework is meant to work EU-internally as a coordination tool for the diverse set of policy areas, ranging from EC issues (trade, development assistance) to political topics (including security issues) and cultural cooperation. But as this thesis set out from the beginning the question remains, to what extent the ENP as coordination tool did not only bring together the different policies within one framework, but if it also changed how the (informal) policy process within the different issue areas is conducted by EU actors. From screening ENP documents it is very clear that it was mainly the Commission that constantly referred to the need of having a single framework that encompasses all areas of EU foreign policy-making, and we will see later that it was also quite clear to the member states that this could be read as an attempt by the Commission to get more leverage also in political areas of foreign policy-making.

Next to these three aims that are supposed to directly support the main objective of creating security and stability, the ENP strategy paper also clearly sets out three principles that the ENP should be based upon and which had already been discussed in the evolution of this policy: The ENP should provide a single framework which is based on shared values and common principles that secure the rule of law, good governance, human rights and minority rights. Furthermore, the EU and its partner countries commit themselves to a market economy approach and sustainable development. Furthermore, the ENP shall at the same time allow for differentiation according to the needs and the capacity for reform of the partner country. And last, the ENP should work under joint ownership, in that far as Action plans are negotiated between the EU and the partner country and that they should reflect the priorities that the partner country wants to focus on in their reforms.

These principles already show that it is a complex network of interaction between partner country governments, EU member states and EU institutions that is supposed to make the ENP work. These networks of interaction are also active in using the instruments that have been set-up for the ENP and which will be elaborated upon in detail in the next part

4.3. The Instruments of the ENP

There are two main instruments that shall provide guidance to the ENP: existing frameworks between the EU and partner countries, as well as action plans. It was made very clear in the negotiations towards setting-up the ENP that this new policy framework should not substitute existing institutional relationships but make use of these structures and complement them, hence the ENP was supposed to build on the existing legal agreements that the EC/EU had build up over time with third countries, such as Cooperation Agreements, Partnership and Cooperation Agreements, or Association Agreements (Interview No. 19, COM).

These different kinds of EC/EU agreements with third countries had developed over time and imply a different intensity and coverage of content, while those agreements became more comprehensive and encompassing over time⁵². Trade agreements were the very first contractual documents used that had a strong economic focus and were limited in scope to certain products. Cooperation agreements were, hence, introduced to deal with a wider range of economic and commercial cooperation, mostly incorporating some elements of trade liberalisation. Cooperation agreements can be adopted by the Council with QMV, however they also asked for consent by the European Parliament. They establish an institutional framework for the relationship between the EC/EU and its partner country, by setting up a “Cooperation Council” which is meeting once a year at ministerial level and which is also assisted by a Parliamentary Cooperation Committee. Cooperation agreements are more comprehensive than the older trade agreements, but they at the same time do not cover such issues like allowing the establishment of a specific free trade agreement. Partnership and Cooperation agreements are a special category of this latter type of agreement which had been concluded at the end of the 1990s with Russia and the Newly Independent States. The ENP partner countries Ukraine, Moldova and the three Southern Caucasus countries rely currently on PCAs as their legal framework with the EU. Belarus had negotiated a PCA with the EC in 1995, but it is on hold since then and not been revoked because of the political situation in the country. The insufficiency of the PCAs for the ENP relationship also shows in that far as the EU started negotiations to establish Association Agreements with all Eastern neighbours apart from Belarus. Already in September 2008 the

⁵² For overview (status 2009) of all kind of agreements between EU and third countries see http://eeas.europa.eu/association/docs/agreements_en.pdf

negotiation process for an Association Agreement with Ukraine started and several successful rounds of negotiations have taken place since then. In November 2009, an EU-Ukraine Association Agenda has been adopted that replaces the former Action Plan and which is supposed to facilitate the entry into force of the new agreement between the EU and Ukraine. Since Ukraine has joined the WTO in 2008, an important aspect of the new Association Agreement is the set-up of a “Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area”⁵³. The latter would not be possible within the framework of a PCA.

Similar negotiations are under way with Moldova since January 2010 (Foreign Affairs Council 2010), and during a visit of the current High Representative/Vice President of the Commission Catherine Ashton to the Southern Caucasus countries in July 2010 the start of negotiations for Association Agreements with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia have been announced (Europa Website 2010)

For the Southern neighbours the switch from Cooperation Agreements to Association Agreements had already taken place earlier. Next to the Lomé countries in 1975, cooperation agreements had also been established with Tunisia, (1969), Israel (1975), Algeria (1976), Morocco (1976), Egypt (1977) and Syria (1977). However, the only one still in force is the one with Syria. The others had been replaced by Association Agreements under the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, which hence have been entitled “Euro-Mediterranean Agreements establishing an Association” and which have been signed with following partners: Occupied Palestinian Territories (1997 Interim), Tunisia (1998), Algeria (2005), Israel (2000), Morocco (2000), Algeria (2002), Jordan (2002), Egypt (2004), Lebanon (2006) (for overview see also table 4 on p. 113).

Association Agreements are the most recent type of international agreements that the EU can establish with third countries, and they have to be decided in the Council by unanimity and also require the consent of the EP. Association Agreements allow for a closer relationship than all other agreements beforehand, and establish cooperation in a wide range of sectors (for more details see Smith, K. 2003: 52-57). This shift to more comprehensive agreements between the EU and its immediate neighbours has also been observed by academic scholars:

“The EU has thus created a hierarchy of partners: its closest partners are linked by association agreements; other countries (..) only by cooperation agreements. The ‘pyramid of privileges’ has shifted over time: in the 1980s the ACP partners were unquestionably at the top; now the EU’s immediate neighbours are certainly crowding the top spot. “ (Smith, K. 2003: 56).

⁵³ For updated and more detailed information see the Ukraine Country Website of the European External Action Service at http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ukraine/index_en.htm.

Table 5: The legal base of EU relations with its ENP partner countries
(sorted by date of final adoption of Action Plan)

	<i>Kind of Agreement</i>	<i>Signed -- In force since</i>	<i>Action plan finally adopted</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Moldova	PCA	1994 - 1998, July	2005 – February	• Also part of Black Sea Synergy • Since January 2010: negotiations for Association Agreement
Ukraine	PCA	1994 - 1998, March	2005 – February	• Since September 2008: negotiations for EU-Ukraine Association Agreement • 2009 Action plan replaced by EU-Ukraine Association Agenda • Also part of Black Sea Synergy
Israel	AA	2000 - June	2005 – April	
Occupied Palestinian Territories	Interim AA	1997 July	2005 – May	
Jordan	AA	1997 – 2000, May	2005 – June	
Morocco	AA	1996 – 2000, March	2005 – July	• Since 13 October 2008: statut avancé (advanced status) adopted at 7th Association Council: more financial assistance and more effort to strengthen political, economic and cultural ties;⁵⁴
Tunisia	AA	1995 -- 1998, March	2005 – July	
Armenia	PCA	1996 - 1999	2006 – Nov.14	• 2010 launch of negotiations for Association Agreement • Also part of Black Sea Synergy
Azerbaijan	PCA	1996 - 1999	2006 – Nov.14	• 2010 launch of negotiations for Association Agreement • Also part of Black Sea Synergy
Georgia	PCA	1996 - 1999	2006 – Nov. 14	• 2010 launch of negotiations for Association Agreement • Also part of Black Sea Synergy
Lebanon	AA	2002 – 2006, April	2007 - January	
Egypt	AA	2001 – 2004, June	2007 - March	
Algeria ⁵⁵	AA	2002 – 2005, Sept.	NONE	
Belarus	PCA signed in march 1995 but not yet in force		NONE	Human Rights Dialogue since 2009
Libya	CA		NONE	• Observer in EMP • 2004: lifting of EU sanctions • 2008 – November: negotiations on framework agreement started • NIP 2011-13 preparation for more ENPI financial assistance from 2011 onwards
Syria	CA	1997	NONE	• draft EU-Syria Association Agreement on hold because of political conditions; now adopted by EU in October 2009, awaiting signature of Syrian government, then ratification of EP and MS still needed; • does not yet benefit from all its instruments and incentives, pending entry into force of the Association Agreement
AA – Association Agreement, CA – Cooperation Agreement, PCA – Partnership and Cooperation Agreement;				
Source: A similar overview was presented by Boniface/Duke (2008); however, this table is extended for additional information and updated by using the country websites of the External Action Service (http://www.eeas.europa.eu/countries/index_en.htm) and the Websites of the EU Delegations in the respective countries;				

⁵⁴ For more information on the “advanced status” and its implication visit following website: <http://www.statut-avance.com/index.php> that is run by Moroccan scholars observing the EU-Morocco relationship.

⁵⁵ Algeria is a rather reluctant partner so far, who only agreed to the Association agreement in September 2005 after lengthy internal debates. Additionally, the Algerian government was reluctant to also negotiate an action plan, but they first wanted to see how the implementation of the association agreement works out (Interview No. 15, CS).

Already in June 2003 the Council had invited the Commission to draft the country action plans that were regarded as the main instrument for implementing the ENP Strategy paper. During the drafting stage of the action plans the Commission also already met the first group of partner countries to discuss its ideas in the course of 2004, while at those meeting also the rotating presidencies of the Council of Ministers, the Council Secretariat and representatives of the team of the High Representative Solana participated (European Commission 2004c: 3). The first drafts had been sent to the Council in July 2004, where after several rounds of debates and negotiations followed (Interview No. 19, COM). As soon as the EU member states approved the draft action plans, the Commissions put forward a proposal for a Council Decision for a European Community/Union position to be taken in the respective Association (or Partnership and Cooperation) Council. There the EU, its member states as well as the partner country agree on the action plan. These institutional framework and its sub-bodies is also used to follow up on more detailed aspects of the action plan after formal adoption and they monitor the implementation of the goals set (European Commission 2004c: 3-4).

The European Union adopted the first seven action plans in 2005 with Jordan, Moldova, Morocco, Tunisia, Ukraine, Israel and the Palestinian Authority respectively. In 2006, three more action plans with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia followed, and in 2007 two more action plans have been adopted with Egypt and Lebanon. Hence, out of the 16 ENP partner country only four countries still do not have any action plans that guide their cooperation with the EU: Algeria, Belarus, Libya and Syria.⁵⁶ Action plans are supposed to set out the priorities for at least three years, and should be revised after five years. This shows for example in the case of Ukraine, where the first action plan was replaced by an EU-Ukraine Association Agenda that sets out the priorities to get the new Association Agreement into force as soon as possible.

4.3.1. The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)

Next to the action plans the European Union, however, also relied on traditionally applied programming documents that it normally uses in its way of delivering external aid and which are part of its project cycle management in development assistance. Country strategy papers and regional strategy papers are drawn up to provide general guidelines, and multi-annual national indicative programmes are part of these papers and supposed to outline the general planning and

⁵⁶ For overview see also European Commission Website about the European Neighbourhood Policy, Reference Documents: http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm#2

identify priorities for financial cooperation.⁵⁷ For all ENP partner countries such Country Strategy papers have been drafted for 2002-2006⁵⁸, and again for 2007-2013⁵⁹.

Already after the Wider Europe Communication in March 2003, member states criticised the inadequacy of the current financial instruments of TACS and INTERREG to allow for fruitful cross-border cooperation. The Swedish delegation was the first one to highlight this problem and to ask for a new “proximity instrument”(Swedish Delegation 2003). Just a few days later also the Finnish delegation tabled its proposal in regard of the need of a new financial instrument (Finnish Delegation 2003) what in the end was also taken up by the then Greek presidency of the Council of Ministers (Presidency of the Council / Greece 2003). In the months to follow the Council had asked the Commission to prepare a Communication in this regard, which the Commission published in July 2003 under the title “Paving the way for a New Neighbourhood Instrument” (European Commission 2003a). In November 2003, also the European Parliament drew the attention to financial instruments, claiming that the existing financial means would be not enough to meet the goals of the ENP and that a re-shuffling of money from other areas would neither be advisable nor sufficient (European Parliament 2003)

In September 2004, the European Commission proposed its first draft for a regulation of the Council and European Parliament to establish a new financial instrument (European Commission 2006d). As this instrument was supposed to alter the financial frameworks, an agreement under co-decision between Council and EP was needed. However, in the following months nothing happened apart from the European Parliament issuing two resolutions, one on the need for more cross-border cooperation like in the Euroregions and one on the current state of the European Neighbourhood Policy in January 2006 (European Parliament 2006a).

In May 2006 the European Commission, finally, published its Communication for a regulation under an amended procedure. The European Parliament held its first reading in July 2006 and approved the Commission’s draft with several amendments (European Parliament 2006b), which the Commission accepted without any comments or rejections. In October 2006, finally the Council approved the amended Commission draft regulation as an A-item during its General Affairs Council (General Affairs Council 2006a). The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) was officially adopted with the publication of Regulation No. 1638 in the Official Journal of the European Union (European Parliament & European Council 2006).

⁵⁷ For more information see European Commission Website of EuropeAid, “How we Work”, “Programming” at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/programming_en.htm

⁵⁸ For all Country Strategy Papers 2002-2006 see <http://www.eas.europa.eu/sp/2002.htm>

⁵⁹ For all Country Strategy Papers 2007-2013 http://www.eas.europa.eu/sp/index_en.htm

The main rationale behind the new financial instrument is to replace all different kinds of financial instruments that had developed over time (TACIS, MEDA, cross-border mechanisms within INTERREG) with one financial framework, also to make it more easily to comprehend and more user friendly.

The new ENPI regulation sets out that the member states and the EP delegate all implementation tasks to the Commission who is responsible for the programming by drafting annual action programmes for countries and regions and monitoring the financial expenditures. These kind of decision making is considered as administrative law making, and the Commission is therefore assisted by a management committee that is set-up under comitology and made up of member states representatives, which have to be kept informed and have to approve expenditure that are not covered by this financial regulation but might arise because of unexpected events or emergencies.

Looking at the documents and explanations of the different institutions in more detail shows a lot about their view of how the ENP and the ENPI in more specific terms should work and who should be involved in what. In this regard it is especially the European Parliament that voiced its discontent of its involvement in the ENP so far.

After its first reading, the European Parliament had submitted a total of 123 amendments, which have all been accepted by the Commission, although some have not been accepted by the Council and hence changed back again afterwards. In its explanatory statement that the EP had attached to the amendments of the ENPI draft regulation (European Parliament 2006b: 52-55) it becomes very clear that in general terms the EP welcomes the ENPI draft by the Commission but that one of the priorities behind the suggested changes is “*Enhancing the role of the European Parliament, both in programming and in monitoring activities*”. This had also already been very clearly emphasised by the EP in its resolution about the ENP in January of the same year, where it stated:

“21. [The European Parliament] Regrets that in its strategy paper (COM 2004, 0373) the Commission responded only to the Council’s opinion and ignored Parliament’s comprehensive resolution of 20 November 2003; [...]

24. [The European Parliament] Calls on the Commission to avoid bureaucratising the whole ENP process and to fully consult and involve not just the Council but also Parliament when developing the time-frames and content of future action plans;” (European Parliament 2006a)

The European Parliament felt neglected by the Commission and the Council of Ministers, and wanted to be stronger involved in the planning and programming processes of the ENP. The argument of the EP was that in these national, regional and thematic programming documents the “*real shape of the co-operation*” (European Parliament 2006b: 53) is emerging and that the European Parliament should be part of those deliberations as well. The EP criticised that in the form of the Commission draft regulation the Parliament would not have any role in the ENPI

processes and that the annual action programmes would be under the sole decision-making power of the Commission. The EP's reference to "bureaucratising" criticises the fact that the ENPI regulation installed comitology for follow-up administrative law-making by the Commission instead of asking that all programming documents follow the "normal" Community decision-making processes between Council and European Parliament, where the Commission drafts and suggests but where both Council and European Parliament can block and suggest their amendments.

In regard of the legislative draft regulation, the European Parliament had suggested a few linguistic amendments to add to the clearness of the legislative text and which were mostly accepted by the Council. Furthermore, the EP added some references to aims of ensuring gender equality, civil society development and good governance (e.g. it asked to add Art. 2d and 2f). However, it is especially the competence questions of EU actors that are of interest for this research project which have been challenged by the EP in four particular parts of the draft regulation: recital 20, Article 2cc, Article 3 on the policy framework, and Article 7 on programming and the allocation of funds (European Parliament 2006b).

Recital 20 in its final version states that "*measures necessary for implementation should follow*" the normal administrative law making procedure of comitology, where the Commission drafts administrative laws that are discussed with the member states in comitology committees but do not have to go through the whole formal decision-making process. The European Parliament opposed this comitology procedure as it is not involved in this part of administrative law making and hence it suggested that implementing measures should be taken according to Art. 26 and only after these implementing measures have been deliberated upon in the EP.

Article 2 lists the "scope of community assistance" that this regulation should cover and for which the Commission had proposed a last Article 2cc stating that the ENPI should also be used for "*addressing common thematic challenges in fields of mutual concern and any other objectives consistent with the scope of this regulation.*" The EP wanted to delete this paragraph with the justification that the list was already quite extensive and that such an open aspect is hence not needed. But at the same time it can also be reasonably argued that the EP did not like this paragraph in combination with its missing role in implementing measures, as then the Commission together with the member states could just decide on additional measures that are not explicitly stated in this regulation. The Council discarded the argumentation of the EP and left the article in the regulation as it had originally been proposed by the Commission.

Article 3 refers to the policy framework that is established by the association or partnership and cooperation agreements, Council conclusions and Commission communications. In this regard the European Parliament wanted to add that Commission Communications that lay guidelines

for EU policy-making towards the neighbours should only be approved by the Council after consulting the EP. Also this suggestion was not taken into account by the Council in the end.

Finally, article 7 deals with “Programming and allocation of funds” and here the EP had suggested an additional article 7(1) which would ask for the establishment of a “multiannual policy framework” that would lay down the strategic priorities for Community assistance. This new framework would be adopted by the normal co-decision procedure, where both Council and EP have a veto. The motivation behind this suggestion of the EP is quite clear – it was and will also in the future be involved neither in the negotiation of the action plans nor in setting up the national / regional indicative programmes which are adopted by the Commission. Hence the EP suggested introducing an additional document that they could veto upon. Again, the Council discarded these ideas of the EP as unnecessary.

In a similar vein the EP demanded that the EP should be consulted for all strategy papers to be adopted for national or multicountry and thematic programmes. Also when considering the explanations of the EP in the rest of the document, it becomes very clear that this was mainly an attempt to avoid administrative decision making without the involvement of the EP.

In terms of contents the three institutions agreed fully on the Commission draft, although there was a slight difference in what they suggested for the financial envelop of the new ENPI. The Commission had proposed 14 929 Million EUR for seven years, while the EP increased this amount to 16 978 million EUR in its amendments. The Council finally adopted the regulation with a financial envelop of 11 181 million EUR for the period 2007-2013. This is an increase of 32% compared to what the EU had allocated to the two programmes of TACIS and MEDA in the period of 2000-2006 (Emerson, Noutcheva & Popescu 2007: 22).

From these 11 billion EUR approximately half was planned to be spent in the period 2006-2010. As the planning figures in table 6 show nearly 75% of the financial instrument are used for individual country programmes, whereas another 1,5 billion EUR is allocated to regional programmes and the governance facility.

This overview on the one hand shows that in absolute terms of the individual country allocations Morocco (654 Mill EUR), the Palestinian Territories (632 Mill EUR) and Egypt (559 Mill EUR) followed by Ukraine (494 Mill EUR) get the most external assistance from the EU. Together these four partner countries get 55% of the individual country allocations of the ENPI for 2007-2010. The last column shows the allocation of the individual country programmes divided by the population of the respective country (statistics from 2005), ie it shows the financial allocation of the individual country programmes from 2007-2010 per capita. In total the ENP partner countries including Russia had a population of 526 million people, and hence the EU contributed approx. 7,8 EUR/person of the ENP countries in external assistance from the

individual country programmes. Calculated per capita, the biggest share of the individual country contributions from EU external assistance 2007-2010 go to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Moldova, Lebanon and Jordan.

These numbers should give a first impression of the most important instrument of the ENP in terms of implementation on the ground – the external assistance of national and regional programmes. Compared to the overall EU budget for 2007-2013 of 975 billion EUR this might not seem a lot, but for the subheading “EU as global actor” 56 billion EUR had been allocated, so that in the end the ENP accounts for 20% of the total spending of this subheading.

Table 6: Allocation of the ENPI 2007-2010
in total, in % of countries involved, and per capita

	Million EUR	% of individual country programmes	% of total	financial means of individual country programme per capita
Algeria	220	5,3	3,9	6,7
Armenia	98,4	2,4	1,7	30,8
Azerbaijan	92	2,2	1,6	11,0
Belarus	20	0,5	0,4	2,0
Egypt	558	13,5	9,9	7,9
Georgia	120,4	2,9	2,1	28,0
Israel	8	0,2	0,1	1,1
Jordan	265	6,4	4,7	48,2
Lebanon	187	4,5	3,3	49,2
Libya	8	0,2	0,1	1,4
Moldova	209,7	5,1	3,7	58,3
Morocco	654	15,9	11,6	22,6
Palestinian Territories	632	15,3	11,2	166,3
Syria	139	3,4	2,5	7,7
Tunisia	300	7,3	5,3	30,0
Ukraine	494	12,0	8,8	10,5
Russian Federation	120	2,9	2,1	0,5
Total - individual country programmes	4125,5	100,0	73,3	
Cross-border Cooperation Programmes	277,1		4,9	
Governance Facility	400		7,1	
Inter-Regional Programme	260,8		4,6	
Inter-Regional Programme - East	223,5		4,0	
Inter-Regional Programme - South	343,3		6,1	
Total - multi-country et al.	1504,7		26,7	
TOTAL - 2007-2010	5630,2			

Source: Financial allocation (planned for ENPI 2007/2010) from http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/0703_enpi_figures_en.pdf; Population figures for 2005 from (European Commission & Eurostat 2007)

4.4. Conclusion: What these first descriptive Empirical Accounts show

This chapter started out to introduce to the European Neighbourhood Policy, to how the ENP was set up and in terms of how it was supposed to work on paper. It showed the evolution of the Wider Europe initiative, how different actors contributed with their own ideas, until finally the ENP Strategy Paper had been adopted in June 2004. It discussed the main objectives and aims, and outlined the main instruments that have been created and elaborated upon in these founding documents. But how does this empirical material now contribute to our understanding and to answering the research questions as outlined at the beginning of this thesis?

The analysis of the documents and of the arguments of the actors during setting up the ENP provides, of course, a rather formal account of how the single ENP framework was supposed to change EU policy-making towards the neighbours. It does not show how it changed in practice (what will be investigated in the subsequent chapters) but this chapter contributes to a general understanding of how the involved actors thought that the ENP framework should change the EU policy-making towards the neighbours. It outlines therefore the original ideas that led to the ENP strategy paper and what the involved actors wanted to change by setting up the ENP. The motivations of the involved actor behind these suggested changes will be discussed in more detail in chapter 7.

First of all, there was a strong consensus among all actors about the main goal that the ENP should work towards in terms of content: creating and enhancing security for EU citizens by increasing prosperity and creating stability in the neighbourhood. This was the main argumentation that was used by Member states in the Council, Commission officials as well as Members of the European Parliament. This first observation is also confirmed in other academic research:

“In the case of the ENP, the consensus on the key goals among the chiefs of government and foreign ministries of the member states is fairly strong. The overall goals of the ENP are clearly stated and shared among the member states. The ENP’s main rationale is to increase the EU’s security; stability in the neighbourhood is to be achieved through promoting welfare and democracy in the ENP participants.” (Sedelmeier 2007: 198)

In this regard it is interesting to see that the Commission followed the same security discourse that was also used by the member states, arguing that the enlargement process was very successful in contributing to security and stability with the new member states, and that it as the supranational institution that contributed such crucial elements to the success of the accession processes should also play a stronger role in ensuring security by creating stability in the neighbourhood. This might be surprising as since the Maastricht Treaty the Commission was always very careful in not talking about “security” issues, as this was still considered in a narrow sense of hard military security and defence and as a traditional area of the intergovernmental CFSP and the member states that the Commission must not touch upon.

Keeping this in mind it is quite astonishing that the Commission used the discourse of “creating security” as the main objective of the ENP. However, we will observe at a later stage that the conception of what “security” means and how it can most effectively be achieved, varied considerably between Commission and (some) member states. At the starting point of the ENP the main communicated rationale behind setting up the ENP was, however, that security and stability for the EU can be achieved by creating security and stability in the near abroad.

Secondly, the ENP was meant to create a coherent and single framework that brings together all different kinds of EU policies towards one country on the one hand, and on the other hand create one framework that guides EU relations with all neighbouring countries in the South and in the East. In this regard the ENP was not supposed to be a new *policy* that might even substitute existing policies, but it was designed as a *policy framework* that brings together all different EU policies that are applied in the EU relations with the neighbouring countries.

Closely linked to this idea of *complementing existing policies* instead of replacing them, it has to be, thirdly, mentioned that the Council as well as the Commission repeatedly emphasised that the ENP as special relationship should not substitute the current legal arrangements but build on them. This implies that the legal contracts between the EU and the third country would remain, and that the ENP builds on the already existing structures and policies that have been established between the EU and the respective third countries.

Last, the ideas of the Commission and the member states as represented in the Council seemed quite similar on how the ENP should look like: it should stretch from Morocco across the Southern shore till Syria in the South, and in the East it would encompass Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine as well as Russia. The latter refused the offer of the EU to join the European Neighbourhood Policy quite quickly, as Russia did reject the idea of being treated as a neighbour but insisted on the discourse around “partnership”. Also in regard of the financial instrument the ideas of Council and Commission were way closer than what the European Parliament seemed to have in mind. The EP saw the ENP as a framework which should in the long run also encompass the Middle East and could stretch until Afghanistan.

In regard of the second question about the roles of different EU actors the set-up phase of the ENP showed a clear dominance of the Commission and the Member states. The European Parliament had presented several far-reaching ideas, but apart from the inclusion of the Southern Caucasus countries into the ENP its ideas have been ignored by the other actors. The EP even recognises this in its follow-up resolution on the ENP in 2006, where it complains that its view had not been taken on board for the Strategy paper, and that by suggesting administrative law making for the implementation of the ENPI the Commission would “bureaucratise” the whole process and exclude the European Parliament totally.

After providing this general background about how the ENP was set-up, and what its main objectives and its structure were supposed to be at the very beginning, it seems a logical next step to compare this ENP blueprint on paper with what happened in practice when the ENP was implemented. However, before we move on in terms of time, this thesis takes a step backwards to assess how the relationships between the EU and its neighbours had evolved before the ENP was set-up.

Chapter 5: No Tabula Rasa - EU Policy-making towards the Neighbours prior to the ENP

In 2003/04 the ENP was celebrated as a new and innovative framework to manage the relations of the European Union with its new neighbours. But in what respect is the ENP “new”? Did it just add together the institutional relations of the EU with the South and the East, or did it also change the quality of these relationships and contributed with “added value”, as some actors claimed? While these questions can also be perceived more broadly, by asking if the impact on the ground changes, this thesis focuses mainly on the institutional dynamics and the EU output, as it is formulated in the first main research question of this thesis about the extent to which the single ENP framework changes the EU policy-making processes towards the neighbours. The latter puts a special emphasis on the EU policy-making dimension and the EU output (in Brussels) rather than on implementation and impact on the ground (outcome dimension).

This chapter outlines and critically assesses the already dense web of institutional links towards the South that had existed between the EC/EU as well as the more recent EU relations with the East, both before the set-up of ENP. It serves as a reference point that allows to compare the ENP and the EU actors involvement in day-to-day policy-making with the way EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours has been set-up at an earlier point in time. This way should allow us to assess to what extent the ENP is really “new” and to what extent it brought some fundamental changes to the EU relationship with its neighbours, and especially to evaluate to what extent the roles and interaction of EU actors was different within these framework compared to the ENP. Hence, this chapter mainly focuses on the set-up of these institutional frameworks, the role and the competences of the EU actors within those, as well as their shortcomings⁶⁰.

The first part focuses on the EU relationship with the South, especially with the Maghreb countries of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. In comparison to the comprehensive relationship with partner countries in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, the EU relations with the Eastern partners were at the time of the ENP set-up still developing and getting refined. After the end of the Cold War and the fall of Communism these countries only had gained independence in 1991, and the first years of their independence their relationship with the EU was not the most salient topic on their reform agenda. But especially since the accession process of the CEEC countries that culminated in the Eastern enlargement 2004/07, the debates and discussions of the EU relationship with countries like

⁶⁰ While the relationships between the EU and each single country in itself is an interesting topic and worth a thorough investigation, this chapter only focuses on the parts relevant for the research questions, while also referring to background literature that might be of interest to gain more insight in the respective country's relationships with the EU.

Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus but also the Southern Caucasus have gained in quantity and quality. The EU relationship with the East is discussed in the second part of this chapter.

Already in chapter 4 and especially in table 5 (p. 113), it has been emphasised that one principle of the ENP was to not substitute but to complement the existing relationships. In more practical terms this implies that the ENP build on the existing legal agreements like the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements, or the more comprehensive Association Agreements. While the cooperation with Eastern neighbours still relies on Partnership and Cooperation Agreements and negotiations to upgrade to Association Agreements are currently under way at the end of 2010, the Southern neighbours predominantly rely on Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements that have been introduced gradually since 1995.

5.1. Looking towards the South: The EU's Mediterranean Policy

“Europe is perceiving the destabilization in the Mediterranean, especially in North Africa, as a threat to its own interests. Economically it fears to lose control over its regular energy supply. Politically it fears the consequences of civil war like in Algeria, the possibility of islamistic takeovers, an increase in international terrorism, drug-traffic, organized crime and, more than anything else, an increase in North African migration with its negative impact on domestic policies in Europe. But this worrying scenario is only one reason for Europe's growing interest in the region.” (Jünemann 1996)

This assessment from 1996 of the EU interest towards its Southern neighbours precisely summarises the position of the EU and its member states during this time. And even more interestingly, it still catches the main concerns that the EU member states put forward in regard of the neighbours at the Southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. Already before the 1990s a general consensus had developed that a cooperative and comprehensive relationship with the Mediterranean partners would be needed, but these attempts did neither manage to supersede the bilateral arrangements between single member states and partner countries nor were able to overcome the strong focus on economic issues and trade⁶¹. Only in 1995 the Barcelona Declaration finally set up the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership that created the first really multilateral as well comprehensive framework between the EU and its Southern Neighbours in 1995.

However, while the quote above outlines destabilisation, terrorism, organised crime and migration as main political problems, these were only recognised in the mid 1990s. Additionally, between the 1970s and 1990s slowly a European approach to the Middle East conflict emerged that also impacted the EC approach to the wider region (Müller 2007). Beforehand the EU Mediterranean policy mainly draw on economic policies (Benkö 2000),

⁶¹ For a comprehensive overview of the EU as an international actor in the Mediterranean between 1958-1995 see Schumacher (2004: 58-197).

what became especially visible after the oil crisis in the 1970s. During more than 30 years, economic interests were the main focus of the EC/EU and its member states towards the Mediterranean partner countries. Europe, especially the southern member-states were and still are heavily reliant on energy supply (gas and petroleum) and natural resources from the Mediterranean. On the other hand the Mediterranean countries are an important market for EU imports and exports (Abellán 2002: 3; Salama 2002: 1; Smith, H. 2002: 162-163).

Table 7 provides a general glimpse on the extent of these trade relations between the EU and Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria respectively⁶². Overall, the “Mediterranean Basin” is the second strongest partner for EU exports, accounting for 12% of all exports just after exports within the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA, 28%) and slightly before exports to the European Free Trade Area (EFTA, 11,2%); In regard of imports, the main EU trading partner is again NAFTA, while the Mediterranean countries account for 9,4% and are hence quite similar to the “Dynamic Asian economies”, EFTA and the Commonwealth of Independent States (Eurostat 2005: 22).

Although the European Union has certain economic interests (export market, energy supply) in the Maghreb countries, the Maghreb countries in return are even more dependent on the EU, because of the large export-orientation of their economies (in 2003 38,3 % of Algerian GDP; 43,8% of Tunisian GDP; 27,9% of Moroccan GDP), whereas the European Union is the most important export-partner for these countries, accounting for more than 66% of their foreign trade in 2003. Furthermore, the EU supplied nearly 63% of the region’s imports in 2003. Tunisia is most dependent on the EU, with more than 73% of imports originating there, and with more than 80% of its exports going to Europe (Eurostat / Office for Official Publications of the European Communities 4/2005b: 3, 4/2005a). The trade flows show as well a quite “colonial” style of trade: Next to agricultural products, the EU imports primarily manufactures articles and textiles from Morocco and Tunisia, that account for 42,6% and 48,2% of total imports from these countries. Algeria is absolutely different, as 71,8% of all imports of the EU from Algeria are related to mineral fuels. On the other hand, the EU primarily exports machinery, transport equipment, chemicals and textiles to the three Maghreb countries (DG Trade 2005b, c, a; for a more detailed analysis see also Piening 1997: 70)

At the same time it is also quite unsurprising that some EU member states have closer links with the Southern Mediterranean and hence have stronger national (economic) interests than others. While for example, on average, one third of all gas imports to the EU come from the three Maghreb countries, Spain’s gas supply originate to 70% from Algeria (Biscop 2003: 17).

⁶² As my empirical analysis primarily focuses on the three Maghreb countries Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria, I will only present their trade data here, as it is important for my case selection to know if any country is economically more important to the EU, and vice versa.

Table 7: EU-Exports to Maghreb and EU-Imports from Maghreb in 2001, 2003 and 2005

EXPORTS from EU to ..⁶³							
	Value in billion Euro			% of total EU trade			Rank 2005
	2001	2003	2005	2001	2003	2005	
Morocco	7,6	8,1	8,3	0,8	0,9	1,1	24
Tunisia	8,0	7,2	5,8	0,9	0,8	0,7	29
Algeria	7,7	8,0	7,8	0,9	0,9	1,0	25
IMPORTS to EU from ...⁶⁴							
	Value in billion Euro			% of total EU trade			Rank 2005
	2001	2003	2005	2001	2003	2005	
Morocco	6,3	6,3	6,4	0,6	0,7	0,8	28
Tunisia	6,3	6,2	5,1	0,6	0,7	0,6	33
Algeria	16,2	14,6	14,8	1,6	1,6	1,7	12
(Source: Eurostat / Office for Official Publications of the European Communities 2005: 40-41; DG Trade 2005d, f, a)							

Table 8: Main EU members in EU-Exports to and EU-Imports from Maghreb in 2004
in absolute terms and in % of total third country's export

Exports 2004				Imports 2004			
absolute in Mio EUR				absolute in Mio EUR			
	Algeria	Morocco	Tunisia		Algeria	Morocco	Tunisia
total	9451	8863	7574	total	15264	6549	6742
BE	582	329	377	BE	1322	309	374
DE	975	983	946	DE	820	356	778
ES	826	2102	566	ES	2837	457	1813
FR	4586	2876	2741	FR	3199	2580	2410
IT	1237	946	2091	IT	4841	1958	467
NL	251	397	221	NL	1036	191	216
UK	244	494	221	UK	475	231	724
per EU member state in % of total third country's export				per EU member state in % of total third country's import			
	Algeria	Morocco	Tunisia		Algeria	Morocco	Tunisia
BE	6,2	3,7	5,0	BE	8,7	4,7	5,5
DE	10,3	11,1	12,5	DE	5,4	5,4	11,5
ES	8,7	23,7	7,5	ES	18,6	7,0	26,9
FR	48,5	32,4	36,2	FR	21,0	39,4	35,7
IT	13,1	10,7	27,6	IT	31,7	29,9	6,9
NL	2,7	4,5	2,9	NL	6,8	2,9	3,2
UK	2,6	5,6	2,9	UK	3,1	3,5	10,7
(Source: Data from Eurostat 2005: 96-97)							

Table 8 also provides evidence for this argument by showing that it is especially France, Italy and Spain that have strong trade links with Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. Nearly 49% of all imports of Algeria come from France, while Morocco's imports are slightly more equally distributed between France (32,4%) and Spain (23,7). Also with Tunisia, France is the main export partner (36,2%) of the EU member states, followed by Italy (27,6%) and Germany (12,5%). In terms of imports, Italy imports more (31,7%) from Algeria than France (21%), while the picture is reversed with Morocco, where France accounts for nearly 40% of all imports and Italy for 30%. Imports from Tunisia are strongest again towards France (35,7%), followed by Spain (26,9) and Germany (11,5).

While the economic interests of the EU member states emerged and remained stable quite from the first attempts to strengthen the relationship, the EU today additionally has a strong strategic interest in its near abroad that is encompassing a broader definition of security than just focusing on trade relations. Scholars and practitioners repeatedly emphasise that the Mediterranean as well as the Middle East are important for the EU's security, especially when considering a comprehensive security approach (Piening 1997: 69; Salama 2002: 1). Migration flows⁶³, environmental concerns, nuclear safety or organised crime can impede European security and demand a coherent, effective approach. Or as Michael E. Smith and Katja Weber observed:

“The challenges the EU confronts with respect to minority issues, visa, border and trade policies, cross-border cooperation and security policies in hopes of stabilising its neighbourhood are enormous. And yet, it is clearly in the EU's interest of effectively manage its relations with its larger neighbourhood” (Smith, M. E. & Weber 2007: 4)

This observation already indicates that the policies provided towards the Mediterranean therefore do not necessarily follow an altruistic approach of the Union's commitment to general norms like human rights and democracy, but reflect as well rational security concerns. Or as another scholar formulated it even more plainly:

“Europe's commitment to the democratisation of the southern Mediterranean region is primarily motivated by a security concern. The Barcelona Process has been fundamentally the pursuit of political and security objectives through economic and cultural means.” (Abellán 2002: 3)

It was in 1995 that finally a first comprehensive institutional framework was established by the European Union towards its Southern neighbours with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

⁶³ For a detailed analysis of the migration flows from and even more importantly through the South Mediterranean countries see de Haas (2007).

5.1.1. From an EC Mediterranean Policy towards a comprehensive EU institutional Framework

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, that is often also referred to as “Barcelona Process”, was formally set up in November 1995, by 15 EU member states and 12 Mediterranean Countries under the Spanish Presidency (Jünemann 1996). However, although there was no common EU approach before 1995, it would be misleading to assume that the framework was established from scratch. Quite on the contrary, some member states, especially France and Italy, had already established strong economic, political and cultural links towards the Maghreb countries and some unsuccessful attempts had been started to strengthen the relationship between the European Communities and this partner countries.⁶⁴ Tunisia, Mauritania and Morocco were French colonies and have attained independence from France only in 1956. Until 1962 Algeria was as French overseas département even a legal part of the Community.⁶⁵ Libya was a former Italian colony, although with strong political and economic influence by Great Britain after the Second World war (Smith, H. 2002: 160).

In the 1960s slowly a “gradual definition of common interests” from EC member states towards the Southern Mediterranean emerged (Gomez 1998: 135). The first trade agreements with the Mediterranean countries were signed in the 1960s, when free access for their exports of industrial products and some concessions for agricultural exports was granted (Salama 2002: 1). These bilateral agreements between the EC member states and the Mediterranean countries were perceived as unsystematic, uncoordinated and inconsistent. To provide a solution to these shortcomings, the European Community launched the “Global Mediterranean Policy” as first general EC policy in 1972. As a novelty, aid assistance was included next to trade preferences (see e.g. Salama 2002: 1; Smith, C. & Latheenmaki 1998: 160; Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 154; Abellán 2004: 279), and while earlier attempts treated the partner countries only bilaterally, this new EC policy considered the Mediterranean for the first time as “*homogenous region*” (Bicchi 2003: 12).⁶⁶

The war between Israel and its Arab neighbours in 1973 forced the EC to rethink its relations with the Mediterranean Countries, also because of its dependence of oil supply from the Mediterranean (Rhein 2002: 701). In 1974 the “Euro-Arab Dialog” between the Arab League,

⁶⁴ The Mediterranean region is set up by three subregions. The Maghreb countries (Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and Mauritania - often also referred to as the Southern Mediterranean), the Mashreq countries (Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Syria - the Eastern Mediterranean) and the Gulf states.

⁶⁵ The EU relations with Algeria are a very sensitive topic. Bretherton and Vogler report that there are policy statements on Algerian internal affairs neither in the context of the European Political Cooperation nor under CFSP. There have been different initiatives to tackle this blank spot, but for example initiatives of the British Presidency were frequently blocked by other member states (Bretherton 1999: 152).

⁶⁶ At the same time it has to be kept in mind that Spain (and Portugal) joined the European Communities only in 1986.

the President of the Commission and the Council was launched, aimed at the establishment of an institutional structure for dialogue on various issues. Differences about the focus of this arrangement yet became soon apparent: the Arabs wished a political dialog that also discussed the role of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the policy towards Israeli as well as the situation in Lebanon, whereas the European representatives emphasised economic issues, and especially oil supply (Piening 1997: 74; Rhein 2002: 701).

The existing trade agreements were upgraded to cooperation agreements with Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria in 1976, which granted trade preferences to both sides and strengthened financial and technical cooperation through loans from the EC budget and the European Investment Bank. Furthermore, common institutions in the form of annual meetings of a ministers, and different committees of ministers (Piening 1997: 72-73; Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 153-154). In 1979, furthermore, EC delegations were opened in Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria⁶⁷. Bicchi argues that during the 1970s there was also a shift in European perception of the Mediterranean, as two new challenges were identified by EC member states: Troublesome economic relations and terrorism. In the 1990s these concerns were extended to migration, terrorism and potential Islamic fundamentalism, which emerged as new perceived threats for the European Communities / European Union and its citizens (Bicchi 2003: 13-14).

Only one year after Spain and Portugal had joined the European Communities, Morocco applied for EEC membership in 1987, what the EC rejected by arguing of Morocco not being a European country. This push of Morocco for more attention in Europe is perceived as a response to the caused frustration regarding the relationship with the EC. Neither the Greek accession in 1981 nor the accession of Spain and Portugal in 1986 had been able to reverse this trend at this point in time (Smith, K. 2003: 76). The Mediterranean were of lower importance for the EC/EU, what increased even further immediately after the Cold war, when the EC/EU focused its attention on the former Communist countries of Eastern Europe (Smith, C. & Latheenmaki 1998: 155). At the same time, Bicchi, however, argues that it should not be left unnoticed that after the fall of the Soviet Union the international climate also changed in a positive manner, as the Russian threat was not perceived as main priority anymore and Europe and the EC could redirect its attention to its neighbours. Hence, while it was indeed observable that the main area of attention was the new Eastern neighbours right after the end of the Cold War, the new climate also allowed slowly for more EC attention towards the South.

⁶⁷ For more information on the EC delegations in the Maghreb countries see http://ec.europa.eu/delegations/algeria/about_us/delegation_role/index_fr.htm (Algeria), http://ec.europa.eu/delegations/tunisia/about_us/delegation_role/index_fr.htm (Tunisia), http://ec.europa.eu/delegations/morocco/about_us/delegation_role/index_fr.htm (Morocco)

In line with these reflections, the importance of the social and economic development of the Southern Mediterranean region for the Community's security was stressed in a Commission policy paper, what led to the "New Mediterranean Policy" in 1990 and the "Renovated Mediterranean Policy" in 1992 (Piening 1997: 78; Abellán 2004: 279). Within the umbrella of these reinvigorated policy frameworks, Morocco and Tunisia were granted an enhanced market access, and the financial assistance for Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia was increased as well as additional financial support granted for regional cooperation and environmental protection.

Despite these new attempts to strengthen the relationship between the EC/EU and its Southern neighbours, the Maghreb countries were, nonetheless, unsatisfied, because they felt being treated only as low priority and they wanted a more preferential engagement and a similar treatment like the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) (Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 155-156). On the other hand, the EC was not able to negotiate with the Maghreb countries as a collective, as powerful member states as well as the US wanted the isolation of Libya (Smith, H. 2002: 166).

The establishment of the European Union with entering into force of the Maastricht Treaty in 1993 provided a new impetus for EU foreign policy-making. The CFSP replaced the EPC and hence raised the hope for the EU to become a more active and efficient actor in international relations, and in its neighbourhood in particular. The European Council in Lisbon in 1992 issued a separate declaration on the CFSP, which outlines the main ideas for implementation of this new policy area, as well as it identifies areas of joint action towards particular groups of countries, with a special emphasis on the EU neighbours, i.e. the CEEC countries there were soon to be entering the accession process.

Generally, the whole Annex I of the Lisbon European Council Conclusions shows a clear, special interest of the EU towards its neighbourhood. In this regard point 12, for example, provides three criteria that should in the future guide the definition of "important common interests": "*geographical proximity, important interest in the political and economic stability of a region or country, the existence of threats to the security interests of the Union*" (European Council 1992: 32). This criteria clearly point to the priority status of the near abroad in regard of EU foreign policy action. In regard of geographical areas, special emphasis is put in this document on the one hand on Central and Eastern Europe, Russia and the Balkans, and on the other hand on the Mediterranean, and in particular on the Maghreb and the Middle East (point 13 as well as the whole part II, European Council 1992). For the Maghreb, the European Council Conclusion on the CFSP read as follows:

“28. The Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean as well as the Middle East are geographical areas in relation to which the Union has strong interests both in terms of security and social stability. [...]

30. the Maghreb is the Union’s Southern frontier. Its stability is of important common interest to the Union. Population growth, recurrent social crises, large-scale migration, and the growth of religious fundamentalism and integralism are problems which threaten that stability.” (European Council 1992: 37-38)

In doing so, the heads of states and government clearly confirmed that stability in the Maghreb countries is a salient issue for the European Union, but at the same time this also shows that the definition of a European interest grew much more comprehensive and encompassing than just focusing on economic advantages like in earlier debates (for similar conclusions see also Smith, H. 2002: 161; Piening 1997: 79).

The emphasis of the respective priority areas in the European Council declaration on CFSP was strongly supported by the Commission that had already beforehand repeatedly emphasised the success of the all-encompassing strategy towards the CEEC countries and hence also implicitly asked for a similar framework for the Southern Mediterranean. As short term measure in regard of the prioritisation, the amount of development aid was increased and trade preferences extended towards the Mediterranean partner countries. Furthermore, the cooperation was also already at this point in time extended to involve at least rudimentary aspects of human rights, environment and democracy promotion (Salama 2002: 1).

External events, however, complicated the relations with the Mediterranean countries at the same time. The Algerian government had cancelled elections after the Islamic Salvation Front seemed to win, what led to violence, continuing massacres and human rights abuses. Although the EU condemned the happenings rhetorically, it maintained assistance aid to Algeria (Smith, H. 2002: 161). Also towards Libya the EU was never enthusiastic in supporting the proposed economic sanctions, “*partly because of its own commercial interests would be endangered*” (Smith, H. 2002: 162), but it in the end followed the US and supported the UN embargo in 1992.

It was a proposal by Spain that triggered a more concrete debate that finally led to the Barcelona Process, although these ideas were first not considered to be embarked upon within the EU framework. Spain had proposed a Conference for Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean that should be similar to the OSCE, an idea that was immediately supported by Italy and France and led to vivid debates from 1994 onwards (Bicchi 2003: 19-20; see also Gomez 1998: 140). The Commission had repeatedly asked to strengthen the relationship with the Mediterranean countries, and therefore welcomed the demands of the Southern member states to upgrade the relationship with the Mediterranean partners.

At its meeting in Corfu in June 2004, the European Council once more emphasised under the heading of CFSP the importance of the Mediterranean, its willingness to intensify the relationship to establish a close “*cooperation guaranteeing peace, security, stability and well-being*” (European Council 1994: 10). In addition, the heads of states and governments mandated the Council in cooperation with the Commission to evaluate the existing institutional frameworks and policies and to draw up potential initiatives that could strengthen the relationship between the EU and its Southern Mediterranean neighbours (European Council 1994).

Subsequently, the Commission published its Communication entitled “Strengthening the Mediterranean Policy of the European Union: Establishing a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership” in October 1994 (European Commission 1994) which was endorsed by the European Council in Essen in December of the same year. This document defines the main EU interests in the regions, outlines strengths and weaknesses of the EC’s established Mediterranean Policy, and outlines its ideas for a new initiative when it calls for a “Euro-Mediterranean partnership”:

“The Community’s long-term strategy of creating a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, comprising a zone of peace and stability embracing the Union, Central and Eastern Europe and the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean, implies a close and continuing dialogue between those concerned.”(point 21 of European Commission 1994: 13)

In a quite similar vein like during the set-up of the ENP at a later time, the Commission also already there used the reference to security interests to push forward its ideas of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. At the European Council Summit in Essen in December 1994 “*the special relationship of the Union to its neighbours, particularly the Mediterranean countries*” (European Council 1994) was identified as one of four priority areas. Under the heading of the “EU’s external relations” the European Council conclusions also confirm the suggestion of the Commission to establish a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, and it positively supports the plans of the forthcoming Spanish Presidency “*to convene in the second half of 1995 a Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference with the participation of all Mediterranean countries [...] addressing all relevant political, economic, social and cultural issues*” (European Council 1994) as well as the commitment of the preceding French Presidency to prioritize preparations in this regard.

After this clear strategic confirmation of the European Council to establish a special relationship with the Southern Mediterranean countries, it was up to the subsequent rotating presidencies to implement these ideas during their term in office. It was for sure a decisive factor that after the

German presidency in the second half of 1994, France and Spain⁶⁸ followed in 1995 to fulfil the role of rotating presidency of the Council of Ministers of the European Union, while Italy was at the helm of the Council in the first half of 1996 (Gomez 1998: 145-146; Piening 1997: 80).

5.1.2. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Set-up and main Objectives

In November 1995, finally, the European Council and the foreign ministers of 12 Mediterranean countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Cyprus, Malta and Turkey⁶⁹) adopted the “Barcelona Declaration” that launched the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) (Euro-Mediterranean Conference 1995). The partnership was designed as a framework that coordinated and subsumed all relations between the European Union, its member states and the Mediterranean countries (Philippart 2003: 1; Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 159). Attached to the declaration itself, a detailed work program in the annex was meant to give practical advices for the implementation of the declaration (Piening 1997: 81).

The EMP was based on a main rationale that had slowly developed during 1990s and rapidly grew to the cornerstone of the EMP: “Linking economic wellbeing to political stability” (Gomez 1998: 134) was the credo that predominantly informed the approach of EU actors when setting up this framework. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership pursues several different but linked goals, and subsumes different policy areas like trade, development and human rights under a single framework. Issues of all three pillars of the EU are included in the partnership, although critics state that “*the economic core of the partnership is evident*” (Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 159). However, at least formally on paper the EMP constitutes

“a comprehensive, cross-pillar instrument [...] covering all the dimensions of the European Foreign Policy and putting together [...] the policies and the instruments of the European Union and the Member States” (Abellán 2002: 1; for similar findings see Smith, H. 2002: 159)

Modelled after the template of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the EMP is set up around three baskets – a political and security, an economic and financial, as well as a social and cultural basket – that are interrelated and expected to mutually reinforce each other (Philippart 2003: 1; Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 159). The main goal of the Political and Security Basket is to establish “*a common area of peace and stability*” (Euro-Mediterranean Conference 1995) and incorporates policies like the rule of law, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedom, peaceful settlement of disputes, preventing terrorism or proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Furthermore, a right to

⁶⁸ On a side remark: the Spanish foreign minister during this presidency was Javier Solana, who became the High Representative for the CFSP after the incorporation of the Amsterdam Treaty in 1999 and fulfilled and shaped this role for ten years.

⁶⁹ In terms of geographical coverage, please note that in contrast to the ENP the EMP incorporated also Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, while Libya is not part of the EMP from 1995 onwards. (see among others McQueen 2002; Michalek 2007; Zaafrane & Mahjoub 2000; Martín 2004; de Ville & Reynaert 2010)

the self-determination of peoples was included, although Israel and Turkey were not comfortable with this issue. Confidence-building measures are also central within this pillar. At the same time the Barcelona process was created as an “*independent but parallel*” mechanism (Müller 2007: 98) to support the Middle East Peace process, as the EMP meetings proved the only multilateral forum where the main conflict parties met regularly. Hence, while the EMP was not intended to solve the conflict in the Middle East directly, it was considered to be positively contributing to the efforts made within the Middle East Peace Process (Müller 2007: 98).

The Economic and Financial Basket aims at the creation of “an area of shared prosperity” what includes the establishment of a free trade area by 2010 and furthermore, economic cooperation and an increase of EU-aid in addition to the official development assistance from individual member states. The underlying rationale behind this basket was that free trade between the Mediterranean partners and the EU, but also between the Mediterranean Partners themselves would increase prosperity and be profitable for the economic and social development of the Mediterranean markets⁷⁰. The Social and Cultural Basket, at last, focuses on the development of human resources through education and training, better understanding between cultures and exchange between civil societies, reduction of migratory pressures and joint action against drug trafficking.

As this multilateral framework of the EMP is only meant to complement bilateral relations, there was no need for totally new contractual agreements but the already existing association and cooperation agreements got upgraded to Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements (EMAA). One of their main objectives is to work towards the establishment of a Free Trade Area between the EU and the Mediterranean partners, to create a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area (EMFTA).⁷¹ They provide the possibility for free trade in manufactured goods and industrial products and include provisions on the freedom of establishment, free movement of capital, trade facilitation and the approximation of legislation. However, agricultural products are excluded from that liberalisation as the southern EU member states were concerned about their economic interests⁷².

⁷⁰ This idea of free trade automatically bringing advantages and prosperity is still strongly embedded in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, although more recent academic reflections also show that such a free trade area might also bring several social and economic challenges to the Mediterranean partners, in terms of social instability and turmoil and that the immediate profits would mainly lie with the EU and its member states (Nabiha no date; Escribano & Jordán 1999; For a detailed but more general assessment of EU-Mediterranean trade relations see also Kheir-el-din & Ghoneim no date). In addition, research also showed that interregional free trade agreements in itself do not automatically create more trade between Mediterranean countries (European Commission 2010a).

⁷¹ The EMAA with Tunisia went in force in 1998, with Morocco in 2000, and the EMAA with Algeria is signed and currently in the process of ratification by the parliaments.

⁷² For example, the EU only signed an agreement to liberalise trade on agri-food and fisheries with Morocco in September 2010, despite Morocco being considered as the model partner with EU-Mediterranean cooperation.

The EMP should provide a coherent and single framework for the partnership, and to be able to administer and support the political agreed objectives, the EU also established a single financial framework in 1996 to increase the efficiency of management and coherence of its external assistance: the MEDA program (Council of the European Union 1996). Within MEDA financial and technical measures are launched to support the reform of social and economic structures in the Mediterranean countries (Philippart 2003: 205). From 1995 to 1999 MEDA provided 3.435 million Euros, and 5.350 million Euros in the period 2000-2006.⁷³

In contrast to the overall decision making procedures within the EMP, the EU institutions decide alone within this MEDA program, as it is a unilateral EC measure (Philippart 2003: 205). This arrangement is important, as MEDA also includes political and economic conditionality. Financial assistance and loans can be suspended when democratic principles, the rule of law or human rights are violated. Further the allocation of funds also asks for “progress towards structural reform” (European Investment Bank 2005, 2004: 1). Next to the grants of MEDA, the European Investment Bank (EIB)⁷⁴ gives loans to the Mediterranean countries for economic and social modernization, development and for enhancing regional integration, primarily with the goal to create a Free Trade Area by 2010. Furthermore, the EIB helps to conduct different studies and to implement projects (Salama 2002: 17). The Commission is responsible to coordinate the financial activities of the EIB, the member states and other international financial institutions (European Council 2000b).

Next to broader challenges in the international arena, it was especially the Amsterdam Treaty that gave a boost to the CFSP and set-up new instruments and actors. It incorporated the instrument of “Common Strategy” as well as it created the post of a High Representative of the CFSP (HR) and the Policy Unit. Furthermore, a European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) has been developed steadily since 1998/1999. In June 2000 the European Council adopted a “*Common Strategy on the Mediterranean Region*” (CSM), which included in contrast to the EMP also Libya (European Council 2000a). Several authors perceive the CSM as a response to the rather disappointing progress in the EMP (Smith, H. 2002: 159) and as an attempt to reinvigorate the existing partnership (Abellán 2002: 9, 2004: 285-286). The broad objective of the CSM was threefold: reinvigorating the EMP by defining more clearly the “common interests” and the need for coherence, provide strategic guidance, and finally evaluate the EU’s role in the Middle East Peace Process (Smith, K. 2003: 77).

⁷³ For more details http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/euromed/meda.htm or Salama 2002, p. 16;

⁷⁴ The EIB spent 4.808 million Euro (1995-1999) and 6.400 million Euro (2000-2006) on the Mediterranean.

In terms of content, however, the CSM did not bring much change although new policies were incorporated (Smith, K. 2003: 77). Issues related to justice and home affairs (especially migration-related policies) were increased. Furthermore, the EU declared its intention to use the evolving ESDP to create a cooperative security region with its Mediterranean partners. The CSM, however, contributed to a more stringent EU internal organisation of the work of the different EU institutions. It emphasizes the need for coordination and coherence of all activities taken by the member states and the Community (Art. 10), strengthens the relationship of political and economic instruments (Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 156) and clearly identifies the tasks of the different European institutions.

Bretherton and Vogler (Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 156) argue that the comprehensive approach of the EU is further emphasised in the CSM, as the relationship of political and economic instruments is strengthened. An important additional aspect is that the CSM it is not only related to political and security issues of the partnership, although Common Strategies are legally speaking an instrument of the CFSP, but it also incorporates economic and social policies, as well as justice and home affairs, which are all formally competences of the EC and the third pillar (Salama 2002: 8-9). In his analysis of the impact of the CSM on EU foreign policy coherence Abellán concludes that the

“CSM gives incentive to bridge the pillars but it does not help to overcome the problems that stem from different decision-making procedures under the respective pillars.” (Abellán 2002: 12)

However, at the same time Abellán critically notes that the set-up of the CSM itself did not at all go in line with the quest and rationale for coherence and consistency. During first debates of the strategy in the course of 1999, member states could not at all agree on a common interest and several were pushing for their own aims, what urged the HR Solana in his report about the Common Strategies later on to talk about a “Christmas tree approach” with “*member states and the Commission insisting on covering all possible aspects and making it difficult to distinguish priorities from questions of secondary importance*” (Abellán 2004: 289). According to Abellán, it was in the end the desire of the Portuguese presidency to show a result at the end of their six months at the helm of the Council that pushed for an agreement (Abellán 2004: 283-284; Presidency of the Council 2004a; External Relations Council 2004c).

Hence, these observations as well as the follow-up work of the Irish Presidency in 2004 (Schumacher 2004: 217; Philippart 2003: 2; Lannon & Van Elsuwege 2004) clearly show that the Common Strategy towards the Mediterranean did not fulfil the objective of providing a clear and strategic guideline for the priorities of the cooperation with the third countries, but it provided an important framework for how to organise the work and cooperation of the EU actors within the EU. What is important to note, however, in terms of timing is that the need to

prolong and re-discuss the CSM after five years overlapped clearly with the debates of how to set-up and develop the ENP.

5.1.3. EU actors and their Competencies within the EMP Framework

In contrast to the earlier attempts of a EU Mediterranean Policy, the Barcelona Conference was the starting point of the creation of a complex network and institutional set-up of interrelated actors, operating on different levels and with diverse competences (Schumacher 2004: 217). The Barcelona declaration itself established multilateral institutions where all EU member states, third country representatives and representatives of the Commission and the Council Secretariat meet, while bilateral arrangements have been established by the Association Agreements with the respective third countries.

First, on top of the multilateral EMP hierarchy are the foreign ministers who meet within the “Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs” and are supposed to monitor the implementation of the Work Programme. They meet each 18 to 24 months⁷⁵, and are also meant to give new impetus to the process of cooperation, although in reality observers claim that this is not at all visible (Lannon & Van Elsuwege 2004: 43; Schumacher 2004). The organisation and preparation of this meeting of foreign ministers lies with the rotating EU presidency in the Council, and representatives of third countries are not involved. In addition, the rotating presidency can convene ad-hoc conferences of special ministers, ie. Euromed Sectoral ministerial conferences, which are often also co-organised and sometimes even initiated by the European Commission (Lannon & Van Elsuwege 2004: 56). The foreign ministers are the highest level of authority within the EMP framework, as meetings of heads of states and government had not been considered when the EMP was set up⁷⁶.

The main body supporting the foreign ministers is the Euro-Mediterranean Committee, which has originally been set up by senior officials from the EU troika and a representative from each of the Mediterranean countries (and hence is also often referred to as “EMP Senior Officials meeting”), and which meets at least six times a year⁷⁷. Representatives from other EU-member states as well as other countries (Mauritania and Libya⁷⁸) and organisations (Arab League,

⁷⁵ The latest 9th Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Foreign Affairs has taken place in November 2007 in Lisbon, while the 8th Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs had taken place in November 2006 in Tampere. For a more detailed overview of all ministerial and committee meeting within the EMP framework see EEAS website at http://www.eeas.europa.eu/euromed/conf/index_en.htm

⁷⁶ This is one of the main differences of the Union for the Mediterranean that was set up to reinvigorate the EMP in 2008: here the driving forces and main meeting fora are conferences of heads of states and governments.

⁷⁷ In 2008, the unofficial rule was that the Euromed Committee meets four times per rotating presidency.

⁷⁸ Libya first was excluded from the EMP, but obtained observer status in 1999. The EU would like to see Libya as a partner, but only when it is willing and able to adopt the already existing acquis (on human rights, democratisation, trade liberalisation) (Salama 2002: 3; Smith 2002: 159). Mauritania is linked to the EU through the Cotonou convention.

Union de Maghreb Arabe⁷⁹) are also invited to participate in these meetings as observers and special guests (Schumacher 2004: 219). Over time, however, the number of participants in meetings of the Euromed-Committee increased, because also representatives of other EU member states next to the troika but also officials from the Commission and the Council Secretariat joined on a regular basis. Schumacher evaluates this development on the one hand positively, as it takes away the negative impact the rotating presidency might have in terms of discontinuity, but at the same time he also points out that this at the same time, intentionally or unintentionally, emphasises the intergovernmental character of the committee (Schumacher 2004). The problem of discontinuity because of the rotating presidency is nowadays still an issue, however in this regard the Commission is often really supportive in making sure that a certain dossier is treated in a coherent manner (Interview No. 25 Austrian MfA).

Although the Euro-Med Committee was originally supposed to be responsible for the whole range of EMP policies when it was set up, Schumacher observed a clear separation between political and economic/cultural issues: The Euromed Committee deals with basket II and III, while the political issues of basket I are kept separate and are only discussed among senior officials without the presence of the Commission (what was also confirmed in interviews, e.g. Interview No. 25 Austrian MfA). The latter is often referred to as “Senior officials committee”, and kept separate from the Euromed Committee, although formally there is only one Euromed Committee mentioned in the set-up documents (Interview No. 9, COM). This political formation of the EMP committee in its preparation also only relies on the Council Secretariat and the foreign ministry of the rotating presidency, without any involvement of the Commission (Lannon & Van Elsuwege 2004). At the same time, a Commission official working on the EMP pointed out that it is a rather “artificial” differentiation, as the representatives from the member states are the same people (Interview No. 9, COM).

Next to these main institutional settings that have been created within the EMP framework there is also a Euromed Parliamentary Assembly, the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue of Cultures, and the Euromed Civil Forum (as example see Art. 78 and 79 of EU-Morocco Association Agreement, EC & Kingdom of Morocco 2000; see also Lannon & Van Elsuwege 2004: 53).

Second, in regard of the bilateral dimension the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements also created own EMAA institutions between the EU and the respective third country: Association Council, Association Committees, and Association Subcommittees. Association Councils meet approximately once per year to “examine any major issues arising within the framework of this Agreement and any other bilateral or international issues of mutual interest.”

⁷⁹ The Arab-Maghreb Union was formed in 1989 by Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya and Mauritania.

(Lannon & Van Elsuwege 2004) and brings together the members of the Council of Ministers, a Commission Representative as well as members of the government of the partner country. The chairmanship of Association Councils alternates between an EU representative and a member of government of the respective third country. Association Committees, on the other hand, meet on the level of senior officials (again Council, Commission and third country) and are responsible for the technical implementation of agreements. Furthermore, association agreements allow for the establishment of more specialised subcommittees, for example on “justice and security” or “human rights” (Lannon & Van Elsuwege 2004: 63).

Finally, the MEDA programme had been set up from the EU side to allow for external assistance and, hence, it also needed an accordingly institutional mechanism to administer these financial funds. Within the MEDA I framework (1996-2000) the EU had established two regulatory committees under comitology to monitor the work of the Commission: a special Med-Committee to review the spending of EC budget funds, and an Article 14 Committee with competences to adopt decisions regarding resources of the European Investment Bank. For MEDA II (from 2000 onwards) the form of these committees changed to management committees under comitology. The difference is that the former committees are least flexible, are composed of higher grades of civil servants, and are those where the member states have the most power, as the Commission has to secure a qualified majority of member states for their administrative legislative drafts. In management committees civil servants representing the member states deliver an opinion on the Commission’s draft, but they can only block the Commission’s proposal by a qualified majority vote (see e.g. Philippart 2003: 2).

Next to the EU member states and representatives of third countries represented in these various fora, the EMP does not have its own secretariat to prepare meetings at various levels, but this task is generally directed to the European Commission, apart from few exceptions where the rotating presidency of the Council takes the lead (Philippart 2003: 203-204). Originally this task of secretariat was only allocated to the Commission interim, but in the end it stayed with it for the EMP (Interview No. 25 Austrian MfA). Parliaments, civil society as well as NGOs are welcomed to participate in the EMP and to create their own institutional bridges, but do not have any power and are not directly integrated in the institutional set up (Smith, H. 2002: 160)

Regarding the EU actors within the EMP, the main document clearly defining the tasks and relationship between the various is, interestingly enough, the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean. When analysed thoroughly it becomes quite clear that this document is not a strategy in terms of setting priorities and goals for EU external action, but its main aim seems to be to structure the EU internal governance system. According to the CSM and as shown in

several summit conclusions, the European Council provides the strategic guidelines and direction also for the EMP. Additionally, the European Council laid down in the CSM, that each Presidency of the Council should present its priorities for the implementation of the CSM (Art. 33 CSM). The Council is responsible for the actual implementation by adopting Common Positions and Common Actions. The main Council configuration dealing with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC), but the foreign ministers are of course supported in their work by the multi-layered system within the Council structures (for general discussion of role of Council Working groups see Fouilleux, Maillard & Smith 2005; for the role of Council Working groups in CFSP see Juncos & Pomorska 2006).

For the Mediterranean the most important working group is the COMAG/COMEM, an integrated Mashrek/Maghreb Working Party of the Council of Ministers of the European Union that deals with all issues related to the CFSP and Community Competences towards the Maghreb (Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria) and Mashreq (Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestinian Authority and Syria)⁸⁰. This working group meets at least twice a week, and its main responsibility is to draft and formulate Council conclusions, prepare the agenda for the Association Councils with the respective third countries and for the committees, and to more generally discuss EU statements towards the region (Interview No. 1, PR Austria). Furthermore, the COMAG/COMEM working group representatives have often also participated in the EMP committee meetings, before this was changed in a way that there are only present of direct competences of member states and political issues are discussed (Interview No. 1, PR Austria). Another important task of the working group is the drafting of mandates for the negotiation position of the Commission, who is accompanied during such negotiations by the rotating presidency and by Council secretariat officials. Dossiers prepared by the COMAG/COMEM working group are then send up in the Council structure to be formally approved by the GAERC – either without discussion as A-item, or as B-item where the foreign ministers would still have to solve remaining issues through negotiations and debate. The latter hardly happened in regard of the EU Mediterranean Policy.

During the Helsinki European Council in 1999 member states had established three permanent bodies that should support EU foreign policy-making, and the European Security and Defence Policy in more concrete terms, of which the Political and Security Committee (PSC) is also at few occasions involved in EU policy-making towards the Mediterranean. The PSC consists of separate ambassadors from the member states, and the idea is that all dossiers with a security aspect are debated first by this special intergovernmental body, before they are passed to the

⁸⁰ See for example an explanation provided by the Swedish Presidency (2nd half 2009) at http://www.se2009.eu/en/meetings_news/2009/12/1/mashrek_maghreb_working_party_comag

permanent representatives of the EU member states in COREPER (Juncos & Reynolds 2007; Duke 2005; Dijkstra 2008; Vanhoonacker, Dijkstra & Maurer 2010: 9). The rationale behind this set-up was that COREPER had been overloaded with work, and this way dossiers should already be finalised at a lower level. However, the first years after the establishment of the PSC showed quite a lot of rivalry between the two institutions, especially between certain ambassadors, as PSC ambassador felt treated as junior and secondary, while the permanent representatives felt overruled and played with at some occasions. In regard of the EU policy towards the Mediterranean, the more politicised aspects of the Middle East Peace Process pass all first through the PSC, while the day-to-day issues of the EMP normally go directly into COREPER (Interview No. 21, PR UK).

Within the Commission, it is mainly DG Relex who is responsible for managing the relations with the Mediterranean and the Middle East. The desk officers for the Mediterranean countries are located in unit F, where F1 deals with more general Euro-Mediterranean and regional issues, while the desk officers of the specific countries are located in unit F4⁸¹. Additionally sectoral DGs like Trade or Agriculture also have subunits that deal with geographical questions, although the role of the desk officers in DG Relex is also to coordinate a common position of the Commission ranging across sectoral differences. Although the role of Commission seems marginal when analysing the CSM⁸², it is in general terms perceived by many authors as

“the most important actor in Union policy towards the Mediterranean - taking responsibility for implementing the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and for promoting the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade area” (Bicchi 2003: 17).

Before the EMP, scholars reported that the entrepreneurship and role of the European Commission was limited, as it “*kept a low profile*” (Philippart 2003: 203-204; Salama 2002: 4, 9; Smith, H. 2002: 160), and when it briefly took some leadership this only lead to a half-backed project of the Renovated Mediterranean policy in 1990. However, that changed dramatically with the implementation of the EMP where the Commission plays a decisive and unchallenged role in basket II, the economic and financial basket. Its main responsibility lies within the programming as well as drafting and adopting of country and regional strategy papers, national and regional indicative programmes and annual financing. The Council monitors the work of the Commission through the above mentioned comitology committees. Both, the Commission and the Council are responsible for ensuring coherence of EU policies (Philippart 2003: 203-204; Smith, H. 2002: 162).

⁸¹ See Commission Directory:

http://ec.europa.eu/staffdir/plsql/gsys_www.branch?pLang=EN&pId=10081&pDisplayAll=0

⁸² The only reference to the Commission is Art. 34 CSM: “The Commission shall contribute to the above within its competences”.

However, in terms of content, the role of the European actors differs in regard to the policy area. In security and political aspects, the Council together with the High Representative is the most important actor on EU level. Although the Commission is associated within these policy areas, it keeps a low profile (Smith, H. 2002: 163-164). In trade and aid aspects, the Commission has the main competence to negotiate with third countries and represent the EU.

Compared to the other actors, the influence of the European Parliament (EP) is quite marginal within the EMP framework. Its only power lies within its competences for the EC budget, as well as it may delay trade and association agreements. As the EP emphasises and shows its concerns for human rights and democracy promotion, it often asks for a stronger use of conditionality clauses. The EP showed its concerns for human rights abuses strongly in 1992, when it delayed the agreement to the Moroccan financial protocol for ten months (Smith, C. & Latheenmaki 1998: 155; Salama 2002: 5), what also happened with the forth financial protocols for Syria and Morocco (see e.g. European Parliament 1999, 2000, 2002, 2004b, 2005b). The EP criticises the EMP for its lack on using political conditionality, its weak instruments and means, its slow development, the exclusion of civil society participation and the exclusion of some countries in the Mediterranean (primarily Libya). It repeatedly asks the Commission to make an annual report on the situation of human rights in the partner countries, as the EP is concerned by the fact *“that the human rights aspects of the Barcelona process are still woefully deficient and that the situation in many countries shows no sign of improvement”* (Salama 2002: 9). Furthermore, the EP also criticises the southern EU member states who wanted an exclusion of free movement of persons and of agricultural products from the partnership, as these issues contradict their national interests (Salama 2002: 13). The establishment of a Free Trade Area would still worsen this asymmetric liberalisation, so that many critics predict, that the EU would have the most advantages of such a customs union (Fernández, H. A. & Youngs 2005: 16-17; European Commission & EuropeAid Cooperation Office 2005: 2).

5.1.4. Obsolete after only ten Years? Achievements and Shortcomings of the EMP

When the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was established in 1995, it was celebrated by the European Union as a big step and important improvement for the relations of the EU with its Southern Neighbours. Ten years afterwards in 2005, the tenth anniversary of the EMP was still celebrated, but critical voices also predicted that the EMP would soon be substituted by the new policy framework of the ENP. The Common Strategy on the Mediterranean was by many already considered as an indirect but clear sign of the discomfort and discontent of politicians from EU member states but also partner countries. These rumours even intensified when the debates about a potential new policy framework “Wider Europe” took off, although the first

ideas for “Wider Europe” were meant to deal with the East and not with the South, as was shown in chapter 4.

In February 2005, the EP published another resolution on the Mediterranean where it emphasises the importance of the Mediterranean for the EU and the necessity of the EMP to face the shared “*challenges of peace, stability, terrorism and security, mutual understanding, the fight against trafficking in people, and. prosperity*” (European Parliament 2005a: 270). It underlines that the EU policy “*must follow a coherent and common regional approach*” and repeatedly “*deplores the failure to comply with the human rights clause in the Euro-Mediterranean agreements*”. But not only the EP, also the Commission is realistic when evaluating the last ten years of the EMP (European Commission & EuropeAid Cooperation Office 2005: 2). Especially in the area of human rights and democracy it acknowledges that the progress within the EMP is slow, also because the partner countries did not always fully implement the principles of the agreements (European Commission & EuropeAid Cooperation Office 2005: 3-5). The Commission highlights improvements in these areas as well as sustainable economic growth and education as future short and medium-term challenges, what it wants to be further discussed at future special conferences, like a “Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Human rights and Democracy” that took place in 2006 (Council of the European Union 2005: 54).

Already in 2003 the Commission had published a Communication entitled “*Reinvigorating EU actions on Human Rights and democratisation with Mediterranean partners*” (European Commission 2003b) that provided ten guidelines of how to enhance the positive impact on human rights and democracy promotion in the neighbourhood, highlighting the positive impact of a comprehensive security approach that allows for a wide conception of security. In a similar vein, Solana in his speech as High Representative in regard of the 10th anniversary of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in November 2005 emphasised:

“Above all it was a political act. [...] The Euro-Med Partnership is not the only international framework for multilateral co-operation with this region. But it is the most developed and in many ways preferred. The reason is that it promotes both security and reform simultaneously. We reject those who insist that we should sequence things, saying that either conflict resolution or political reform must come first. Barcelona is about pursuing both reform and security at the same time.” (Solana 2005)

Keeping in mind that Solana was Spanish foreign minister at the time when the EMP was set-up, he clearly emphasises the interesting character of the EMP as a framework that brings together different aspects, ranging from trade, over political issues to cultural aspects. It is, however, exactly this combining element of merging political reforms and economic development that is also raised as a major criticism in the academic assessment.

The argument of these critics mainly runs along the lines that the EMP policies of the European Union are based upon a false assumption about “*the expected causal link between economic and political liberalization*” which constituted “*such a central element of the Barcelona Process philosophy*” but “*has not materialized in practice*” (Kienle 2005: 25). Kienle (Kienle 2005: 31) demonstrates in his analysis about economic and political liberalisation, that the former does not necessarily have to be followed by the latter. He criticises that most authors forget the important argument, that economic reform reinforces societal differentiation and therefore creates the need for new conflict resolution mechanisms. In his analysis of Morocco, Syria, Jordan, Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia he shows that the undertaken economic reforms sometimes coincide with political change, but that “*the political reform that has taken place has been kept below the threshold that would indicate regime transformation*” and also led to a reconfiguration or modernisation of the authoritarian regimes (Kienle 2005: 32-34). Kienle concludes that there are positive signs of political liberalisation to be observed in Morocco and Syria, but he also emphasises that there is no evidence whatsoever that would suggest that those were triggered or even just supported by the EMP and are based on a sustainable development rather than just marking single events (Kienle 2005: 28-31) (Kienle 2005: 33). Economic liberalisation can only impact on political transformation when it favours the emergence of new power centres, that are able and willing to challenge the ruling regime but which are not simply a by-product of the former. The EMP builds on these wrong assumptions of a causal link between economic liberalisation and political change, without creating such necessary new power centres. If the EU really wants political change in these countries, it is not enough to foster trade and economic reform (see also Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 156; Fernández, H. A. Y., Richard 2005: 15). Aid, trade and development policies have to be accompanied by a focus on political reform, favouring the emergence of such independent power centres (Bretherton & Vogler 1999: 163; Aliboni 2005a: 48-49, 51-58). At the same time, new power centres could challenge the political authority in the third countries, what seems rather counterproductive to the EU objectives of creating security and stability, as it can not be reassured that these new power centres would also be keen on working with the European Union.

Next to this criticism about the general rationale behind the EMP, there are also a few other aspects that are repeatedly criticised, which are the failing record of human rights and democracy promotion, the ignorance towards conflicts, and the lack of providing a profound reform of the EU's internal organisation that would allow effective and coherent action.

First, one of the most salient issues of concern is the record in promoting human rights and democracy, as these are perceived as disappointing within the EMP, or as Aliboni formulates it “*indeed mostly disappointing*” (Aliboni 2005a: 48). Authors criticise that human rights and democracy are mentioned as objectives within the EMP but that they are not considered as “*the*

EMP's most important or primary objective" (Fernández, H. A. & Youngs 2005). In addition, negative conditionality is not even considered, as the EC/EU does not have any experience in withholding or withdrawing external assistance, while at the same time positive incentives are only used sporadically and without any transparent reward system (Aliboni 2005a: 56; Smith, H. 2002: 156; Piening 1997: 81; Salama 2002: 18-19).

Second, observers often highlight that the EMP was in the end neither able to contribute positively to the Middle East Peace Process conflict resolution nor to tackle any other conflict in the region, like the Western Sahara. The Israel-Palestine conflict is seen by the EU as part of its Mediterranean policy, what hinders progress in its relations with other countries of the region (see among others Philippart 2003: 1; Salama 2002: 2), while others at least emphasise that the EMP is one of the few fora where the conflicting parties meet on a regular basis and cooperate (Abellán 2004: 290). At the same time, EU officials involved in the EMP process for example elaborate quite openly that the Western Sahara conflict is not considered as suitable to be dealt with within the EMP, but that all involved parties agree that this conflict should be dealt with by the UN (Interview No. 13, CS). Creating stability and supporting the efforts of the UN seem important aims of the EMP, but direct conflict resolution would hamper the whole Barcelona process and might endanger already achieved results. Hence, conflicts like the Western Sahara are kept separately, and the EMP is mainly considered as supporting the Middle East Peace Process indirectly but there are not aspirations of getting involved more strongly within the EMP framework (Interview No. 10, COM; Interview No. 13, CS).

Last, some authors also emphasise that the institutional set-up of the EMP seems not too straightforward and often confusing, especially for outsiders and partner countries:

"The EU should define clear leadership roles in both the EMP and the CSM in order to articulate the declared priority it attaches to the Mediterranean. It should identify the actors and/or agencies that are expected to champion the region in general and the different dimensions of policy in particular. There is a growing requirement for the EU's Mediterranean partners to find a specific point of contact within the EU not only to channel their concerns in more positive ways, but also to respond to specific requests." (Abellán 2004: 291)

The Common Strategy for the Mediterranean was adopted to clarify the working of the EMP and the interaction of the different actors, but it does not at all represent and catch the formal and informal dynamics of EU decision making. The Commission is only mentioned once in the whole document, although it has the primary role in implementing the EMP in the third countries through programming and project management, while for example the policy-making process within the Council is only described superficially. Abellán goes even a step further in criticizing that in the end the EMP does not follow any EU aspiration or common EU interest but that member states just use the framework and support it when their own interests are in line with the EMP aims. This makes the EMP an ambitious project on paper, but as soon as it would

come to the adoption of joint actions or a common position to put these aims into practice, the EU member states would never be able to agree (Abellán 2004: 291).

Apart from these points of criticism, many authors, nevertheless, also emphasise that the positive effects of the EMP must not be ignored as well. The Partnership survived, moved slowly forward and created a framework for cooperation between the EU and its Mediterranean partners that at least tried to apply a comprehensive security approach by bringing together economics, political issues as well as cultural aspects. Creating different baskets in itself again did not allow for the aspired cross-fertilisation but at least the EMP was one single framework that structured the EU relationships of the third countries in the South. Furthermore, the EMP was built on a multilateral approach, emphasising also the regional cooperation between its partner countries, although in reality the success in this regard seems minor. So have the Maghreb countries for example ratified the Agadir Agreement in February 2004 that sets up a free trade agreement between Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia and Egypt (Kienle 2005; Aliboni 2005a; Fernández, H. A. & Youngs 2005), although in reality trade relations between the conflict-driven neighbours Morocco and Algeria for example are still very rare. Other commentators highlight that the rationale of the EMP works towards a long-term impact, so that evaluating its impact after only ten years seems inappropriate, especially when taken into consideration with how many states are targeted by the EMP (Fernández, H. A. & Youngs 2005: 158). Additionally, EU actors involved in the EMP processes and mechanisms also concluded that the EMP is more important for establishing a good relationship with the neighbours than often perceived from people that do not work within this governance system, because its most important contribution is the creation of all different kinds of networks, where the cooperation works especially well on lower, and often more technical levels (Interview No. 11, COM).

5.2. Looking towards the East: the EU Relations with the Southern Caucasus

In strong contrast to the dense and long-lasting relationship with the Southern Mediterranean, the EU relations with the East only started after the fall of the Berlin wall and the declarations of independence of the respective countries. The countries of the Southern Caucasus, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia only caught the attention of the EU and its member states in the late 1990s and even more profoundly since 2003. Mayer came to the conclusion that until 1997 it was mainly the Commission who was shaping and providing impetus for the EU relationship with the Southern Caucasus, while from 1998 onwards member states showed an increasing interest, because they had negotiated the PCA, but also because some felt discontent to provide the financial means but do not have any say in the actual content of the relationship (Mayer 2006: 153-154). All three countries of the Southern Caucasus had declared independence from

the Soviet Union in the course of 1991, but the first EC/EU attempts to establish a relationship with those countries were rather uncoordinated and lacked a comprehensive strategy towards the region. After this first stage that was to a large extent dominated by the Commission and its technical assistance programme, the cooperation became more strategic and security-orientated from 2003 onwards, what explains the set-up of a Special Representative and the conduct of the first EU rule of law mission to Georgia.

5.2.1. The Emergence of EU Interests and increasing Cooperation

The first steps in the EU cooperation with the Southern Caucasus mainly focused on supporting the transformation process that especially after the declaration of interdependence was said to be crucial to avoid turmoil and instability (Mayer 2006: 13). However, the EU support towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia was rather reactive in these first years of cooperation and did not follow any concrete strategy or clear objectives. This can also be observed in the allocation of EU external assistance towards the Southern Caucasus until 2000. Table 9 provides an overview of the total EU external assistance towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, where it differentiates between the ‘normal’ TACIS allocations and the extraordinary allocations that mostly cover humanitarian assistance in the framework of ECHO, especially under their food security programme, and other extraordinary assistance measures. The Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) was the main financial instrument set-up in 1991 to support reforms in the former Soviet countries. Two different observations are interesting in regard of this table.

First of all, this table shows that most of the funds allocated to the Southern Caucasus were distributed as reactive measures to humanitarian situations, which have to be considered ad-hoc measures that did not follow any scheme of the normally much standardised planning of EU external assistance allocation. The percentage of the main instrument itself to support the three countries in their reform process, TACIS only constituted a small share (approx 20%) of the overall financial allocations in the timeframe between 1991 and 2000, what on the one hand also implies the missing of any strategic planning nor any sustainability of the financial assistance.

Secondly, when comparing the figure for TACIS with the ENPI allocations for 2007-2010, it shows that the regular EU external assistance to the South Caucasus countries increased steadily since the first years of cooperation in the early 1990s. On the one hand, this is an effect of the restructuring of the financial instruments in a way that external assistance could be better planned and allocated and that the ENPI constitutes the main financial budget line next to few thematic instruments. On the other hand, however, it is also quite clear that the overall assistance increased (see also Annex II for a detailed overview of EU external assistance towards Georgia between 1992-2006). For 2008, for example the total EU external assistance

for Georgia amounts to EUR 181,9 million, of which however only EUR 35,4 million are reserved for the EU Monitoring Mission that was set-up in October 2008 (for more details see European Commission 2008b).

Table 9: EC external assistance, 1991-2000 to Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia
in Million EUR

	Armenia		Azerbaijan		Georgia ⁸⁵	
	TACIS	total	TACIS	total	TACIS	total
1991	2,3	2,3				
1992	9,6	9,6	12,5	12,5	9	9
1993	17	35,39	4	24,24	4	21,77
1994		24,79	4	22,85	4	21,81
1995	6	65,9	6	77,82	6	74,47
1996	14	55,25	8	56,35	8	57,72
1997		9,1	8	34,1	8	38,3
1998	10	31,6	8	40,6	8	23,46
1999		17,6	7	38,06	8	38,5
2000	10	36,6	7	22,17	15	10,1
Total 1991-2000 (ten years)	68,9	288,13	64,5	328,69	70	295,13
	Biggest share of assistance via humanitarian assistance from "ECHO" and "food security programme"		ECHO and food security as well as "exceptional assistance"		largest share of external assistance budgeted as "exceptional humanitarian aid"	
For comparison ENPI allocations 2007-2010 (4 years)	98,4		92		120,4	

Source: Data from Annex of respective Country Strategy papers 2002-2006, see
Armenia: http://eeas.europa.eu/armenia/csp/02_06_en.pdf, Azerbaijan:
http://eeas.europa.eu/azerbaijan/csp/02_06_en.pdf, Georgia: http://eeas.europa.eu/georgia/csp/02_06_en.pdf; For
ENPI data see table 6 and Financial allocation (planned for ENPI 2007/2010) from
http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/0703_enpi_figures_en.pdf

TACIS had started in 1991, and was replaced only in 2007 by the ENPI, although some projects had still financial means allocated in 2008 as well. The original objectives as outlined in the TACIS regulation were to “*support the process of transition to market economies and democratic societies*” (Frenz & European Commission), and the first years until 1999 the instrument was mainly “*demand driven*”, implying that financial resources were distributed after requests from CIS ministries and mostly used for small-scale projects (Frenz & European Commission), but that there was no clear strategy or a-priori-planning that influenced the allocation of external assistance. This changed with a new revised TACIS regulation in 1999 (Council of the European Union 2000) that followed a “*dialogue driven*” rationale where “*EC priorities were equally discussed as were national proposals and priorities*” (Frenz & European Commission). The objective of the revised TACIS instrument was slightly changed to “*a programme to promote the transition to market economy and to reinforce democracy and the rule of law*” (see Art. 1 of Council of the European Union 2000). Furthermore, the idea of

“national ownership” had been introduced, meaning that external assistance would only be effective if the recipient country identified with the supported measures and gained ownership over the process (Frenz & European Commission).

This more structured and strategic approach of the EU is observable in the external assistance to the region but also accounts for the more general development of EU policy-making towards the region and can be best explained by the set-up of a formal relationship between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia respectively, with the ratification of Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (see for example PCA EU-Georgia 1999). Those agreements had already been negotiated in 1996, and finally were in force in 1999. Together with TACIS, the PCAs are considered “*to become an increasingly strategic instrument*” (Frenz & European Commission) of the EU towards the South Caucasus region. But it was not only the institutionalisation of cooperation, but also a shift in EU member states attention that changed the perception of the Southern Caucasus as salient neighbourhood region. It was for the first time during the 2192nd General Affairs Council meeting in Luxembourg in June 1999 that the Council took notice of the Southern Caucasus and elaborated upon its importance in terms of investments and security related issues (Mayer 2006: 140). In the mid of the 1990s the Southern Caucasus, and especially Azerbaijan, liberalised their energy markets, allowing national oil companies to negotiate contracts with international companies. This liberalisation brought a new interest of EU member states towards the Southern Caucasus in terms of energy security and transit routes (Mayer 2006). In addition, a change in perception towards new security threats like illegal immigration, organised crime and environmental pollution raised awareness in the EU towards the salience of stable neighbours in the Southern Caucasus (Mayer 2006: 14). While it was not possible to get any insights in trade relations with the EU in the first ten years of independence of the Southern Caucasus countries, the data presented in table 10 for 2005, 2006 and 2007 show some interesting patterns that give at least an impression of the trade relationship between the EU-27 and the Southern Caucasus.

Table 10: EU-Exports to and EU-Imports from Southern Caucasus 2005-2007

EXPORTS from EU to ..							
	Value in million Euro			% of total EU trade			Rank 2009
	2005	2006	2007	2005	2006	2007	
Armenia	419	478	604	0,04	0,04	0,05	101
Azerbaijan	1495	1955	1593	0,14	0,17	0,13	60
Georgia	681	926	1090	0,06	0,08	0,09	77
IMPORTS to EU from ...							
	Value in billion Euro			% of total EU trade			Rank 2009
	2005	2006	2007	2005	2006	2007	
Armenia	514	339	354	0,05	0,03	0,025	118
Azerbaijan	2508	5448	7349	0,21	0,40	0,51	33
Georgia	276	471	459	0,02	0,035	0,03	83
(Data taken from DG Trade 2010a, b, c)							

As table 10 shows, Azerbaijan has the strongest trade relationship with the EU-27. While it only accounts for approx. 0,15% of the total EU-27 trade, the EU is the biggest import partner for Azerbaijan, accounting for 30% of all imports, followed by Turkey (19%) and Russia (17%). This link is even stronger when it comes to the major export partners of Azerbaijan, where 48,3 of all exports go to the EU-27, followed by India (11%) and the US (9,5%) (DG Trade 2010b). However, when taking into consideration the kind of trade goods, it shows clearly that this strong share of exports to the EU are mainly because of energy, as 98,8% of all EU imports from Azerbaijan are mineral fuels, while the EU exports to Azerbaijan mainly machinery and transport equipment (44,7%) and manufactured articles (20,6%).

A similar pattern is visible in the EU-27 trade with Georgia. While its share on EU imports and exports seem rather marginal compared to the overall EU trade, the EU is an important trade partner from the perspective of Georgia. The EU-27 are Georgia's main import partners accounting for 28% of all imports, followed by Turkey (16,9%) and Azerbaijan (9,7%). And also in terms of exports, the EU-27 hold the biggest share of exports from Georgia with 33,6%, followed by Turkey (18,2%) and Azerbaijan (12,5%). Interestingly, Russia only accounts for 7,4% of all imports to and 1,4% of all exports from Georgia. Again, a large share of 50,2% of the EU imports from Georgia are categorised as mineral fuels, and 21,2% as crude materials. In the opposite direction, Georgia mainly imports machinery and transport equipment (30%), and mineral fuels (23,8%) from the EU-27 (DG Trade 2010c).

Armenia is the least important trading partner for the EU-27, but again the EU is an important partner from the viewpoint of the third country. The EU-27 account for 27,4% of all imports to Armenia, in comparison to second strongest partner Russia with 24,2%. Even more importantly, the EU-27 are Armenia's main export partners with 44,6%, followed by Russia with 15,4% of all exports. The EU mainly imports manufactured goods (81,6%), while its biggest share of exports is made up of machinery and transport equipment (41,1%). (DG Trade 2010a).

These trade relations show that in global terms the Southern Caucasus countries are not a too important market for the EU-27, with the exception of the important import of mineral fuel from Azerbaijan. At the same time, already at the end of the 1990s it was very clear in the EU rhetoric that stabilising and liberalising the markets of these three third countries seemed necessary to support them on their way to reforms and stabilisation.

With the entering into force of the PCAs in 1999, the relationship between EU and the Southern Caucasus countries was put on a more formal footage, what the Commission announced as a *“new stage of a strategic cooperation”* (translated from Mayer 2006: 185). However, the PCAs in itself did not provide the desired push for a new cooperation, as they according to analysts

lacked incentives and political will (Ghazaryn 2008: 7). In the academic literature, a few reasons are identified for this lack of PCAs to provide a strong impetus.

First, the PCAs strongly relied on a regional approach in the EU cooperation that the third countries themselves did not really appreciate. The EU right from the beginning treated the Southern Caucasus as one region, although local politicians as well as academics strongly emphasised that there is neither a convincing desire for regional cooperation nor a regional identity (Ghazaryn 2008: 6; see also Simão & Freire 2008). The conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh that even resulted in violence and war in 1994 put the relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan on hold and is still not really resolved (Mooradian 1999; for more background on the conflict and conflict resolution attempts see International Crisis Group 2004a; International Crisis Group 2004b). In Georgia, the fight of the two autonomous regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia for being recognised as independent states and the inability of Georgia to integrate these regions into national politics, led increasingly to tensions and conflict, that in the end culminated in the August war with Russia in August 2008 (International Crisis Group 2010b, a).

Secondly, the PCAs were not country-specific at all, but treated the three countries totally similar without recognising their different needs or national emphasis on reforms. All three countries had reached a certain but promising degree of economic stability and economic growth by the end of the 1990s, but their national directions especially in foreign policy orientation varied considerably. Azerbaijan was considered a rather authoritarian regime that was able to attract foreign investment and trade with oil (Ghazaryn 2008: 5). Armenia also had in place a more authoritarian regime compare to other former Communist countries in Eastern Europe. From the three third countries in the Southern Caucasus Georgia showed the most reform orientated aspirations after the Rose Revolution in 2003⁸³, working hard on decreasing corruption and gaining economic stability, but its progress and success remained fragile, what showed clearly during the war with Russia in August 2008. However, the PCAs that the EU negotiated did not take into account these differences in orientations, or as Ghazaryn described in a rather sarcastic tone:

“The content and scope of the PCAs with Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, would reveal little difference, that is, the name of the country in signing the agreement.” (Ghazaryn 2008: 7)

Thirdly, the framework of the PCA was considered as too weak, too less encompassing and too superficial to support the necessary reform processes. Compared to the Association Agreements that had been put in place with the Southern Mediterranean Countries, the Cooperation Councils

⁸³ The Rose Revolution took place in Georgia in November 2003. After strong public protests after disputed parliamentary elections, President Eduard Shevardnadze resigned and allowed for a peaceful change in power. Following up on these events, presidential elections were held in 2004 and the current president Mikheil Saakashvili took the office of president.

that had been established with the PCAs were “*not entitled to take decisions imposing obligations on the signatories, diminishing the importance of this institution*” (Ghazaryn 2008: 6). The institutional framework for cooperation end of the 1990s was not strong enough to ensure for clear and effective strategic guidance, and it took five more years because this EU approach towards the Southern Caucasus changed. Therefore, the EU revised its approach towards the region from 2004 onwards, identifying rule of law, support for civil society, fight against poverty and conflict prevention as the priorities of the cooperation (Helly 2006: 88).

This revision of the EU relationship with the Southern Caucasus by 2003/04 resulted in an increasing cooperation in terms of quantity and intensity, but it also gained in terms of profile and focus (Mayer 2006: 248). It was in the area of CFSP that another actor was added to the institutional set-up to upgrade EU-Southern Caucasus relations: the special representative (EUSR) for the Southern Caucasus. His main task was to keep a close link with the local actors in the Southern Caucasus and to contribute to the ongoing conflict resolution. Next to the appointment of an EU special representative, the shift towards new priorities can also be considered as one factor contributing to the EU decision in July 2004 to launch the first EU rule of law mission in the context of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) to Georgia that was named EUJUST Themis. The mission itself was running for one year, and its main objective was to support Georgian authorities in their reform attempts of the judicial system.

As already discussed in chapter 4, the Southern Caucasus countries were at the beginning not at all considered for the new policy framework with the neighbours. The Wider Europe Communication of the Commission in March 2003 even explicitly excluded them from the new initiative, arguing that they “*fall outside the geographical coverage of this initiative for the time being.*” (European Commission 2003c: 4). It was the European Parliament, and especially its EU Committee on Foreign Affairs that put the Southern Caucasus on the agenda for the Wider Europe initiative in September and November 2003 as well as again in February 2004 (EU Committee on Foreign Affairs 2003; European Parliament 2003, 2004a), asking vigorously for incorporating the Southern Caucasus in the new Neighbourhood Initiative. It was in reaction to the Rose revolution in Georgia that in January 2004 the External Relations Council asked the Commission and the HR to put forward considerations of how to incorporate Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia into the ENP (External Relations Council 2004a), before the Southern Caucasus countries were officially incorporated into the ENP Strategy Paper in May 2004. From 2005 onwards, the main topics in EU-Southern Caucasus cooperation were Justice and Home Affairs, energy and transport (Interview No. 14, CS). Since April 2009 the European Union is conducting negotiations about the launch of a Mobility Partnership with Georgia that

should include visa facilitation and readmission agreements. Similar discussions take place with Armenia and Azerbaijan⁸⁴

5.2.2. EU actors and their Competences towards the Southern Caucasus

The EU relationship with the Southern Caucasus countries was in comparison to the Mediterranean partner countries in the South not as long-lasting and comprehensive, but especially after the re-focus of EU objectives in 2003 towards rule of law, good governance and conflict resolution, an increased number of actors was involved in shaping the EU foreign policy-making towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Before 1999, it was primarily the Commission who shaped the EU relations with the Southern Caucasus countries by being in charge of the technical assistance via the TACIS programme. Member states had delegated this task of coordinating TACIS entirely to the Commission, as it had proven successful in the implementation of the assistance to the CEEC countries via the PHARE programme. Furthermore, Commission President Delors saw this engagement of the Commission in TACIS as an appropriate way to strengthen the role of the Commission. In addition, the Commission had years of experience in providing development aid and structural assistance programmes, and a similar more intergovernmental coordination within the Council structures was just not imaginable (Mayer 2006: 233-234). The Southern Caucasus was just sporadically discussed in the Council meetings in reaction to specific events, but it was from 1998 onwards that member states approached the Southern Caucasus in a more comprehensive manner and considered a more strategic approach. Mayer⁸⁵ argues that the interest of the Council increased because member states had been involved in negotiating the PCAs what made them consider the region more closely. Furthermore, crisis prevention emerged increasingly as a topic, and the Southern Caucasus became a focus of attention in this regard as well (Mayer 2006: 153-154).

Despite the more political interest of member states towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, the Commission was in charge of the technical assistance programmes and implementation, especially via its EC delegations on the ground in third countries. The latter provided the Commission, and more specifically the country desk officers in DG Relex with important background information and updates from the ground, and although after the Amsterdam Treaty also the HR was supposed to receive periodical political updates from the delegations (Mayer 2006: 36), it was very clear that the Commission had an important information advantage

⁸⁴ For updated information on these current negotiations see the Commission Website of DG Home Affairs at http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/policies/external/external_neighbourhood_caucuses_en.htm

⁸⁵ Mayer investigated the EU policy towards the Southern Caucasus until 2004 in his doctoral thesis, focusing especially on the institutional relationship between different EU actors. For a more detailed account of the EC/EU approach before 2004 see Mayer 2006.

because of this institutional linkage. The EC delegations play a major role in the identification, planning and supervision of projects, while since 2001 DG Relex was tasked to give political direction for this form of external assistance, by drafting the multi-annual programming documents. The EuropeAid Cooperation Office, on the other hand, was from 2001 onwards responsible for managing the project cycle and for the drafting of annual programmes (Frenz & European Commission).

In his analysis of the EU relations with the Southern Caucasus until 2004, Mayer concludes that the cooperation and coordination between Commission and Council are institutionally crucial for EU foreign policy-making towards the Southern Caucasus. His main research finding is that the role of the Commission in the EU cooperation with Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan should not be underestimated, as it is indeed able to shape the policy according to its own interests and ideas. He argues that in the realm of selecting and implementing projects the Commission has a considerable room for manoeuvring, especially in regard of negotiating the different programmes with the third countries. These projects could formally be rejected by the TACIS comitology committee in the Council, but getting a required qualified majority of member states is hardly possible, considering the different perceptions of the member states of the way the EU policy towards the Southern Caucasus should look like. Hence, in total, there is a considerable asymmetrical distribution of information and resources, which the Commission knows to play well (Mayer 2006: 241). At the same time Mayer, however, also emphasises that the Commission can not just do whatever it wants, but that the interaction between the EU actors and their way of negotiating a certain approach or policy is crucial, and that the stance of the different actors also shows the importance of underlying institutionalised norms and behaviour.

While the Commission's role in implementation and project management rather increased with more planned financial assistance allocated to the Southern Caucasus countries, it is in the area of policy formulation where it had to share its influence increasingly with the member states via the Council of ministers from 2003/04 onwards. Conclusions of the External Relations Councils can not be considered legislative acts in the traditional sense like they are used in EU public policy-making, but Mayer explains that they, of course, have politically a binding force for the Commission. Such conclusions of the Council, however, mostly incorporated rather general assessments and suggestions for the Southern Caucasus countries and rarely precise instructions. Therefore, the Commission took the Council conclusions into account when drafting strategy papers, but in drafting these documents it had a vast amount of leeway to set priorities according to its own discretion (Mayer 2006: 39). The Commission, hence, can be considered as an important "animator" and "policy entrepreneur" in regard of the EU relations with the Southern Caucasus (Mayer 2006: 242), although Mayer also accounts for its weaker

role in the realm of CFSP. This in combination with the more comprehensive security approach of the European Union as outlined in the European Security Strategy in 2003, diffused the agenda-setting and policy-shaping influence of different actors. Especially the European Security Strategy confirms this new rise of attention that the EU and its member states should play towards the Southern Caucasus:

“It is not in our interest that enlargement should create new dividing lines in Europe. We need to extend the benefits of economic and political cooperation to our neighbours in the East while tackling political problems there. We should now take a stronger and more active interest in the problems of the Southern Caucasus, which will in due course also be a neighbouring region.”
(European Council 2003b: 8)

The European Security Strategy was officially endorsed by the Thessaloniki European Council in December 2003, although it was the High Representative Javier Solana, and especially his Director-General for External and Politico-Military Affairs in the General Secretariat of the Council, Robert Cooper who had drafted and put forward this document. Its approach and tone in regard of the Southern Caucasus provide a good account for the new approach of the Council to the EU cooperation with the Eastern neighbours.

Within the Council of Ministers it is again a working group that at the most technical and less political level prepares the negotiations between member states. The Council Working party on Eastern Europe and Central Asia (COEST) is responsible for EU relations with Belarus, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, as well as in the Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. It meets twice a week, and next to one representative of each member state and the rotating presidency chairing the meeting, it is mostly the respective Commission geographic desk officer who represents the Commission at this meetings (Interview No. 19, COM). All dossiers that are submitted to the Council in relation to the three Southern Caucasus countries are for the first time dealt with within this working party, before they move up to COREPER, or to PSC if the dossiers incorporates any highly political CFSP or ESDP related issues⁸⁶.

It has already been discussed earlier that the Amsterdam Treaty incorporated vital changes in the area of CFSP that also contributed positively to the set-up of the ESDP. Observers agree that the most consequential adaptation with the Amsterdam Treaty was the set-up of the post of the High representative for the CFSP, and especially the appointment of Javier

⁸⁶ The Political and Security Committee (PSC) was established on an interim by the Helsinki European Council in 1999, and finally formally set up in 2001 by “Council Decision of 22 January 2001 setting up the Political and Security Committee (2001/78/CFSP)”. Together with the European Union Military Committee (EUMC) and the European Union Military Staff (EUMS) it is supposed to support the CFSP and especially the ESDP. It meets twice per week and is made up of PSC ambassador from the permanent representations of the member states. It was chaired by the Presidency, but will be chaired by “a representative of the High Representative” under the Lisbon Treaty (for more background on the PSC see Vanhoonacker, Dijkstra & Maurer 2010; Duke & Vanhoonacker 2006; Juncos & Reynolds 2007).

Solana as first office holder. The latter shaped the development of CFSP and ESDP in the subsequent years considerably, and to support the work of the HR in the different geographical areas of the work, the Council of Ministers can also appoint EU Special Representatives by a joint action. These special representatives receive their strategic guidance from the PSC, while being operationally under the guidance of the HR (Adebahr 2009)⁸⁷. In July 2003, the Council established the post of a Special Representative of the EU to the Southern Caucasus (EUSR) “*to ensure clear lines of responsibility, as well as the coordination and consistency of external actions of the European Union in the South Caucasus*” (see point 2 Council of the European Union 2003a: 74). The first office holder, Heikki Talvitie, was meant to assist the conflict resolution in the region, to support the implementation of EU cooperation objectives on the ground, to ensure presence of the EU in the region and to support all involved actors in their reform attempts by establishing dialogue and exchange (see Art. 2 and 3 Council of the European Union 2003a; see also Helly 2006). Formally, the EUSR is under the authority of the High Representative whom he should support in its work in the region. In February 2006, the Council appointed as follow-up Peter Semneby as EUSR for the Southern Caucasus (Council of the European Union 2006c), whose mandate was recently extended until the end of February 2011 (Council of the European Union 2010a).

But the new impetus on ESDP developments not only triggered an EU institutional change towards the Southern Caucasus, but in 2003 the European Union deployed its first missions within the ESDP framework, and its first rule of law mission was launched in the Republic of Georgia. This ESDP mission named “EUJUST Themis” had been established with the Council Joint Action 2004/523/CFSP, with the main objective to support the Georgian authorities in their attempts to reform the criminal justice system. The idea for this mission was put on the agenda by the Estonian delegation in December 2003, and presented to the Committee for the Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CIVCOM) in February 2004. While some member raised concerns towards an unnecessary provocation towards Russia, it was especially the Directorate for Civilian Crisis Management (DG E IX) within the Directorate General for External Relations (DG E) in the Council Secretariat that supported the request by the Estonian delegation (Kurowska 2008: 8). At the same time observers report some disputes with the Commission who at this point in time had experts on the ground for the reform of the penitentiary reform and respective projects running what was considered as traditional competence of EC external relations. Kurowska describes this period as “*a symptomatic intra-EU process*” that is informed by “*the infamous Council-Commission turf battle*” (Kurowska

⁸⁷ For updated information on the EU special representatives see the respective website of the Council of Ministers at <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showpage.aspx?id=263&lang=EN>; At the end of 2010, the EU was supported by eleven Special Representatives.

2008: 8). Helly reports that the EUJUST Themis head of mission, Sylvia Platz, participated in the ambassadorial weekly meetings of the member states, and hence provided regular information to the member states about the status-quo of the mission, but that the relationship between the mission and the Commission on the ground was strongly hampered by personal conflicts of the involved officials (Helly 2006: 94). One of the reasons for this battles Helly for example identifies in the different salary schemes, leading to a situation where the EUJUST Themis official receive lower salaries than the Commission officials on the ground (Helly 2006: 98).

This first EU rule of law mission run for a year until July 2005, during which nine senior officials from EU member states were placed in national institutions in Georgia to assist and train Georgian officials and give advice in the justice reform process (Kurowska 2008: 10; Helly 2006: 92). Next to the assistance of Georgian reform attempts, this mission was also meant to send a political signal to the partner country that it is considered as important and on the other hand to EU internally test civilian crisis management (Helly 2006: 91). When the ESDP mission was deployed, the Commission already had some projects running in the area of rule of law, but member states decided to, nevertheless, deploy an ESDP mission because of three reasons. It could be quicker deployed than any Commission programme, it would be more politicised and, hence, also carry more political weight, and thirdly the Council wanted to show that it was able to use new CFSP instruments in civilian crisis management (Helly 2006: 93).

Although the mission after its one year of running was not able to fulfil all its objectives, it was decided after some quarrels between member states about the future EU support for the Georgian reform process that as follow up to the rule of law mission, two THEMIS experts would be placed in the enhanced team of the EUSR, whose mandate would be therefore extended. These two EU experts in the EUSR team would assist Georgia in drafting their criminal law implementation plan that should also reflect in the forthcoming ENP action plan (Kurowska 2008: 10; for more background on the ESDP mission see Helly 2006), while also the Commission was tasked to ensure the sustainability of the project and to follow up on its objectives (Interview No. 14, CS).

As soon as it was clear that the Southern Caucasus countries would be part of the ENP from May 2004 onwards, the negotiations about the action plans started. In June and July 2005 COEST was identifying the topics to be covered in the action plans in detail, before the drafts were circulated to the partner countries in August 2005 (Interview No. 14, CS). However, the final conclusion of the action plans with the partner countries was delayed by a veto of Cyprus, after a commercial airline from Azerbaijan ignored the EU non-recognition policy and flew to the Turkish Cypriot republic. As reaction to this violation, Cyprus blocked the negotiations with

all three Southern Caucasus countries (External Relations Council 2004a; also Interview No. 14, CS) for a considerable amount of time, before the action plans finally were adopted in 2006.

5.3. Conclusion: Different Regions – different Interests – different Relationship

This chapter outlined the main objectives, development, and institutional elements of the EU relationship with the neighbours in the South (Maghreb countries) and in the East (Southern Caucasus countries) before the European Neighbourhood Policy was formally set up in May 2004. The aim of this analysis is to establish the ground towards which the EU actors' interaction after the set-up of the ENP can be compared to.

Towards the South, the ENP is, in contrast to the multilaterally designed Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, a bilateral framework that manages the relationship between the EU and a single partner country. The positive effect of this new arrangement is that the respective country can be better rewarded for its reforms and that the EU is able to respond more efficiently to the specific needs of the partner. The multilateralism of EMP often caused frustration for countries like e.g. Morocco who wanted to deepen the relationship with the EU more quickly than other third countries of the EMP. But due to the multilateral setup the EMP did not allow a special treatment for single countries, what meant that the whole process only could improve as quickly as the slowest country developed. Nevertheless it is emphasized in nearly every document of this time and was also strongly highlighted by interview partners from the Commission (Interview No. 3, COM; Interview No. 6, COM; Interview No. 7, COM) that the ENP is not meant to replace the EMP but that these two frameworks shall complement each other.

There had been several attempts to redesign the EC relations with the South in the past, but it was only the Barcelona declaration in 1995 that managed to achieve a qualitative change towards more intense and comprehensive relations by establishing the EMP. Within the formal institutional framework of the EMP, the European Council gives the strategic direction that is expressed in the Common Strategy. Each Presidency of the Council should present its priorities for the implementation of the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean (CSM) in its working program (European Council 2000a) and the Council is responsible for the actual implementation by adopting Common Positions and Common Actions. Within the EMP the only provision in regard of interaction of different actors is the achievement of coherence, for which both the Commission and the Council are responsible.

While the role of the Commission was not formally set out in any document, observers agreed strongly that its impact from the EU perspective was crucial and necessary. Nevertheless, a clear separation remained, where political and security issues were kept intergovernmental under the clear leadership of member states, while economic and to a certain extent cultural issues were

dealt with under strong involvement of other supranational actors, mainly the European Commission. Major strategic reorientations were mainly decided by the European Council, while the rotating presidency together with the Commission provided for setting the agenda on a daily basis. In terms of implementation, it was to the most extent the Commission as operator of the MEDA programme that organised, controlled and evaluated projects and other financial assistance.

In terms of EU interests, the emphasis of the EMP is often said to strongly rely on economic issues like market integration, and towards Algeria especially on gas imports. These long-standing interests were more recently joined by migration issues and also strategic security concerns. While migration from the Maghreb countries in itself is not a big issue, these countries play an important role in migration from Subsaharan countries to the European continent (de Haas 2007). In addition, EU member states have an interest in supporting these countries to establish stable democracies and sustainable social systems, to avoid unrest and potential violence at the EU borders.

The EU interest towards the East was until 1999 mainly represented by the European Commission and its implementation of the TACIS programme to support the reform and stabilisation efforts of the respective countries after their independence. Only after the entering into force of the PCAs in 1999 also member states showed increased interest, and it was in 2003/04 that the EU cooperation with the Southern Caucasus was upgraded in terms of quantity and quality, outlining new priorities in the rule of law, support for civil society fight against poverty and conflict prevention. In terms of trade, the Southern Caucasus markets are not important for the EU member states, apart from gas exports from Azerbaijan and the transit routes of oil and gas in general terms, while in the last years migration and the fight against organised crime also entered the agenda of cooperation.

In terms of EU actors' involvement before the set-up of the ENP, the EU relationship with the Southern Caucasus differs from the EU-Morocco relationship in the more active involvement of several actors of the Council Secretariat, especially the EUSR and the Head of Mission of EUJUST Themis. In comparison to the often highly technical relationship with the Mediterranean neighbours, the engagement with the Southern Caucasus countries was much less intensified before 2003, and focused primarily on energy concerns, humanitarian assistance, and attempts for conflict resolution. The ongoing conflicts in the region were mainly pursued within the CFSP pillar what led to the fact that the Council and its bodies (a special representative for this region and his team) were more involved in policy-making towards the South Caucasus than towards the Southern Dimension. However, also during the 1990s the role of the Commission increased steadily in implementing programmes (especially TACIS) in the Southern Caucasus (European Commission 2004b)

The Commission is similar to the relationship with the Mediterranean responsible for the implementation of project and external assistance, but the Council more often and in more detail discussed the relationship with the Southern Caucasus around 2000-2003, especially in the context of CFSP in terms of conflict resolution (Nagorno-Karabakh as main frozen conflict in the region) and with the set-up of the first rule of law mission in Georgia.

Chapter 6: Many Actors, different Roles, and distinct Approaches within the ENP

This thesis aims at investigating in what respect and to what extent the single framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy triggered change in the EU policy-making processes towards the neighbours. While most research on the European Neighbourhood Policy looks at the relationship between the EU and third countries, or on the impact of the EU in the neighbourhood, the focus here lies on the EU level and the inter- and intra-institutional arrangements to work under the framework of the ENP. Chapter 4 looked in more detail into the involvement of different EU actors in the set-up of the ENP and outlined the main basic concepts and the underlying logics of this new framework towards the neighbours. This analysis gave a first impression which actors had different ideas about the content and structure of the ENP, and how different arrangements had been negotiated before they had been incorporated in the ENP strategy paper. In contrast, chapter 5 scrutinised the way the EU had designed its relationship with the East and the South before the ENP was set-up and especially the EU actors' involvement in this pre-ENP era. This chapter is crucial in a sense as only by having something to compare the ENP institutional set-up to, it is possible to observe potential change.

This current chapter 6 analysis the way that EU actors are involved in implementing the ENP framework and conducting EU foreign policy after the set-up of the ENP. This is done in two stages: First, the various actors and their main tasks are sketched out, in order to show to what extent the emergence of the ENP also asked for adaptation in the institutional set-up within and between the involved actors, and it is important for our understanding of the ENP to see that, for example, also the Commission is no unitary actor, but that in certain circumstances it comes down to the single Commission officials and desk officers and their work. Secondly, this chapter makes use of the concept of the policy process (Versluis, van Keulen & Stephenson 2010) which allows to break down EU policy-making towards its neighbours in various stages: agenda setting, policy specification, decision-making, implementation and evaluation. This detailed investigation allows a mapping of the involvement of the EU actors in the various stages of EU policy-making towards the neighbours and leads to a comprehensive assessment of what the changing roles of the different actors.

These elaborations and reflections are directly able to provide answers to the first part of the research question about the role that different EU actors have in formulating, specifying, deciding and implementing foreign policy at EU level at different points in time between 2000 and 2007. As it already had been emphasised in the introductory chapters of this thesis, there was no formal change in the treaty provisions, and also the "ENP founding documents" remain only on a general level in regard of the institutional set-up and therefore stay vague about the task allocation and involvement of different actors. Hence, this chapter contributes to a better

understanding of how EU policy-making towards the neighbours is conducted on an every-day basis, following formal - but even more importantly - informal processes and mechanisms.

Concluding and comparing those results to the preceding chapter allows to answer the question to what extent the interaction and task allocation of EU actors changed in different stages of the policy cycle (agenda-setting, formulation, decision-making, implementation, evaluation) after the incorporation of the ENP.

6.1. The formal Arrangement of EU Actors within the ENP Framework

The ENP framework did not set-up a new policy in the traditional sense, as the preceding chapters have shown, but its objective is to bring different policy areas together in a cross-pillar manner that have been pursued within the EU according to different policy-making methods and arenas so far. On the one hand there are policies like development, external assistance and trade that are dealt with within the first pillar and hence the Community method, where the Commission has the right of initiative, the Council and often the EP as co-legislator decide, and the Community implements. On the other hand, policies of the intergovernmental second and third pillar are added to this framework, i.e. especially elements from the Common Foreign and Security Policy. The latter are kept absolutely intergovernmental, where the Commission holds just an associated role but has to share its right of initiative with the Member states, and in particular the rotating presidency. This cross-pillar intersection also was meant to bring different actors closer together that are involved in EU foreign policy-making, namely the European Commission, the Council of Ministers and its preparatory bodies, the Council Secretariat and the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, and the European Council⁸⁸. For some of those actors the set-up of the ENP also meant an intra-institutional adaptation to be able to deal with the new policy framework.

6.1.1. Within the European Commission

During the negotiation of the ENP framework and its set-up the responsible Commissioner for External Relations was Chris Patten who held this office from 1999 to 2004 under the Commission President Romano Prodi. He was the one who was asked by the European Council to elaborate plans together with the High Representative Javier Solana of how to design the new framework towards the neighbours (see e.g. General Affairs Council 2002a: 10; Patten/Solana 2002: 1). However, during the first half of 2003 some of his minor tasks were shifted to the then

⁸⁸ While the European Parliament had managed to leave its mark on the set-up of the ENP, by suggesting again and again to include the Southern Caucasus countries as well in this policy framework, its role in everyday policy-making is rather marginal. It has to be kept informed and can send written questions to the Commission, but considering its weak impact on the formal and informal policy process its role will not be elaborated here.

Commissioner for Enlargement, Günther Verheugen. This created though quite some confusion and suspicion with other actors of the EU system of governance, as the following written question of the MEP Philip Clays to the Commission from August 2003 demonstrates:

“Commissioner Günther Verheugen is being given a new area of responsibility. His duties will now include relations with the EU’s new neighbouring states, namely Russia, Ukraine, Israel and Morocco. This was formerly the responsibility of the Commissioner for External Relations, Chris Patten. Why has this area of responsibility been transferred from Commissioner Patten to Commissioner Verheugen? Does the Commission also intend to combine relations with other neighbouring states under the heading of ‘enlargement’ rather than external relations?” (Claeys 2003)

Günther Verheugen replied to this question on behalf of the Commission that the accession negotiations had been concluded successfully in December 2002, while the Commission has also “*set out an ambitious vision for upgrading political and economic relations with the Eastern and Southern neighbours*” (Claeys 2003). To be internally able to manage this workload, the Commission had decided on 9 July 2003 that the EU relations with the neighbouring countries stay with the Commissioner for External Relations (ie Chris Patten) but that the Commission for Enlargement (ie. Günther Verheugen) will “*provide political guidance to a task force consisting of officials from the Directorates-General for External Relations and Enlargement*” (Claeys 2003). The reason for this inter-institutional arrangement that Verheugen presented towards the MEP illustrates a common conviction within the Commission at this time that the experience and expertise of the enlargement process should not be wasted but “transferred” to other areas, as also Verheugen’s response shows:

“This will ensure the Union’s contribution to the creation of an area of shared prosperity and stability around the enlarged Union, making use of the experience the Commission has gained in assisting Acceding States to prepare for accession wherever applicable. It reflects the Commission’s view that, in return for concrete progress demonstrating shared values and effective implementation of political, economic and institutional reforms, all these neighbouring countries should be offered the prospect of a stake in the Union’s internal market, as well as other advanced forms of co-operation in key fields of mutual interest” (Claeys 2003).

In 2004, the confusion about which Commissioner is now exactly responsible for the Wider Europe initiative was solved in that far as the new Commissioner for External Relations was renamed to “Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy”. Under the Barroso I Commission, this post was taken up by the Austrian Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner, who therefore provided the first face responsible for the new policy framework towards the neighbours. As deputy chair of the group of external relations Commissioners⁸⁹ she was not only responsible for the Directorate-General External Relations (DG Relex) and the EuropeAid Cooperation Office (DG Aidco) but she was also meant to coordinate the output of other DGs and other Commissioners responsible for EU foreign policy.

⁸⁹ Commission President Barroso himself was the chair of this Relex-group of Commissioners.

This Relex-family, as it is often also referred to, subsumed trade, development and enlargement. The Commissioner for external trade from 2004 onwards was Peter Mandelson, before he resigned to be able to concentrate on British politics and his post at the helm of DG Trade was taken over by Catherine Ashton. Louis Michel was the Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Development Policy at the respective time, having under his guidance the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) and DG Development. And finally there was Olli Rehn who was responsible for DG Enlargement. However, it was not just on the political level of the College of Commissioners that there was an organisational adaptation to accommodate the new policy framework, but it was especially at the bureaucratic level in the Directorate-Generals that institutional re-shuffling had become necessary.

Most of the Commission services of the Relex family already had respective desk officers for the countries of the neighbourhood before the set-up of the ENP. EuropeAid as implementation service was mainly structured around technical and thematic topics rather than along geographical subdivisions, while DG Trade had public servants especially assigned towards the regions in the East and the South. DG Development was not directly relevant for the neighbourhood region, while in more technical DGs there were often specific units who also had geographical desk officers that dealt with countries in the neighbourhood (like for example DG Enterprise and Industry with a unit for Mediterranean countries; or DG Justice and Home Affairs with desk officers relevant for countries in the East and South). These country desks remained as they were with the set-up of the ENP, but the main changes were introduced in DG Relex which was now more than ever meant to provide the main political guidance and to be the focal point for the respective countries. This implies that, for example, the country desk for Morocco was supposed to coordinate and provide the main contact point for all issues related to Morocco, while her/his colleagues from the other services and DGs should support him with their expertise but also ask for political input in case the country is discussed in a more sectoral proposal or project.

With the set-up of the ENP, a new ENP unit was established within DG Relex that was build around the 'Wider Europe' task force that had already been in place during the ENP negotiations and had been made up of various officials from DG Relex and DG Enlargement. The main objective of this task force had been the drafting of the Wider Europe Communication (European Commission 2003c), and later on the ENP strategy paper (European Commission 2004b). When the new ENP unit was created, officials were mostly shifted from DG Enlargement to this new unit in DG Relex. Most of these new officials, however, were not familiar with EU foreign policy-making, the neighbourhood region or in more specific terms with the Wider Europe communication at all, what shows in following rather cynical remark by

one interview partner “*the first thing that I had to do was to read this Wider Europe communication*” (Interview No. 7, COM).

In terms of the set-up from 2004 onwards, DG Relex accommodated the ENP within three main directorates: D was generally termed to be responsible for the neighbourhood, E was the directorate for Europe and Central Asia, and the geographical focus of directorate F was the Mediterranean. As common in the Commission, each directorate is again made up of different units. Directorate D is split in a unit D1 for “general coordination” and a unit D2 for “sectoral coordination”. D1 has two main tasks: on the one hand it is responsible for financial issues like the development of the ENPI; on the other hand it is supposed to take care of communication and information dissemination (Interview No. 7, COM). Hence, D1 is responsible for the ENP framework at large, for coordination, development of the policy framework, reporting, monitoring and harmonization. It is also this unit that is responsible for the yearly publication of progress reports that are drafted by country teams. And it was also this unit D1 that drafted the ENPI between 2004 and 2006. Within unit D2, sectoral experts are responsible to provide technical knowledge and expertise within various policy areas to the desk officers. While country desk officers are experts in their respective country, they often do not have the technical expertise across all different kind of policy areas, but they can ask their colleagues in D2 to support them with technical details. They act as the “*graue Eminenz im Hintergrund*”⁹⁰ (Interview No. 7, COM), as one Commission official phrased it. Additionally, this service unit should mediate between the country desk officers and the other (technical) DGs, like for example DG Trade or DG Industry. The officials in the sectoral unit D2 use the same jargon and language like their colleagues in other DGs, and at the same time they can also “translate” and mediate between the different Commission units and suggest compromises.

Commission officials within this sectoral coordination unit D2 had to a large extent worked in DG Enlargement beforehand, and they even continued working on enlargement dossiers until the end of 2004, even when they had already been transferred to their new posts in DG Relex (Interview No. 7, COM). The motivation behind this shift of expertise from DG Enlargement to DG Relex was again a rather pragmatic move to use the expertise and knowledge that those officials had gained in dealing with the accession processes:

“The College of Commissioners discussed who should lead ENP and they found a practical solution: After the finalisation of the enlargement negotiations Verheugen did not have that much to do anymore, while Chris Patten was rushing around the world, being a busy man. Furthermore, it was planned to make DG Enlargement smaller. But as, of course, nobody wanted to loose this enlargement experts, their know-how, and experience, the College of Commissioners decided to integrate these people in the new ENP unit.” (Interview No. 7, COM)

⁹⁰ The English translation for this phrase would be “grey eminence that stays in the back seat”.

This rhetoric of the Commission also shows that Commission officials do not consider a difference in the technical approach to implement relations in different countries or regions. For them it does not matter at all if the relations with accession countries are implemented, or if it is the relations with neighbours that they are working on. At the same time, it has to be kept in mind that the Commission refers to the 2004-enlargement as the EU's most successful foreign policy ever, what Commission officials hence often consider as an example of good practice that should serve as a role model for other policies, as also the following quote of an official from unit D in DG Relex shows:

“So our job as directorate general is to be a repository of knowledge, to particularly bring the knowledge of the enlargement methodology – although this is not enlargement, we are borrowing a lot of things from them.” (Interview No. 6, COM)

With the set-up of the ENP this new directorate D was created, but at the same time already existing units were transferred and put together more closely. Within directorate E the desk officers for the countries in the East of the ENP are located, while directorate F is responsible for the countries in the South. Both directorates have already existed in their own right before the ENP was set-up, and especially directorate F has a strong stance as it was coordinating the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership for the Commission since 1995. While directorate D consists of sectoral experts responsible for the whole ENP framework, directorate F also hosts some sectoral experts that are especially targeting problems and challenges that are relevant for this region. Furthermore, of course, the desk officers for the respective countries are located in this directorate. Directorate F is considered as a rather independent and solitary unit that often takes a strong stance to defend its own ideas and interests. In this regard, for example, one interview partner remarked that unit F strongly believes that the EMP has to be kept alive as the partner countries are attached to it, but that this *“is at least the perception of unit F – and not of the whole DG Relex”* (Interview No. 10, COM).

Country desk officers are generally expected to coordinate the position of the Commission towards those countries (e.g. F4 is responsible for the Maghreb and has one desk officer for Morocco, one for Algeria and one for Tunisia). They are mostly representing the Commission in the respective Council Working Groups (Interview No. 8, COM), they are supposed to be the first contact point for specific country information, and are meant to collect and process information about developments that they gather from their daily interaction with colleagues from the EC delegations in the various countries and through contacts with various open sources (Interview No. 8, COM). They are also keeping in touch with NGOs or political groups in the respective third country, and consider themselves as *“focal point”* for all kind of relations that the EU has with a third country.

Next to this internal role of coordinating the various actors and provide a coherent position of the Commission in regard of a specific country, the main task of the ENP desk officers is the implementation of association agreements. This implies that they are responsible for the political contact with third countries, and that they support the work of the association subcommittees, committees and other bodies that might have been established by the Association Agreement. Furthermore, they are responsible for the implementation of the action plan from the EU-side, and their second main task is assisting in financial programming (Interview No. 19, COM). The most important source of valuable country-specific information for desk officers in DG Relex are the EC delegations that have been overlooked in their relevance by EU actors for quite some time⁹¹ (Interview No. 12, COM; Interview No. 13, CS).

6.1.2. Within the Council of Ministers: Member States, the rotating Presidency, the General Secretariat of the Council, and the High Representative

While the set-up of the ENP asked for some organisational adaptations in the Commission, the impact of the ENP framework development did not trigger any change in the institutional set-up of the Council structures. The relevant bodies had already been in place and were dealing with the respective policies and countries even before the set-up of the ENP. The various actors within the Council now also were dealing with the same dossiers like beforehand, but now they were categories to fall under the ENP framework. In the following, the Council Secretariat, bodies of member states' representation on different Council levels, the rotating presidency, and the High Representative for the CFSP are examined in more detail to show their contribution in the EU policy-making process towards the ENP neighbours.

The General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers & the High Representative

The General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers of the European Union – or Council Secretariat (CS) as it called more informally - is not an official institution but allocated within the Council structure, with its main task to assist the Council in its daily work (see Art. 23(1) of the Council Rules of Procedure, Council of the European Union 2009b). In academic research about EU policy-making it has been ignored for quite some time, although it had already been set up with the European Coal and Steel Community in 1952 (for a comprehensive analysis of the role of the Council Secretariat over time see Christiansen & Vanhoonacker 2008; for a detailed account of the role of the Council Secretariat during the European Political cooperation see Nuttall 2000). It is just during the last few years that scientific inquiries are also

⁹¹ It was quite visible during the negotiations of how to implement the Lisbon Treaty and the establishment of the EEAS that the importance of the EC delegations has been recognised also by other actors in the EU foreign policy system, especially the Member States. EC delegations are not only upgraded to EU delegations, but from now on it is not only DG Relex and the Commission for External Relations who has access to their reports and provided information.

investigating the influence and impact of CS officials on the EU foreign policy-making process in a more theoretical and structured manner (Juncos & Pomorska 2006; Vanhoonacker & Dijkstra 2007; Christiansen & Vanhoonacker 2008; Dijkstra 2008; Juncos & Pomorska 2010).

While the main task of the Council Secretariat is to support the Council in its daily work, it is especially the rotating presidency that it shall assist in managing the challenging job of being at the helm of the Council for six month “*under the guidance and responsibility*” of the latter (Art. 23(3) Council Rules of Procedure). It supports the rotating presidency in its management and secretarial tasks (booking rooms, setting up the monthly agendas, distributing documents on time), but even more importantly it provides institutional memory and this way supports the presidency in brokering agreements in member states’ negotiations (Schout & Vanhoonacker 2006; Vanhoonacker, Pomorska & Maurer 2010). Furthermore, the Council Secretariat is meant to ensure “*coherence of the Council’s work*” and the implementation “*of its 18-month programme*” (see Art. 23(3) of the Council Rules of Procedure, Council of the European Union 2009b).

The set-up of the ESDP since 1999 and the development of civilian and military crisis management capabilities lead to a reinforcement of the role of CS officials in this area. Already since the Maastricht Treaty there was the comparably small Directorate-General External Relations (DG E) dealing with CFSP, but it was especially the introduction of the High Representative for CFSP (HR) and the Policy Unit with the Treaty of Amsterdam that give new impetus to the role of the Council Secretariat in EU foreign policy-making (Vanhoonacker, Dijkstra & Maurer 2010). Staff working in the Policy Unit was institutionally integrated in the already existing DG E in the Council Secretariat, and the whole unit was hence meant to support the HR in his daily work, especially as the HR held at the same time the post of the Secretary General of the CS. It was with the Solana era and in the aftermath of the disappointment of the bad EU performance in regard of the Balkan wars that the CS was for the first time also “*entrusted with executive tasks*” (Christiansen & Vanhoonacker 2008: 760). While the Policy Unit that is assisting the High Representative in its daily work is an integral part of the Council Secretariat since the Treaty of Amsterdam, there is still a visible differentiation between the more secretarial and logistical support provided by Council Secretariat officials and the more political work done by the Policy Unit (Juncos & Pomorska 2010). The office of the High Representative was kept very vague when set up with the Treaty of Amsterdam, and it was its first office holder, Javier Solana who shaped the role of the High Representative and gave it substance, sometimes even more than member states had meant for from the outset. This can also be observed in the Council Secretariat, where the development over time left the “*impression that there is a geographical increase of Solana’s area of influence*” (Interview No.

13, CS), implying that the High Representative after some years in office dealt with more areas and regions of EU foreign policy than originally designed for.

In regard of EU foreign policy-making towards its neighbours, several desk officers are responsible for dealing with the respective countries. As for the CS in general, their main objective is to provide consistency to the Council despite the rotation of the six-month presidency (Interview No. 14, CS). They are responsible to draft the Council conclusions together with the presidency, and if necessary when not only CFSP matters are concerned, in close cooperation with Commission officials. These desk officers also were regularly drafting speaking notes for Solana and providing briefing material for the member states. They support the rotating presidency not only in organisational matters, but by being able to rely on a long-standing institutional memory they can provide valuable insights about member states' positions and "hot potatoes" and can predict mostly quite well what the controversial formulations and aspects of a certain drafted text are going to be that the presidency should be prepared to negotiate with the member states (Interview No. 14, CS). Additionally, a representative of the CS is mostly present during negotiations with third countries, next to a representative of the Commission and the rotating presidency (Interview No. 15, CS).

Next to the country desk officers, the Council Secretariat also accommodates the advisers and staff of the Special Representatives, and the case of the ENP especially of the Special Representative for the Southern Caucasus. While the work of the EU Special representatives (EUSRs) focuses mainly on establishing and cultivating the relationship with third country actors on the ground, the respective country desk officers of the CS and the EUSR staff meet weekly to discuss potential items that should be put on the PSC agenda or discussed in working groups. In this regard they are also in close contact with the respective desk officers in the Commission. In regard of the neighbourhood, there is especially the EUSR for the Southern Caucasus, but his role is assessed as quite a difficult one, given the limited resources at his disposal (no office in Brussels, low technical support) but also the fact that this special representative works in a region, where there is no clear EU strategy that he could base his work on (Mayer 2006: 228). The first office holder Heikki Talvitie was replaced by Peter Semneby in February 2006, who had at his disposal three political advisors: two were in Brussels and one was situated in Tbilisi, in the premises of the Commission (Interview No. 22, CS). The team of the EUSR is in close contact with Council Secretariat officials who provide them with the general overview and possibilities of "*what member states want to do or do not want to do*" (Interview No. 22, CS). They also work closely with the Commission, especially on the ground in the third countries, like in Georgia, where they exchange information:

"So we receive also what they are doing and we try to match our political messages also with the Community programmes available in a specific area" (Interview No. 22, CS)

The political advisors of the EUSR also emphasise that this close cooperation with the Commission is in their view crucial to the effectiveness of their work, as it is the Commission who has the money to fund projects (Interview No. 22, CS). At the same time, they do not really see an overlap in competences and perceive their cooperation with the Commission as smooth and going well, what they consider as a consequence of the concrete personalities holding the different posts:

“I think that the EUSR is rather complementary and no replacement of what the Commission is doing. And I think it is working well, the two institutions working together. Now, this working well also is a result of the concrete people involved on this. It has a lot to do with personalities” (Interview No. 22, CS)

From the perspective of CS officials there is a clear separation of tasks between them and the Commission. The Commission is responsible for coordinating all aspects of the action plan and for the programme implementation, while the CS only provides content-input when asked to do so by the member states. Generally CS officials assess the working atmosphere with the Commission as smooth and fruitful, while the CS considers itself as kind of control body in regard of the Commission, to make sure that the Commission stays within its limit of competences and within the common interest of EU member states, as “*they [Commission officials] sometimes would give third countries more than [what] member states and Council are willing to give*” (Interview No. 14, CS).

Member states emphasise that especially in terms of human resources the “*Council Secretariat is not to be compared with the Commission*” (Interview No. 25 Austrian MfA), or as a representative of the French permanent representation also confirmed:

“the Council Secretariat is a small administration of advisers. They organise and give legal advice but do not have the human resources to do more. When asked by member states they prepare papers.” (Interview No. 17, PR France; also confirmed by Interview No. 16, PR France)

In regard of EU foreign policy towards the Mediterranean the CS does not provide any input in terms of content at all or just on very rare occasions when explicitly asked to do so by several member states (Interview No. 17, PR France). In the framework of the Association Councils the CS is also supposed to prepare documents for all EU member states, but experience showed that those documents are circulated way too late because they always had to get the authorisation from the highest political authority (in case of the timeframe under investigation, the HR Javier Solana) before they could be passed on to the member states. This mechanisms proved highly inefficient, so that in the meantime most member states prepare those briefings again on their own (Interview No. 25 Austrian MfA).

In regard of EU foreign policy-making towards the Southern Caucasus, the situation developed differently, as here the Policy unit in its support for the HR and the team of the EUSR also provide strong input in terms of content, especially in regard of CFSP, security issues and crisis

management, and for example in regard of the EU rule of law mission that was deployed to Georgia in 2004⁹². Here member states had experienced a careful observation of competences, especially in grey areas where the PSC is involved but also the Commission works on specific aspects (e.g. civilian crisis management, stability and good governance project that are funded from the first pillar) (Interview No. 16, PR France). Generally, the contact between the CS and the Policy unit in specific terms with the member states is not organised or institutionalised, but it depends often also on the involved people and personalities of how these interaction is build up (Interview No. 13, CS). In addition, interviewees repeatedly emphasised that it comes down to the personality and the role perception of the respective individual holding the desk in the Council Secretariat, as the following quote illustrates:

“To what extent the Council Secretariat supports the work depends on individuals and also on the characteristics of member states holding the rotating presidency” (Interview No. 18, PR Germany)

At the same time member states’ representatives also point out that while Solana’s policy unit is an integral part of the Council Secretariat, it also sometimes shows frictions between the more content-orientated officials working for Solana, and the more administrative posts that are meant to support the rotating presidency logistically (Juncos & Pomorska 2010). In 2006, an interviewee assessed that the division of labour between the two subunits is “*still in the making and we [i.e. the member states] also still try to fully comprehend [it, what is] [...] not always easy*” (Interview No. 18, PR Germany). What is an interesting aspect to keep in mind in terms of interaction with other actors is that CS officials go regularly to PSC meetings, but they never attend any COREPER II meetings (Interview No. 15, CS).

The Representation of Member States within the Council

It is the representatives of members states who have been considered to be dominating the policy process in the area of CFSP, while at the same time there has been a trend towards Brusselization, referring to a “*steady enhancement of the Brussels-based decision-making bodies*” (Allen quoted by Duke & Vanhoonacker 2006: 163). Within the governance system of the European Union, it is mostly in the different levels of the Council of Ministers of the European Union where this member states’ representatives negotiate towards a consensus within CFSP (for a detailed discussion about the different units and administrative bodies engaging in CFSP see Duke & Vanhoonacker 2006). While at the lowest hierarchy it is the different Council Working Parties (or also Working Groups as they are often referred to),

⁹² Please note that the timeframe under investigation of this thesis only goes until 2007, and that the crisis of the Russian-Georgia war in August 2008 and the follow-up reactions of the EU have not been taken into account anymore.

dossiers for CFSP are afterwards moved up to the Political and Security Committee (PSC)⁹³, before they are passed to COREPER II.

In total, there are currently 38 different Council Working Parties responsible for Foreign Affairs, ranging from thematic working parties, like for example the Working Party on Global Disarmament and Arms Control or the Working Party on EFTA, to geographical working parties, like the Working Party on transatlantic relations or the Working party on the Western Balkans (for the comprehensive list of see Council of the European Union 2010b). For the third countries covered by the ENP there are two working groups that are mainly dealing with EU policy-making towards those regions: the Working party on Eastern Europe and Central Asia (COEST) and the Mashreq/Maghreb Working Party (COMAG).

Both working parties COEST and COMAG meet twice a week, if needed also more often. The Commission country desk officers mostly represent the Commission there when their respective country is on the agenda, while they also keep informal contacts with their counterparts in the Council Secretariat (Interview No. 19, COM). At the same time, Commission representatives might even change during the same meeting according to the issue discussed, what gives them the advantage that they are always the experts around the table, in contrast to member states' representatives who are during the whole meeting the same people and have more of an "all-rounder" background (Interview No. 1, PR Austria).

During the last years, and especially during the timeframe under investigation, the two Council working parties were dealing with the political aspects of the EU relations with neighbouring countries issues and responsible for preparing Council conclusions in this regard (Interview No. 1, PR Austria). COMAG also was dealing with the preparation of the agenda for the Association Council and the Association Committees, and was often discussing EU statements of various kinds. In this regard it mainly also depended on the EMP committee that had changed their working procedure, so that COMAG representatives only participate in those meetings if there is an issue discussed that falls under the competence of the member states, like for example political issues.

One important task of the working group is also drafting mandates for position of the Commission for negotiations with partner countries, in which also the Presidency and the Council Secretariat participate. The latter two are present during those negotiations, because this way member states have a sense of "*keeping control over the Commission*" (Interview No. 1,

⁹³ The Political and Security Committee replaced the former Political Committee and was envisaged as an interim body already in the Helsinki European Council in 1999. It was formally established only in February 2000 (for more background about the implications of changing from the Political Committee to the PSC and for its relationship with COREPER II see Duke 2005: 16) (for the role of the PSC in ESDP see also Vanhoonacker, Dijkstra & Maurer 2010: 9)

PR Austria), so that the Commission does not negotiate against the interests of the member states.

After dossiers have been discussed in the working groups, they are passed on to the PSC, or in some cases directly to COREPER II. Formally, all dossiers of the PSC also have to go through COREPER II, but informal practice and unspoken agreement had it in the past that dossiers once closed in PSC were not re-opened anymore in COREPER II meetings.⁹⁴ EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood illustrates very well the relationship and the very pragmatically changing division of labour between the PSC and COREPER II.

Since 2005, there was a general agreement that most of the dossiers related to EMP countries would go directly to COREPER II, with the exception of more politicised issues of the Middle East Peace Process or other dossiers with a highly politicised component. Between 2003 and 2006 it was, for example, the strategic partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East, the component of Weapons of Mass destruction in the association agreement with Syria, or the Lebanon conflict that were also debated in the PSC (Interview No. 18, PR Germany; Interview No. 21, PR UK). Not only EMP matters, but all bilateral relations are considered nowadays to fall under the ENP and hence would not go through PSC but directly to COREPER II (conflicts, crisis management and the more “hard-security” issues as an exception, of course) (Interview No. 21, PR UK). However, this unspoken and informal rule only developed with the British presidency in the second half of 2005, as a member state representative elaborates:

“Dossiers of the EMP are hardly ever going through PSC, but are always directly referred to COREPER II and the External Relations Council – but that is an adapted procedure since the British presidency. Until then it was the standard rule that the PSC right from the beginning prepares the Council Conclusions and the drafting of the text. The British changed that, because the British PSC-ambassador was annoyed – why not let the groups [*i.e. the Council working parties*] do their work, as it did not save any time at all [*that the PSC was drafting the Conclusions on its own*] but just doubled the time that had to be invested in the drafting. But the PSC had done this job already for quite some time, and it was a bit resistant to let this task be taken away, as some colleagues actually enjoyed this kind of work, even if that turned them often into an ‘editorial team’, what by and large is not what they are there for. Hence it took some time to get them adapted, so that they only discuss those issues that had been left unsolved by the working parties and do not start re-opening issues that had already been closed on the lower level.” (Interview No. 18, PR Germany)⁹⁵

⁹⁴ The relationship the forerunner of the PSC, the PoCo, and COREPER II was often strained and overshadowed by internal turf battles about seniority (see also footnote 86 on p. 155). This is not the place to re-open this issue, but for a detailed background analysis see Duke (2005).

⁹⁵ This interview was conducted in German, and therefore the quote provided here is a free translation by the author. The original quote reads as follows: “Aber von der Euro-Mediterranen Partnerschaft landet eigentlich nie irgendwas im PSK, sondern immer nur im Ausschussrat oder im Außenministerrat - und auch das ist ein verändertes Verfahren seit der britischen Präsidentschaft. Bis dahin hat in der Regel das PSK auch die Schlussfolgerungen von Anfang an redaktionell und das ganze Drafting gemacht. Die Briten haben das aber geändert, weil es dem britischen PSK-Botschafter zu dumm war, sollen doch diese ganze Gruppen [gemeint sind die Ratsarbeitsgruppen] einmal arbeiten und das hat am Anfang keineswegs Zeit gespart sondern verdoppelt, weil eben das PSK solange und so intensiv diese Ausschussfolgerungen gedraftet hat, dass sie sich diese Arbeit nicht nehmen lassen wollten, denn viele Kollegen hat das regelrecht Spaß gemacht, auch wenn sie dadurch selber zum

This account shows that the ENP framework in itself did not alter the mechanism underlying this division of labour between PSC and COREPER, but it helped to clarify the separation of tasks: normally all ENP dossiers go directly to COREPER II, just those with a highly politicised agenda would still have to be discussed in PSC, especially when they contain components related to defence, conflict or crisis management. It is interesting to keep in mind in this regard, that Council Secretariat country desk officers rather attend PSC than COREPER II meetings, as they consider PSC more crucial in terms of providing input than COREPER (Interview No. 15, CS). While this is a rather individual decision of the respective desk officer, it also implies that Council Secretariat staff then has a tendency to be more involved and informed about the politicised dossiers but that they are not that acquainted with the everyday ENP implementation of EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours. This is a bit different for the Commission desk officers who are present at COREPER II meetings as well (Interview No. 10, COM).

These elaborations above show that the ENP did not trigger any direct institutional adaptation within the Council to deal with the new policy framework, but that it supported the institutionalisation of clear working procedures between different units like PSC and COREPER II. The example of the British presidency altering the involvement of PSC in setting-up the text and drafting of Council Conclusions, also emphasises the important role of the rotating presidency who can also be considered as a potential factor shaping the set-up and implementation of the ENP framework, as the next subchapter is going to show.

The Rotating Presidency: between Organisier, honest Broker and Leadership

The rotating presidency of the Council of Ministers has a long tradition in the European integration process. It had already been established in the Treaty of Paris (1952) where it was decided that every three months the presidency shall be taken up by another member state. With the Rome Treaties the period at the helm was extended to six month (Vanhoonacker, Pomorska & Maurer 2011 forthcoming). The rotating presidency mechanism was also used for the European Political Cooperation, even when it started outside of the treaty framework. After the Treaty of Maastricht there was one single presidency responsible for all different levels of member state representation, i.e. the country holding the rotating presidency was chairing all the different levels within the Council of Ministers (Working Parties; PSC; COREPER I and II, Council configurations) but also the European Council meetings.⁹⁶

Redaktionsteam wurden, was im Grunde nicht ihre Aufgabe ist. Und das hat eine ganze Zeit gebraucht, dass sie also nur über die strittigen Punkte reden, die die Gruppe offen gelassen hat und nicht wieder den ganzen Text von vorne aufrollen.“ (Interview No. 18, PR Germany)

⁹⁶ This idea of one presidency on all levels changed significantly with the Lisbon Treaty and the introduction of the permanent chair of the European Council and the High Representative chairing the FAC and her representatives some lower Council Working Parties and the PSC (for more details see Vanhoonacker, Pomorska & Maurer 2011 forthcoming).

The idea behind this rotation system was that each member state should get the opportunity to be at the helm of the Council, no matter if it is a small or big member state. Academics classified the roles of the rotating presidencies in different categories, ranging from organizer, broker, political leadership to external representation (see table 1 in Schout & Vanhoonacker 2006: 1055). It is widely contested in the literature to what extent those roles compete with each other and create a certain dilemma for the presidency: while political leadership would allow pushing for national interests this role does not at all go in line with the idea of an honest broker to find a compromise between competing member states. Also how much the rotating presidency can actually influence and impact on the EU agenda proved a quite difficult question to answer (for a profound literature overview and critical reflections see Tallberg 2003). At the same time, this system of rotation also brought challenges for some of the member states in terms of logistical, organisational and leadership capacities as well as human resources (Elgström 2003; Kirchner 1992). It is at the same time often criticised that this system of rotation contributes to a lack of continuity and coherence, as the country at the helm changes every six months, and there is a tendency that Spain for example focuses on Latin America, while for example Belgium puts its emphasis more on Africa and there like (Grant & Leonard 2006). In addition, partner countries often show difficulties in understanding this rather complex system of representation, as their interlocutors not only vary according to policy area (Commission, presidency, or even member states) but because also the presidency-face changes every six months (Bengtsson, Elgström & Tallberg 2004).

To establish more continuity and coherence between the rotating presidencies the Seville European Council in June 2002 therefore agreed that the six forthcoming presidencies should always draw up a multi-annual programme for the next three years, starting in 2004. In a similar vein, the two countries holding presidencies within the same year, should submit a joint operational work programme to the Council in the preceding December of their presidency (see point 4 and 5 of Annex II entitled “Measures concerning the Structure and Functioning of the Council” of European Council 2002b). However, this mechanism did not deliver the desired effects and was therefore revised by the Council in 2006. From 2007 onwards, the trio presidencies (ie three presidencies following up on each other) should together draft a “*Council’s 18-month programme*”⁹⁷ [...] *in closer cooperation with the Commission [... and] with a view to its endorsement by the General Affairs and External Relations Council*” (see Article 4(2), Council of the European Union 2006b). Hence, for the empirical analysis within the timeframe under investigation in this thesis of 2002-2007, there are one multi-annual

⁹⁷ The respective point 2 in the Council Decision reads as following “It is also appropriate to streamline the programming of the activities of the Council. Accordingly, a new system based on an 18-month programme to be submitted for endorsement to the Council by the three Presidencies due to hold office during that given period should be introduced and replace the previous system” (Council of the European Union 2006b: 47)

programme 2004-2006 (Council of the European Union 2003b), and four operational programmes of the Council from 2003-2006 (Council of the European Union & Irish and Dutch Delegations 2003; Council of the European Union & Luxembourg and United Kingdom Delegations 2004; Council of the European Union & Austrian and Finnish Delegations 2005; Council of the European Union & Greek and Italian Delegations 2002b) under the first system, as well as one 18-month programme from 2007 onwards (Council of the European Union 2006a).

It was no coincidence that the set-up of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in 1995 fell under the Spanish presidency, or that it was during the French Presidency in 2008 that the follow-up project of the Mediterranean Union was put on the agenda. In EU foreign policy-making, and especially in CFSP it is the rotating presidency (as main focal point for member states' request) who provides leadership, sets the agenda and brokers agreements. The Commission, of course, also still has its right of initiative but its opportunities are much more restricted, given the sensitive political issues at hand. The following pages look into the importance and salience that different presidencies gave to EU foreign policy with the neighbours and to the ENP in specific terms, while table 11 provides an overview of the rotating presidencies between 2002 and 2007.

Table 11: Rotating Presidencies of the Council 2002-2007

Time	Country in Presidency	Remarks
2002 – 1 st half	Spain	Functional logic behind pushing for closer EU relationship with Mediterranean (terrorism, economic liberalisation, migration); bringing EMP forward but no clear input in ENP set-up;
2002 – 2 nd half	Denmark	Focus on closing accession process but no indication that external dimension (e.g. wider Europe initiative) was taken into account;
2003 – 1 st half	Greece	- In Operational programme, Mediterranean region as “another high priority”, wider Europe as priority issue in 2003, Southern Caucasus mentioned but outside “wider Europe” idea. - No evidence that pushed specific idea for EU relationship with neighbours: Greek non-paper rather general and uninspired; no Italian proposal while Commission and EP put forward their more concrete ideas;
2003 – 2 nd half	Italy	
2004 – 1 st half	Ireland	Ireland took note of ENP and framed it as complementary element to EMP; While the implementation and review of the Mediterranean strategy was planned for this period of time, the Irish presidency used this opportunity to also put some attention to ENP;
2004 – 2 nd half	The Netherlands	- Focus on Justice and Home Affairs and Hague Programme - Orange Revolution in Georgia mainly dealt with by HR Solana;
2005 – 1 st half	Luxembourg	No profound role of ENP in presidency programme;
2005 – 2 nd half	United Kingdom	Focus on EMU and inherited dossiers; 10th anniversary of EMP; support Commission in ENP implementation and monitoring;
2006 – 1 st half	Austria	Western Balkans as priority & accession process; “ensure development of ENP”; first mid-term review of ENP action plans; provide “<i>more substance to the ENP</i>”;
2006 – 2 nd half	Finland	
2007 – 1 st half	Germany	“strengthening and developing the ENP”; cooperation with neighbours on energy and migration;
2007 – 2 nd half	Portugal	Emphasis on Southern dimension of ENP;

When looking at the presidency programmes and its evaluations it shows that the “wider Europe” idea did not really result from the presidencies in the Council. While it was in April 2002 that the Council for the first time discussed „*Wider Europe: Relations between the future enlarged EU and its Eastern Neighbours*“ (General Affairs Council 2002a) and had asked the Commissioner and the HR to follow up on their ideas (as discussed in Table 2 on page 88), the presidencies at this time do not show to have had any input on this idea. There is no mentioning of the EU relations with the neighbours whatsoever during the Swedish presidency in 2001 (Elgström 2002), and also not during the Belgian turn in 2001 (Kerremans & Drieskens 2002).

The Spanish presidency at the beginning of 2002 had naturally a focus on the EU relations with the Mediterranean. Barbé argues that as first priority Spain had to deal with the dossiers that it inherited from earlier presidencies (enlargement, Lisbon strategy), but that as second priority the Spanish presidency clearly put an emphasise on the “*struggle against terrorism, economic liberalization and the development of European foreign policy (mostly relating to the Mediterranean region) as motors of the European integration process*” (Barbé 2003: 45). While this focus is not really surprising, it also indicates that Spain follows a clear functional logic in its presidency priority by focusing on the cooperation with third countries that could follow its own interests of having close economic links with the Mediterranean and managing migration (for a conceptual discussion of “uploading” of national interests to EU foreign policy see Wong 2011). The Spanish presidency is said to have been quite successful in facilitating and bringing the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership forward (Barbé 2003: 48), but in regard of future plans about how to structure the EU relationship with the neighbours there is no indication that the Spanish presidency took this into account when presenting its priorities and providing leadership. This also shows in the track record of the following Danish presidency, who put a special emphasis on enlargement in terms of closing the procedures in Copenhagen in a successful manner, but there is no evidence that would indicate that the Danish presidency took the external dimension of enlargement and the idea of new borders into account at all (Friis 2003).

2003 was the crucial year for shaping the exact set-up of the ENP (see Table 4 on p. 97) and this was also acknowledged in the 2003 operational work programme of the Council that was submitted by the Greek and Italian presidency (Council of the European Union & Greek and Italian Delegations 2002a). As priorities under the heading “EU in the world: projecting stability” it identifies the EU relations with the Balkans, the Mediterranean and Russia, and it states that “*wider Europe will be a priority issue in 2003*” and asks for a “*rapid consideration of the question of the enlarged EU’s relations with its ‘new neighbours’*”. At the same time, there are lots of areas that are defined as high priority in this programme, as for example the Mediterranean that “*will be another high priority area for the European Union [to] strengthen*

regional cooperation”. The Southern Caucasus is also mentioned as an area of EU cooperation, but it is kept clearly separate from the Wider-Europe-idea.

Considering the length of this operational programme and the crucial point of time in shaping the future structure of the ENP, this operational programme remains rather vague, repeating just some general statements that the Council already had made before in various conclusions. This uninspired neglect of the ENP development also showed during the actual implementation of the presidencies in 2003, as the following observations illustrates.

When Greece resumed the helm of the Council, the Eastern enlargement had already been finalised and the Laeken convention had given a new spirit to the European integration project. As external factor the Iraq war and the quarrels of member states about the kind of support for the US left doubts about the idea of a common EU foreign policy considerably (Hill 2004b). So although the Greek presidency tabled a *“food for thought paper”* (Presidency of the Council / Greece 2003), the Greek presidency did not show any sign to pay particular attention to *“Wider Europe”* (for a brief overview and evaluation of the Greek presidency see Dimitrakopoulos & Passas 2004). Their tabled paper was rather general and without concrete substance, and like the operational programme of the Council it mainly reiterated what member states had already stated in Council conclusions beforehand.

Italy took over the Council presidency in the second half of 2003, but also they did not provide any leadership in shaping the ENP. Quaglia (2004) reports that the Italian presidency generally had a difficult stand to provide leadership, because it did not have the support of all member states and the EU institutions, and there was also a lot of disagreement in terms of content, as the following observation shows:

“Two important meetings between the EU and Russia (October) and the EU and the Ukraine (November) took place in 2003. During these summits, the positions expressed by the Italian Prime Minister in his role as Council President were at odds with the stance adopted by the Commission (and some other Member States), causing tensions amongst the institutions” (Quaglia 2004: 49)

Quaglia argues that the quarrel between the Commission president Romano Prodi and the Council President Berlusconi was more mirroring a future conflict about competing for the office of prime minister in Italy, than a conflict between different EU institutions. At the same time we have to keep in mind that the Commission was very active in putting forward its proposals for a financial instrument (e.g. the ENPI draft in July 2003), and also the EP tabled at different occasions its ideas about *“Wider Europe”*. While it would go too far to deduct that this activity of other actors is related to the strained relationship with the presidency, there is at least no evidence that would suggest that those institutions consulted with the presidency at all. This is rather surprising if not to say odd, as the rotating presidency at this time was considered the

main focal point in EU foreign policy-making to set the agenda, also by putting forward drafts on behalf of other actors.

As outlined above, it was for the first time in 2004 that six consecutive presidencies were coming up with their multi-annual programme 2004-2006 (Council of the European Union 2003b). This programme is a rather general document and does not outline any specific ideas for the ENP. It discusses the Union as a global player in strong resemblance to the European Security Strategy (European Council 2003b) that was just published when this multi-annual programme had been drawn up. In total, the multi-annual programme emphasises five different issues in regard of external relations, of which one is termed “*building security in our neighbourhood*” that also emphasises as one suggestion that “*the Union will define a range of policies towards its neighbours in the East and in the South, based on shared values and helping to address common challenges*” (Council of the European Union 2003b: 21). The document also refers to a Northern dimension plan that is to be developed in 2006, before it states that “*A new neighbourhood policy will be developed, with the Commission presenting from 2004 proposals for Action Plans for all countries concerned and introducing Neighbourhood Programmes in preparation for the proposed new proximity instrument.*” (Council of the European Union 2003b: 21). Out of the whole 57 points put forward in this multi-annual programme only those two directly refer to the European Neighbourhood Policy. Additionally, cooperation with the neighbours is mentioned in general terms in reference to the then very topical Lisbon strategy, under the heading of maritime safety and pollution prevention, where the need for a close cooperation with the neighbours is emphasised (Council of the European Union 2003b: 14). This indicates that it might not per se be altruistic reasons that determine the establishment of a prosperous neighbourhood, but that it is in areas with functional needs of the EU member states that the neighbours are considered as necessary cooperation partners.

The main event of 2004 was undoubtedly the accession of 10 new member states in May, while the main topic of the two presidencies focused to a large extent on Justice and Home Affairs and again the Lisbon agenda (Council of the European Union & Irish and Dutch Delegations 2003). In regard of the EU relations with the neighbours, the Council operational work programme 2004 emphasises that the “*implementation of the Thessaloniki European Council Conclusions on Wider Europe/ New Neighbours policies will be a priority issue in 2004*”, with special attention for upgrading the existing agreements with third countries. But at the same time the Council outlook seems rather passive, as it is looking “*forward receiving from the Commission Actions Plans*” (Council of the European Union & Irish and Dutch Delegations 2003: 46-47).

But it was the first time in 2004 that a presidency consciously referred to the European Neighbourhood Policy and actively put forwards its ideas, while this was done by a country

holding the presidency that actually does not have any specific relationship towards the respective third countries and might not have been expected by many observers to be the first one to consider the ENP as important priority: Ireland. Next to the general priorities of the Lisbon strategy and Justice and Home affairs, as well as improving the relationship with the US the Irish presidency inherited the task of re-evaluating the EU relations with the Mediterranean. It shows quite clearly that it was not a topic that the Irish presidency had chosen itself, but that this mechanism of review had been agreed beforehand and just coincided with the Irish presidency. Hence, it was not a deliberate choice of Ireland to be the first presidency to take the ENP set-up intentionally into account, but having been tasked to review the Mediterranean EU strategy, they took this challenge seriously, prepared well and considered it in broad terms. At the start of its presidency in January 2005, the Irish presidency circulated its ideas as presidency priorities “*for the implementation of the Common Strategy for the Mediterranean Region*” that were to be discussed in the Council Working Groups, COREPER and finally confirmed in the Council (Presidency of the Council 2004b). In this document, the Irish presidency puts forward different ideas about how to reinvigorate the EMP, but it also puts the EMP in close relationship to the “*developments in the European Neighbourhood Policy*”, emphasising its complementary character. In addition, it also mentions its “*support to the Commission in its work to ensure early progress on the European Neighbourhood Policy, progressing Action Plans with some of the Mediterranean Partners during our Presidency*” (Presidency of the Council 2004b). The Irish presidency put a lot of effort and time in preparing this dossier, before its final report on the EU strategic partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East was approved by the European Council (Schumacher 2004: 58-197). It was generally considered as one of the successes of the Irish presidency to make “*progress on international issues in the Mediterranean, Middle East and Africa*” (Rees 2005: 57).

The subsequent Dutch presidency focused primarily on the adoption of the Hague Programme within the area of Justice and Home Affairs and foreign affairs issue did not figure high on the agenda. The crisis with Iran as nuclear threat was dealt with by the UK, France and Germany, while observers state a strong leadership for the High Representative Solana in EU foreign policy-making:

“the so-called Orange Revolution in Ukraine was mainly the concern of the Union’s foreign policy czar, Javier Solana, and the Member State with the most expertise and the greatest strategic interests – Poland” (van Ham 2005: 61)

The operational programme for the Council in 2005 as presented by the Luxembourg and British presidency (Council of the European Union & Luxembourg and United Kingdom Delegations 2004) highlights as main priorities again the Lisbon Agenda, the Area of Freedom and Security and Justice (as to what JHA had been renamed), as well as future accessions. Under the slogan of “*extending the area of peace and security*” the neighbouring countries are

mentioned together with the Western Balkans and the Middle East in terms of enhancing border security. For the rest, the programme only names three minor points in regard of the ENP that the Council will focus on in 2005: the ENP Action plans should be finalised; the Barcelona celebrates its 10th anniversary, and the strategic partnership for the Mediterranean and the Middle East should be continuously implemented (Council of the European Union & Luxembourg and United Kingdom Delegations 2004: 40).

The Luxembourg presidency again emphasises the “*drawing up and adopting action plans with all the neighbouring countries concerned*”⁹⁸, but this is the only reference in the whole programme to the new policy framework, and also during its presidency the ENP did not play any role at all (Hearl 2006). The UK presidency priorities are more elaborate but the presidency also emphasises that its focus in external relations is mainly driven by inherited dossiers, already long agreed summits, or other unforeseen external events. Next to development issues (e.g. Millenium goals), Africa (and here especially the difficulty with Zimbabwe), and the nuclear threat of Iran, the UK presidency puts a special emphasis on the 10th anniversary of the Barcelona process⁹⁹ that it co-hosts together with Spain in Barcelona in November 2005 (UK Presidency of the EU 2005 2005b: 26). At the same time, the British presidency confirms its support for the Commission in implementing the ENP:

“As Presidency, the UK will ensure effective co-ordination of this monitoring [*of the action plans*] and will continue to encourage partner countries to take advantage of the opportunities under the ENP by helping them along the process of political, social and economic reform. The UK Presidency will also support the Commission in negotiating Action Plans for the second wave of ENP countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Egypt, Lebanon). The Commission hopes to complete these negotiations by the end of 2005.” (UK Presidency of the EU 2005 2005a)

This quote clearly shows that the main responsibility for implementing the ENP lies with the Commission, and that they perceive the role of the presidency in terms of supporting the Commission and coordinating the monitoring of this process.

In 2006, Austria and Finland took the place at the helm of the Council, and their common priority in regard of the ENP were “*to ensure the development*” of the ENP, pointing to the first mid-term review of ENP actions plans, the set-up of the ENPI and to the negotiation of starting the implementation of action plans of the Southern Caucasus countries (Council of the European Union & Austrian and Finnish Delegations 2005: 53-43). Furthermore, they emphasised the continued pursue of “objectives of the strategic partnership for the Mediterranean and Middle

⁹⁸ The Luxembourg Presidency Priorities, Retrieved from http://www.eu2005.lu/en/presidence/priorities_et_pgm/priorities/index.html

⁹⁹ The tenth anniversary summit of the Barcelona process in November 2005, however, turned out as a disastrous event. While with most of the Southern Mediterranean partners abstained from joining (with the exception of Turkey and PA), also EU member states could hardly agree on any common aspects. See for example Euromesco News December 2005, Retrieved from http://www.euromesco.net/images/enews_2_en.pdf

East” (Council of the European Union & Austrian and Finnish Delegations 2005: 53-43). The tone was to give “*more substance to the European Neighbourhood Policy*” (Council of the European Union & Austrian and Finnish Delegations 2005: 7), while especially the Austrian presidency highlighted the need to “*use [...] European Neighbourhood Policy to further the EU’s energy policy objectives*”(Pollak & Puntischer Riekmann 2007).

In 2007, the German presidency took over the presidency of the Council, and while their biggest achievement for sure was to bring the failed constitution back on track in the form of the Lisbon Treaty, in regard of the ENP they were aiming at “*strengthening and developing the European Neighbourhood Policy and extending relations with Russia and Central Asia*” (German Presidency 2006: 5). This phrase also featured in a very similar wording several times in the newly established trio presidency programme (Council of the European Union 2006a: 15). The cooperation with neighbouring countries was again emphasised outside the narrowly defined external relations chapter in terms of energy issues (German Presidency 2006: 9; Council of the European Union 2006a: 32 & 63) and in regard of asylum and migration policy, where the cooperation with the partners as countries of origin and transit should elevate the migration pressures to the EU and the establishment of a Southern Maritime Border Surveillance System facilitate the joint management of illegal immigration (German Presidency 2006: 18; see also Council of the European Union 2006a: 53 & 58). The consecutive Portuguese presidency shared the priorities established in the joint operational programme for 2007, but observers also claim that the Portuguese were emphasising the importance of the Southern dimension of the ENP because of clear self-interests:

“In 2007, after the accession of ten central and eastern European states, the Portuguese representatives were determined to promote attention to the southern flank, that is, the Mediterranean, but especially Africa. During the second half of 2007 Portuguese authorities attempted to advance the co-operative efforts under way with the Mediterranean countries through various ministerial meetings, including the first meeting held between the southern Mediterranean partners regarding migration. Africa, meanwhile, was a priority area for an obvious geostrategic reason; a renewed focus on Africa, as opposed to central and eastern Europe, would enable Portugal to gain a more central role within the EU’s external relations (Ferreira-Pereira 2008: 65).

This interpretation of the Portuguese emphasis on the Southern dimension of the ENP is not surprising but rather confirms a long standing suspicion of member states favouring either the Eastern or the Southern dimension of the neighbourhood, according to their own national benefits and their ability to shape the respective EU approach.

6.1.3. The European Council

The European Council was recognised as an official EU institution only with the Treaty of Lisbon that entered into force in December 2009. However, the Heads of States and Government met in this highest political formation already since 1974, and already since then it

is the European Council that is supposed to give the general strategic directions for EU policy-making when meeting at least four times a year. And although this institution is not passing laws or there like, it is normally considered as instructing the other levels, especially the Council of Ministers to take action in a certain area and in a certain direction. The following overview of references in the European Council presidency conclusions from 2002 to 2007 show that the European Council repeatedly emphasised the need to strengthen the EU relations with the neighbourhood, but that at the same time it mainly reiterated and emphasised phrases that had already been discussed and agreed on beforehand in the Council. In this regard the European Council confirmed the path taken in other fora, but it did not provide strategic leadership in the way that Heads of States and Governments would shape the ideas about this new policy framework.

The first time the European Council as the highest political level was considering the “Wider Europe” initiative was at its European Council in Copenhagen in December 2003 where it confirmed the intention of the EU to “*take forward relations with neighbouring countries*” (European Council 2002a: 6) and reiterated what the Council had asked beforehand, i.e. that the Commission and the HR prepare proposals in this regard. Ten months later it welcomed the work done so far by the EU institutions and asked all actors involved to follow up on the ideas developed already to ensure a “*comprehensive, balanced, and proportionate approach, including a financial instrument*” (European Council 2003a).

A year later, in November 2004, the European Council welcomed the tabled proposal for the ENPI, and “*requests a report on progress and achievements before the end of 2005*” (European Council 2004a: 22). Just a month later, at its December summit in Brussels, the European Council again confirms the EU intention to strengthen and deepen the relationship with the neighbours (European Council 2004b: 15-17), before it commented in detail “*with satisfaction*” on “*the progress made within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy*”, referring especially to the first series of action plans that had been successfully finalised. It also again asked the Commission and the HR to report on the progress (European Council 2004b: 16)

In 2005, The European Council referred to the ENP twice. In June, the European Council again expresses its satisfaction with the first wave of action plans, next to commenting on the situation in Ukraine and Belarus and welcoming the appointment of an EUSR for Moldova and the report about the implementation of the EU strategic partnership with the Mediterranean (European Council 2005b). The second time the European Council refers to the ENP is in December. It again “*welcomes the progress*” in the ENP implementation process, and a special topic in this European Council conclusions centres around migration issues, in which cooperation with neighbours is considered as salient aspect (European Council 2005a).

Also in 2006 the European Council at three different meetings refers to the need to cooperate with neighbours in relation to migration and energy issues, which both figure prominently as main topics of the meetings (European Council 2006c: 14, 2006b, a: 14). In the conclusions of the June meeting, the European Council emphasises also once more the importance of the ENP and reiterates the main ideas behind the policy framework:

“The European Council reiterates the importance it attaches to the European Neighbourhood Policy as a means to strengthen cooperation with its neighbours and expand prosperity, stability and security beyond the borders of the European Union. The European Neighbourhood Policy seeks to support the political and economic reforms of neighbouring countries on the basis of partnership and building on shared values. The Union is determined to strengthen and further develop its Neighbourhood Policy, thus offering an increasingly close relationship and substantial support, as neighbouring countries fulfil their commitments to reform”. (European Council 2006b: 22)

In the June 2006 meeting the Heads of States and Governments also welcome once more the progress in regard of the action plans (European Council 2006a: 18), and they endorse the GAERC conclusions of December 2006 (General Affairs Council 2006b) in regard of the Commission document about how to strengthen the ENP (European Commission 2006f). And also in 2007 the topics of the European Council in regard of the ENP stay similar: migration and energy policy and for both the importance to cooperate with the neighbours is again emphasised (European Council 2007a, c). And at last in December 2007, the European Council again emphasises the “*strategic relevance of the relationship of the EU with the Mediterranean*” and points to the fact that the ENP has to be considered as a “*core priority within the EU’s external action*”. It welcomes the work done by the Commission in its various communications, and asks all involved actors, and especially the upcoming presidencies, to keep on implementing the ideas of the ENP (European Council 2007b).

This account of the different actors within the ENP framework shows that it was only for the Commission that the ENP framework led to inter-institutional adaptation. The other actors dealt with issues of the ENP within their usual structures and addressed the same topics, just that now the dossiers of the respective countries were mostly labelled as “ENP”. The involvement of actors also differs according to the two countries under investigation: while for the Mediterranean the Commission fulfils a prominent role in terms of coordinating the EMP, it is the Council Secretariat (and there especially the Policy Unit of Solana and the EUSR team) that provides also political guidance for the EU foreign policy towards the Southern Caucasus. Furthermore, it was surprising to see that the European Council did not take up the leadership role that it is often assumed to have, but that it mainly confirmed what foreign ministers had agreed upon in the Council or what the Commission had proposed in its Communication. In a similar vein, the analysis of the rotating presidencies is even more surprising, as none of the countries at the helm did not consider the ENP set-up or working procedures as a salient topic,

and only a few actually outlined specific topics that should be dealt with within the framework (like migration and energy) to facilitate a cooperation with the partner countries. This observation also points to the need to look at the way that the EU actually does its day-to-day policy making towards its neighbours in more detail.

The next part looks into more detail what roles the different actors fulfil in the ENP policy cycle, how they interact, and how this role differentiation emerged over time.

6.2. The Involvement and Interaction of EU actors in different Policy Stages

“So I think it is still evolving, the whole process and also the kind of competences of who gets involved in what – issues are still not particularly clear. I mean what is a member-state-lead, what should be done by the EU-25, where should the Commission be the leader; it is not totally clear, so this still has to be defined.” (Interview No. 21, PR UK)

This quote from a British diplomat working in Brussels was referring to the situation of EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours in 2006. This situation was also emphasised by a Commission official who elaborated that the “*ENP is more in set-up phase now*” (Interview No. 9, COM), when asked about the institutional cooperation in 2006. This shows that even two years after the ENP strategy paper there was no clear delimitation of working roles of all actors involved, and the system was still in flux. But this quote also highlights that competences of all actors involved seem clearly differentiated in the treaty text, but that it is often more complex and difficult in practice to clearly define the roles without overlap and conflict.

Foreign Policy at EU level was for a long time mainly associated with the Council or the European Council as locus for intergovernmental policy-making between member states (see chapter 2.1 on page 19). Within the CFSP, which is often considered as the political element of the EU as an international actor, it was the member states that shaped the policy, and this mostly took place within the different Council structures. The Commission was only associated with CFSP, and also other EU institutions and actors did not have a say in this intergovernmental policy area. However, this separation in theory sounds more straightforward than it is in practice, as for example the ECOWAS case showed that needed the involvement of the ECJ to settle a dispute between Commission and Council about competences that were difficult to distinguish between political CFSP issues and economic external EC relations (Duke 2006b: 19; Duke & Blockmans 2010: 11). Hillion and Wessel who analyse the ECOWAS case in detail (Hillion & Wessel 2009) argue that from a legal point of view the treaty left a “*fuzziness in competence distribution within the EU system of external relations*”, while at the same time political scientists emphasise the increasing blurring of internal and external policies (Eriksson & Rhinard 2009). The latter complicates a clear separation of tasks even more (for a in-depth

study about cross-pillar tensions in the area of migration and EU Middle East Policy see Stetter 2004)

When taking into account the formal treaty provisions only, the role of the Commission in policy-making towards the neighbourhood did not change considerably during the last two decades, neither with the adoption of the Common Strategy for the Mediterranean nor with the incorporation of the ENP. But this is misleading, and several scholars already emphasized that the impact of the Commission on foreign policy evolved considerably during the last decades, leading for example to the assessment that the Commission is “*the most important actor in Union policy towards the Mediterranean*” (Smith, H. 2002: 160). This would go in line with the earlier research findings of this chapter that neither the European Council nor the rotating presidency seemed to assume strong leadership within the ENP framework.

The formal specification of the involvement of different actors is not to be found in the treaty text, but the working procedures of the ENP were formally set up in the “European Neighbourhood Policy strategy paper” of 2004 (European Commission 2004b). It was decided that the Commission would draft country reports for the third countries where it will provide information about the political and economic situation of the country and possible needed reforms. Based on the results of these reports ENP action plans were drafted by the Commission, then discussed with the member states and finally negotiated with the third countries. The action plans are very concrete and technical, and identify the priorities of reform with each partner for the next three to five years. The Commission is responsible for the implementation of these action plans and the monitoring of progress through periodic progress reports.

Christiansen (2001: 762) emphasises in his study on inter- and intra-institutional relations in the EU “*that deficits of the formal structures and the treaty provisions are compensated by informal arrangements*”, where he also concluded that the formal treaty provisions do not tell the whole story about tasks and competences of EU actors. This is the reason why the rest of this chapter investigates in more detail how the different actors contribute to the EU policy-making towards the neighbours in practice. The focus thereby is not only on the interaction as provided for in the formally in the official documents but especially on the informal and day-to-day interaction of EU actors of dealing with the ENP framework.

The analysis is structured along the concept of a policy process that distinguishes between agenda setting and policy specification¹⁰⁰, decision-making, implementation and evaluation

¹⁰⁰ While this stages can be differentiated when adapting a very narrow definition, this thesis deals with them together, as this is sufficient for the purpose of analysis, and a more narrow definition would lead to a too extensive elaboration that would not fit into the focus of this thesis.

(Versluis, van Keulen & Stephenson 2010). While EU foreign policy analysis to a large extent focuses on the stage of decision-making only, the argument presented here is that such a focus also invites for a certain bias, as decision-making procedures are quite detailed elaborated upon in the treaties and hence do not allow for the analysis of informal mechanisms too well. Furthermore, a focus on decision-making in EU foreign policy automatically biases the results towards an overemphasis of the role of the member states, as those are the ones that are the main decision-makers in foreign policy-making.

However, it must not be a priori assumed that the influence of other actors during other policy stages can be automatically ignored, or that those other stages do not shape the ENP in a considerable manner as well. While the concept of the policy cycle has so far been mainly used for the analysis of EU public policy, it has also been applied to more general foreign policy analysis, however only rarely to EU foreign policy analysis (see for example Webber & Smith 2002; for one exception applying the policy cycle to EU foreign policy making see Duke & Vanhoonacker 2006). At the same time, such an adoption of the framework for foreign policy-making has to, of course, take into account the peculiarities of foreign policy-making compared to EU public policies.

It is also important to keep in mind that this chapter does not look into the set-up of the ENP (that was done in chapter 4.1, page 85 ff.), but that the analysis now departs from the idea that the main policy framework had already been established, especially with the ENP strategy paper in June 2004. Therefore it looks into more detail how the various actors now made this ENP framework work in practice, and how they interacted in order to pursue EU foreign policy towards the neighbours within this framework from 2004 to 2007. Hence, when we take about agenda-setting and policy specification in the first part it is not about the ideas of how to set-up this framework, but it is about the “smaller” scale of setting the agenda and specify policies within the established framework.

The ENP framework brings together dossiers of economic policies and external assistance that are negotiated under Community competence, political aspects of the CFSP pillar, and more recently the external dimension of Justice and Home Affairs of the pre-Lisbon Treaty (i.e. the third pillar fight against terrorism, fight against crime, migration etc), as already elaborated several times above. For the Southern dimension, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) was set up in a very similar way, but there the division between economic and political issues was still more clearly designed than within the ENP. The EMP was separated in economic, political and cultural baskets but this formal differentiation does not exist in the ENP, especially as these different areas are always incorporated in one document, e.g. the action plan.

The proceeding parts of this chapter show that the formal differentiation of the applied EU decision making procedure still exists, but also that the sharing of tasks especially in agenda-setting changed, as now all different areas are brought together in one document (the action plans). This gave increased leverage to the Commission, because it was the latter who drafted these documents, while at the same time it had to make sure to accommodate member states' concerns who could still block those proposals in the Council. Furthermore, it will be shown how other actors perceived the role of a specific actor, e.g. what member states thought about the role taken over by the Commission in the ENP.

6.2.1. Agenda Setting and Policy Specification

The main areas of agenda setting and policy specification on EU level concerns on the one hand the drawing up of the action plans, on the other hand the framing of topics that have been emphasised as salient areas of cooperation with third countries in various EU documents like the Council conclusions, European Council Presidency conclusions or the Commission communications.

The action plans were negotiated and agreed upon in three stages. In 2005, the first series of seven action plans have been adopted between the EU and Israel, Jordan, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia and Ukraine respectively. In a second step three more action plans with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia were successfully put in place, while two more action plans with Egypt and Lebanon followed in 2006. Out of the 16 ENP partner countries it is four countries (Algeria, Belarus, Libya and Syria) that still do not have an action plan in place (see also Table 5 on p. 113) and which are often considered as the “difficult” partners that do not really seek a close cooperation with the EU.

The drafting of action plans at EU level is coordinated by the respective officials in the Commission. Furthermore, it was the Commission who was tasked beforehand to draw up Country reports for all neighbouring countries that outline the existing legal framework shaping the EU relations with the third country, the political situation as well as the economic and social situation in the country (European Commission 2004a, 2005a). These reports were taken as a starting point to identify the needed reform agenda and should provide the EU institutions with a first impression of what reforms would be best to tackle first.

After this first assessment, the draft action plans are prepared, during which the Commission is in charge of coordinating and collecting different suggestions, seeking close contact with member states' representatives in the Council, the Council Secretariat and advisors of the EUSRs, as these texts are “*carefully prepared together*” (Interview No. 7, COM; also confirmed by both Interview No. 14, CS; Interview No. 15, CS), especially when it comes to the political aspects of the action plans:

“On the political aspects, my colleague from the Council Secretariat and ourselves [*the team of the High Representative*] we were involved, were asked for input, to give our comments on the language, but mainly we got the whole document to comment on, and we gave some suggestions to other things but mostly really what falls in the scope of our competences or our activities – it is really the CFSP, the foreign political aspects, in concrete the conflicts. Because the general cooperation on foreign policy is the Council Secretariat, and it is also general competences from the teams of the High Representative”. (Interview No. 22, CS)

At the same time it has to be kept in mind that timing in this regard is an important aspect, as it is the Commission who puts forward a draft that is then forwarded to the Council and the member states for discussion. While those can of course provide their input and suggest amendments, it also is common agreement that it is more difficult to change an existing text than putting new ideas forward in a first draft, what provides a slight but interesting advantage for the Commission. The latter has of course to be careful not to intrude on the political CFSP/ESDP competences of member states too forcefully, but at the same time it is the first one that can shape drafts according to its ideas and suggestions.

This EU-internal coordination process, however, of course also leads to some disagreement from time to time, as the following example shows. The political parts of the action plans differ considerably from partner country to partner country, to be able to adapt the content of the action plan to the reform process of the respective country and also to make sure that the partner government is in a position to agree to the content. However, there are of course also parts that are standard and have to be included in all action plans, as for example the respect for human rights. In a similar vein, it was member states who had insisted that the issue of actions against weapons of mass destruction should be incorporated in the action plans. However, the Commission found this rather disturbing and counterproductive, as some partner countries proved very reluctant to mention this topic at all and in the end the EU had to make concessions in other areas to get an agreement – and some of these concessions would have been more important to keep, from the point of view of the Commission (Interview No. 7, COM). While both Council and Commission representatives also highlight the importance of having a certain political aspect in the relationship, it also showed in the EU-internal negotiations of the action plans that the perception of how political objectives should be achieved varied. While Commission officials sometimes emphasise the technical aspects of an agreement, Council representatives have a tendency to politicise and ignore the technical nature of the relationship (Interview No. 7, COM). This also links to a long standing debate in the development policy, if reforms should right from the beginning follow a political objective, or to what extent it is better to first start cooperating on technical issues, and just when those show successful the political elements are added. Commission officials complain, for example, that such political issues like Weapons of Mass destruction were taking too much attention away from the issues that really made an impact on the ground, for example in regard of improving the living conditions of the poorer citizens in the partner country. They also agreed that those more technical issues are

often not too sexy or exciting to negotiate, but in their point of view they are as important as political objectives, or even more strongly formulated:

“The long-term positive effect of these reforms might, however, be hampered by these political emphasises, as it blurs the real objectives and aims of the policy.” (Interview No. 7, COM)

Another negative example for the political interference with the ENP was for example when Cyprus was blocking the adoption of the action plans with the Southern Caucasus countries, not because it fundamentally disagreed with the content of those action plans but because an Azeri airplane had unauthorised landed in the Turkish part of the Cypriot island, what the Cyprus government was considering as an affront of their sovereignty concerns. Commission officials often perceive such political interference as disturbing factors that harm their own efforts in cooperating on technical and less-politicised matters, which in the Commission’s view in the long term will also have a positive impact on the political situations in the countries.

Only after an EU internal agreement those drafts are discussed with the respective third parties. As soon as EU member states seem to agree on a draft action plans, the Commission puts forward this proposal for a Council Decision for a European Community/Union position to be taken in the respective Association (or Partnership and Cooperation) Council. There the EU, its member states as well as the partner country again negotiate and agree on the action plan. This institutional framework and its sub-bodies (like the Association Council or Committee) are also used to follow up on more detailed aspects of the action plan after formal adoption and they monitor the implementation of the agreed objectives (Interview No. 7, COM; European Commission 2004c: 3-4).

The action plans set the priorities of cooperation between the EU and the third country within the next years. They are meant as base that shapes the support of the EU and the distribution of EU external assistance. While also the EMP combined political and economic aspects within one document or also Association agreements integrated economic as well as political aspects, it is for the first time in the EU relationship with the neighbours that a more concrete plan of EU action is designed comprehensively within one document. It is not just that different actors put different parts together within one document title, but all of those aspects were drafted by the Commission and discussed at once.

Table 12 illustrates the priorities put forward in the action plans with Morocco, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia (European Union 2005, 2006a, b, c). Those areas highlighted in grey are normally aspects that are considered dossiers of the second or third pillar. What is important to keep in mind in this regard is that those action plans were not endorsed by the PSC but went directly through COREPER, despite the elements that normally would be considered as CFSP/ESDP topics (Interview No. 16, PR France).

Table 12: Priorities of action plans with selected countries

	Morocco	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Georgia
1	pursuing legislative reform and applying international human rights provisions	Strengthen democratic structures, rule of law , reform judiciary and combat of fraud and corruption	Contribute to peaceful resolution of Nagorno Karabakh	Strengthen rule of law , especially through judicial system reform and rebuilding state institutions;
2	enhanced political dialogue on the CFSP and ESDP and enhanced cooperation on combating terrorism	Strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms	Strengthen democracy (especially fair and transparent elections)	Improve business and investment climate; continue fight against corruption
3	negotiation of agreement on liberalising trade in services	Further economic development, enhance poverty reduction efforts and social cohesion, sustainable development	Strengthen protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and rule of law	Economic development, poverty reduction and promote social cohesion
4	development of FDI conducive climate, growth and sustainable development;	Improve investment climate, strengthening of private sector-led growth	Improve business and investment climate; continue fight against corruption	Enhance cooperation in JHA issues , especially border management
5	cooperation on social policy to reduce poverty and create jobs	Further convergence of economic legislation and administrative practices	Improve functioning of customs	Strengthen regional cooperation
6	support for the education and training system, scientific research and information technologies to boost economic development	Development of energy strategy	Support balanced and sustainable economic development;	Promote peaceful resolution of internal conflicts
7	effective management of migration flows , [...] readmission agreement, short-stay visas	Contribute to peaceful solution of Nagorno Karabakh conflict	Further convergence of economic legislation and administrative practices	Cooperation on Foreign and Security Policy
8	transport sector development; Trans-European Transport Network	Enhanced efforts in regional cooperation	Strengthening EU-Azerbaijan bilateral energy cooperation	Transport and Energy
9	energy sector, and gradual integration into EU's internal electricity market		Enhance JHA cooperation , especially in border management	
10			Strengthen regional cooperation	
Source: European Union 2005, 2006 a, b, c;				

While the action plans are considered the main documents specifying the objectives of EU cooperation with each individual partner countries, agenda-setting and policy specification, of course, also took place at a more general EU level, in terms of specifying the EU interest and future priorities that should be taken into account within the policy framework Council conclusions, European Council Presidency conclusions as well as in Commission Communications. The principles of the ENP of joint ownership, differentiation and added value had for the first time been emphasised in the ENP strategy paper that was published as a Commission Communication (European Commission 2004b). But it was also in follow-up Commission communications that those principles were highlighted and emphasised by the Commission, especially as those fitted well into the way the Commission organised its external assistance and project management towards other regions and countries.

Such emphasis can be found in the yearly ENP progress reports but they figure especially in the 2006 Communication entitled “*Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy*” (European Commission 2006f). This document accompanied the ENP progress report of 2006, and the following quote summarises the purpose of this Communication to the point:

“The Commission has therefore identified a number of areas in which the ENP should be strengthened to ensure its success. In all these areas, this would mean an additional effort for the EU, but this would be outweighed by the political benefits.” (European Commission 2006f: 4)

In total the Commission puts forward seven suggestions of how to strengthen the policy framework towards the neighbours, where in their view the most important issues is the enhancement of the “*economic and trade component*” that should lead to a comprehensive free trade agreement that would also cover agricultural products and fisheries. The latter was repeatedly considered as a no-go for member states like Spain who feared a too strong competition for its own economy from the Mediterranean partner countries. At the same time, it has to be kept in mind that this aspect of a free trade area, of course, falls into the strongest competences of the European Community, and a stronger emphasis would provide more leverage and freedom of design for the Commission.

The second suggestion that the Commission puts forward is the facilitation of mobility and a more flexible management of migration. It states that

“mobility of persons is of the utmost important also for all ENP partners [...] Yet our existing visa policies and practices often impose real difficulties and obstacles to legitimate travel.” (European Commission 2006f: 5)

Member states and the Commission were very keen on selling the idea of readmission agreements to the partner countries, and it was of course visa facilitation that partner countries were mostly emphasising as their interest in this aspect of cooperation. While the assessment of the Commission in this regard seems justified, it also illustrates why member states often suspect the Commission of rather supporting the interests of third countries than those of the

member states. The latter is often used by member states as argument why it is important they keep a tight control regime on the Commission and its mandate for negotiations with third countries. In a similar vein, the third suggestion was to enhance “people-to-people exchange”.

Also priority four of the Commission Communication is interesting for the current analysis as the Commission assess that “*thus far, the ENP has been largely bilateral, between the EU and each partner country*” (European Commission 2006f: 8) and that a more thematic orientation of the ENP would be more appropriate and effective. Taken this idea a step further it could be argued that by having a more thematic and therefore often more technical approach, it would depoliticise some of the relationships, what showed an obstacle to some Commission officials right from the beginning. Last but not least, the Commission suggested strengthening political cooperation to “*address conflicts in the region*” and again here the exact formulation of the Commission tellingly reads:

“The Union makes a very large contribution to assisting refugees and displaced persons – how much better if these resources could be used to promote sustained development.” (European Commission 2006f: 9)

External assistance for refugees and displaced persons is an area that is mostly managed and taken care of by Community instruments and therefore by the Commission, what also illustrates again the viewpoint of the Commission that it actually might be better equipped to contribute to conflict resolution than the rather political and declaratory CFSP measures that member states take care of. The last two suggestions of the Commission put forward in this 2006 document are to strengthen regional cooperation as well as financial cooperation. In regard of the later the Commission notes that

“the funding available to support the ENP reform agenda will still be relatively modest [*after the ENPI set-up*] notwithstanding the ENP’s ambition to address a very comprehensive reform agenda” (European Commission 2006f: 12)

At the same time the Commission keeps its suggestion quite realistic in terms of the financial means available for the ENPI and does not directly ask for an increase of the ENPI allocations, but it highlights the need to use other budget lines flexibly to allow for a successful financial support.

However, as outlined in the first part of this chapter, it is not only the Commission that looked at the ENP and its development, but also the Council and the European Council time and again referred to the ENP in their official documents. The general ENP objectives have been reiterated in Council conclusions and European Council presidency conclusions throughout the years, while it was especially the Dutch presidency in 2004, and the German and Portuguese presidencies in 2007 that framed the need to cooperate with partner countries in relation to the topics of migration and energy. Member states in those documents did not specify in detail what such an intensified focus on migration and energy should look like, but they clearly set the

agenda in terms of pointing at the interest of member states to work more intensely on these issues within the ENP framework. But it was left to the Commission or sometimes it was even the Commission who was explicitly requested by the member states to draft and put forward proposals in this regard.

Interesting for the analysis of agenda-setting and policy-specification is the reaction of the member states to this Communication “*Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy*”. The General Affairs Council took notice of the Commission Communication in December 2006 (General Affairs Council 2006b), and asked the incoming presidencies to assess the Commission’s suggestions and to present a report to the Council. The German presidency took up this request and presented its report in June 2007 to the General Affairs and External Relations Council (Presidency of the Council 2007), which was also taken into account by the Brussels European Council in June 2007 (European Council 2007c). The German Presidency in its report starts off by reiterating the main objectives of the ENP and by referring again to the often emphasised principles of joint ownership, differentiation, and added value. In terms of the objectives there is a clear focus on the “*geopolitical imperative to foster stability*” and on the need to “*channel Europe’s great modernizing power even more efficiently*” (Presidency of the Council 2007: 2). The threat to the EU’s stability because of “*political instability and weak governance*” is pointed out, while just in the next sentence the need to tackle “energy security” and “illegal migration” is emphasised. This emphasis on energy and migration is strongly in line with earlier Council conclusions, and again points at the perception of member states what kind of aspects should be targeted by the ENP. The German presidency report also emphasises the important role of the ENP action plans as tool to map out the reform priorities, and also in regard of the progress made so far the presidency seems to generally agree with the Commission’s assessment. However, the German presidency report reads most differently in regard of the reform steps needed to strengthen the ENP. While the same topics are covered (apart from migration what was the second priority for the Commission and was totally ignored by the member states), the suggestions are also framed differently and presented with a slightly altered argumentation.

The first emphasis of the German presidency report is similar to the Commission’s suggestion on increased economic integration and the improved access to the internal market. The presidency argues that this would lead to a better business climate in the third country, what also positively influences the stability and prosperity of the partner country. The presidency even suggests that this economic integration should also “*feature elements of asymmetry in their [the partner countries] favour, as appropriate*” (Presidency of the Council 2007: 7). So far the suggestion is quite in line with what the Commission proposed, but the presidency goes a step further to emphasise that this would provide an effective incentive for the partner countries to

cooperate. The Commission generally would not disagree with this assessment that economic integration is a salient topic, but while the Commission considers it is a goal in itself that should be achieved, the member states instrumentalise this aspect to be used as incentive for other political goals.

The second suggestion, however, differs significantly from the Commission Communication. The latter had suggested that a more flexible migration regime (e.g. visa liberalisation) would provide another important incentive and is crucial for the success of the ENP. This suggestion was totally ignored by the presidency, i.e. migration was only framed as a problem that the ENP should tackle but it was not even mentioned once as part of the solution as well. The presidency also suggested that the incentive system has to be kept strong, but their suggestion was to “*make better use of the EU’s financial weight*” (Presidency of the Council 2007: 8) by managing the external assistance in a better way and by establishing new facilities to support reform in third countries. Also in the concluding chapter entitled “*the way ahead*” the efficient use of financial incentives and especially the strong application of positive conditionality were emphasised by the presidency (Presidency of the Council 2007: 10)¹⁰¹. In this point the Commission on the one hand and the presidency and the member states on the other hand showed the strongest disagreement. In regard of political conditionality, it has again be kept in mind that Commission officials are often reluctant about the use of political conditionality, not because they do not consider human rights etc as important aspects of reform, but because they considered it often as the unnecessary interference of political interests of single member states that leads to conditionality.

The third suggestion of the presidency targets the increased use of cross-cutting sectoral themes that should lead to reinforced multilateralism. This topic was quite similarly framed to what the Commission was suggesting. However, for the Commission this was only priority four. In a similar vein the fourth presidency suggestion pointed at the need to do more in regard of conflict resolution, what was also highlighted by the Commission as fifth priority. And finally, the last suggestion of the presidency evolved around citizens’ involvement and civil society support, what was also emphasised by the Commission Communication, but there it was the third priority to be taken into account.

This comparison shows that while all actors agreed on the general importance of the ENP and its main underlying principles, there were also different topics that the Commission on the hand and some member states on the other hand perceived as important areas for cooperation. This comparison also shows the potential areas for conflict: both Commission and member states

¹⁰¹ As last point the German presidency report discusses the Black Sea Energy. However, as this framework is not relevant for the research focus of this thesis it is not taken into account.

agreed that migration is a salient topic, but while member states mainly wanted to tackle it is a problem, the Commission also emphasised its positive attributes in terms of creating incentives by setting up more flexible regimes for regular migration.

This way of setting the agenda and specifying policies in terms of EU actors' interaction within the ENP is quite different than the arrangements under the EMP. There, each presidency of the Council was to present its priorities for implementation, but it was explicitly the Council who is responsible for the actual implementation by adopting Common Positions and Common Actions (and where the Commission was only mentioned as interim secretariat and as being responsible together with the Council to ensure coherence). The Commission within the ENP framework is in the position to put its own topics on the agenda, to emphasise the aspects that it considers as crucial for an effective EU foreign policy towards the member states, and time and again it is even asked by the member states to do so.

Closely linked to this task of suggesting and drafting policy proposals are two functions that Hill considers as the main tasks of foreign policy bureaucracies: gathering routine information and assisting in formulating policies. Both tasks investigated below show that the Commission is also more strongly involved in this first stage of the policy process, because member states consider it as the focal point of information and expertise, what leads to the perception that the Commission is the best interlocutor to formulate well-informed drafts. Additionally it has to be kept in mind that the Commission is often perceived as the neutral representative of the European interest that proposes drafts that are acceptable for all member states.

6.2.2. Decision-Making

The decision-making stage of the policy cycle is the one where no significant change in terms of EU actors' interaction occurred at all. All political issues have to be agreed upon by member states unanimously, while those external relations with a more economic, trade or development aspect fall under the Community competence and hence show a stronger involvement of the Commission. Within the latter areas member states, however, still are involved in administrative law making under comitology, when the Commission has to discuss in committees certain implementing acts. And one procedural change as outlined in more detail above is that since the British presidency ENP dossiers do not go first into PSC anymore (except for cases with crisis management components) but are mostly directly passed from working groups to COREPER II.

Member state are surely the most influential actors in this stage, and informally it has also shown that the Commission has to consider specific national "hot issues" when assisting member states in drafting policy proposals. One difficult subject was for a long time, for example closer integration in agriculture and trades in services, what was a very difficult topic for Spain who feared a too strong harm for its own market. But also France and Portugal

showed quite reluctant in regard of liberalizing the trade in agricultural products (Interview No. 13, CS). While the Commission of course tried to take the consideration of these member states into account, officials working in Brussels also remark that older member states like Italy, Spain or France have a certain advantage in this regard, as the Commission over time got really familiar with their national interests, and they had already lots of opportunities to learn how to push their own interests not only during the formal discussion of the draft proposal but already beforehand in the agenda-setting and early drafting stage (Interview No. 18, PR Germany). Once negotiations started with third countries the Commission of course has to keep member states informed and it is the latter who have to approve in the end the outcome of those negotiations, but mostly the Commission only needs a qualified majority, and sometimes the Commission strategically and actively embarks on persuading member states to reach a majority (Interview No. 11, COM).

But apart from those minor issues that changed some informal practices, the decision making stage is still the stage that works exactly as it was envisaged in the treaty provisions.

6.2.3. Implementation

In EU public policy-making, the implementation stage is considered crucial for effective policy-making. Only when policies are also implemented the way that they were intended those earlier taken decisions actually take effect and a political system holds up its legitimacy for existence. However, in the academic analysis of EU foreign policy-making the stage of implementation is often ignored or considered as too technical and unexciting. Hence it is hardly taken into consideration in CFSP research or in a more comprehensive EU foreign policy analysis, while it is mainly in research about the EC external relations where implementation is considered an important topic to measure effectiveness and to observe impact on the ground. This disregard of implementation in EU foreign policy research in a comprehensive manner to a certain extent also emerged from the rather declaratory character of EU foreign policy-making in its early years, when the EU mainly was commenting on outside events but was not in the position to actually do something actively to respond to external threats or crisis.

However, especially in the ENP the importance of the implementation of action plans is repeatedly emphasised. And as all EU external relations and administrative CFSP expenditures¹⁰² are financed through the EU budget „*the Commission has the cheque-book for all policies*” (Interview No. 15, CS) within the ENP framework. Hence, the Commission is the one responsible for administering the budget.

¹⁰² For CFSP the expenditures for civilian crisis management is covered by separately established mechanisms, but missions with military components have to be financed through the member states separately.

In the EU relations with the Southern Caucasus, Mayer concludes in his analysis that the relationship between Commission and Council is the most important aspect in EU policy-making towards this region. However, he also emphasises that it is especially the implementation stage where the Commission has a vast amount of leverage and room for manoeuvre, because it is the one selecting and financing various projects (Mayer 2006: 241). Projects, of course, still have to be confirmed by comitology committees, what would give the TACIS committee of the Council theoretically the choice and power to reject certain projects by qualified majority, but in practice this proved rather unlikely to happen, also because member states sometimes disagree with the Commission but at the same time they also disagree with each other. In Mayer's view, there is a clear asymmetrical distribution of information and resources in technical assistance programming that the Commission knows very well to use. This was also again and again confirmed in interviews with officials. At the same time, the working procedure adapted beforehand especially as outlined in the Common Strategy for the Mediterranean did not ascribe any specific role for the Commission in implementation but emphasised that it is the rotating presidency in the Council with support of the HR who shall implement the EU policy towards the Mediterranean. The Commission is only mentioned as supporting institution, as for example point 34 of the Common Strategy states vaguely that "the Commission shall contribute to the above within its competences" (European Council 2000a). This was also not changed or updated when the Common Strategy was prolonged in 2004 until 2006 (European Council 2004c). This discrepancy between the assumed role of the Commission in the official documents and the actual role of the Commission in implementation towards the Mediterranean as shown in Mayer's research highlights that it is not sufficient to just stick to the formal account of how policies are made but that it is indispensable to have a closer look of what is actually happening on a day-to-day basis.

Considering the clear separation from the past between political CFSP implementation and economic or development-orientated external assistance, the ENP framework definitely challenged this clear separation. Within the ENP, it is the Commission who is in the position to spend money in EU external relations (Interview No. 12, COM), while member states acting within the CFSP framework would either have to frame their action in a way that it is covered by the EU budget, they would have to rely on the Commission to implement their political decision, or they would have to draw up national means to finance their ideas. This situation again provides an incredible advantage for the Commission, as the following quote from a Council Secretariat official illustrates:

"The Commission, they run projects, they have the money. And if you want to do Foreign Policy you need to have money – so they have the money and we do not" (Interview No. 22, CS)

Within the Commission it is mainly the EuropeAid Cooperation Office (DG Aidco) and the delegations who take care of programme implementation while the programmes follow strictly the generally used project cycle management regime as developed by the Commission (European Commission & EuropeAid 2004). DG Relex was responsible for drafting the ENP action plans, but for the more detailed programming documents like country strategy paper or national indicative programme it is DG Aidco who is responsible to draw up these documents. However, these are of course prepared in close inter-service consultation with DG Relex (Interview No. 2, COM).

The annual programming is specified in the Annual Action Programmes which are drawn up in the following manner:¹⁰³ The EC delegations are the first ones to submit draft identification documents to DG Aidco and DG Relex (mostly in January-February). From February to April these documents build the base for internal discussions in the Commission, especially between officials from DG Relex and DG Aidco. End of April the delegations again submit a draft document for the Annual Action Programmes to the two DGs in Brussels, which in the following are discussed internally but also with other DGs and are translated until mid of June. When those drafts of the Annual Action Programme are ready they are submitted by DG Aidco to the ENPI Management Committee where the Commission and the member states are represented to discuss these administrative documents. The ENPI Management Committee normally takes approximately until End of August to finalise those documents, while also the relevant working groups in the European Parliament are consulted. After these processes are successfully completed the Commission normally adopts the annual action programmes by September or October.

Similar to the MEDA programme, also the ENP includes a conditionality clause, although the ENP framework only applies positive conditionality: positive reforms in the partner countries shall be rewarded by additional financial means or a closer cooperation in different areas or access to certain EU agencies or programmes. Human rights and democracy promotion were not incorporated strongly in association agreements but are now part of ENP acquis, as they have been taken into account in the action plans and partner countries know that they are vital interests for the EU. As all bilateral EU cooperation with an ENP partner country is based upon the action plans, close cooperation is only possible when those action plans exist (i.e. only limited cooperation with Algeria, Belarus, Libya and Syria who do not have an action plan).

It, however, again became quite clear in interviews that Commission officials believe in the power of their own instruments to deal with these kind of issues and that no political

¹⁰³ These steps of the annual programming cycle have been taken from the ENPI Website: <http://www.enpi-programming.eu/wcm/en/programming-process/timeline.html> (Last retrieved 22 February 2011).

conditionality is needed for partners who want to cooperate, as they assume that the Commission instrument give them more leverage, than what member states can achieve through political threats. At the same time, the implementation of the Commission in regard of EU external relations has also often been heavily criticised, especially by the development community. Often the strict project cycle management approach that the Commission follows and asks its partners to operate with puts a highly bureaucratic and administrative burden on partner institutions and also makes it easier to handle if certain apriori knowledge about EU project cycle management is in place. Furthermore, the Commission moved from supporting lots of small projects in the last years to increased budget support, i.e. providing co-financing for government spending in conducting certain reforms (European Commission & EuropeAid 2007; European Commission & Development 2008). The criticism for the latter coming from NGOs and the development community is that this kind of assistance often strengthens the not always democratic regimes in the third country or targets administrative reform in terms of good governance, but that those projects not really are felt by the citizens of the third countries at all. The Court of Auditors also repeatedly critically reflects on the use of budget support by the Commission in external assistance, although its critique mainly focuses on the implementation of the measure (Court of Auditors 2010). At the same time, the multitude of budget lines and different ways of supporting projects or governments in neighbouring countries make it quite intransparent and difficult to assess how much money the EU exactly provides for a partner country per year (Maurer & Morgenstern 2009 ; see also academic literature on EU democracy promotion and its challenges, e.g. Schimmelfennig & Scholtz 2009; Pridham 2007; Warkotsch 2008; Freyburg, Lavenex, Schimmelfennig, Skripka & Wetzel 2009; Bicchi 2009; Youngs 2001, 2009; for a detailed analysis of change in neighbouring countries in different policy areas see Weber, Smith & Baun 2007; for another more recent analysis see Withman & Wolff 2010).

What those accounts show is that it is mainly the Commission that administers the money and develops the detailed plans of how to support reforms in third countries. At the same time this refers to a long-standing dispute in EU foreign policy-making about the linkage between economic goals, economic means and political goals. While some Commission officials, especially from technical DGs, have a tendency to support the point of view that political goals should not disturb the progress achieved in creating stability and prosperity, it is of course especially member states who claim that for their political goals they also need the financial support and broader comprehensive assistance:

“We see this very clearly in the Southern Caucasus for instance, where we, the Commission, have funds to support rehabilitation projects in Abchasia and South Ossetia. The Council has the more political role, because they have a special envoy which is appointed, so the political talks are led by the Council, but at the same time the Council is very aware that they lack some basic instruments, that is very well known problem” (Interview No. 8, COM)

Hence, while member states “cannot go it alone”, they consider it as crucial that the Commission backs their ideas up and implements them accordingly also with their own efforts and projects. At the same time, it was not surprisingly a British official who highlighted the positive contributions member states can provide to this process as well:

“And I think it is key now moving forward that the Commission really brings in the member states, so that the member states will get a good spirit as well, so that we kind of work together on these issues. Because I think the Commission will have a very important role in the ENP, but when it comes sometimes to political ache you need the member states, you need people, you need ministers, you need countries to bring through the messages and to back up what the Commission is asking of a country.” (Interview No. 21, PR UK)

This quote clearly illustrates the member states generally do not disagree with what the more technical assistance and external assistance that is generally provided by the Commission, but it also clearly shows that member states consider it as crucial to nevertheless get the political message behind this cooperation across.

Another aspect that was repeatedly emphasised over time and especially so in the 2006 Communication on how to strengthen ENP is the need for more vertical coherence and the use of stronger complementarity between what the EU is doing within the ENP framework and how single EU member states are engaged in certain third countries (European Commission 2006f: 13; also confirmed and emphasised in Interview No. 16, PR France).

6.2.4. Evaluation

The main evaluation tool of the ENP as outlined in the 2004 Strategy are yearly progress reports that are prepared and presented by the Commission¹⁰⁴. The progress in implementing the agreed reform priorities as outlined in the action plans should be constantly monitored in the relevant bodies created by the PCA or Association Agreements, while the Commission should prepare this yearly assessment to provide the other EU institutions a concise overview about the progress made (European Commission 2004b: 3). The idea behind these yearly evaluations was that after some time the action plans should be reviewed in terms of content and if needed, adapted or new contractual relationships offered. The action plans generally are valid for five years, with the exception of the action plans with Israel, Moldova and Ukraine whose action plans were only intended with a validity of three years¹⁰⁵. As already elaborated upon it is the with the set-up of the ENP created unit D1 in DG Relex that is responsible for the publication of

¹⁰⁴ For the collection of all progress reports published so far see Commission Website, ENP Reference Documents at http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm#3 (last retrieved 25 April 2011).

¹⁰⁵ Information also confirmed at Europa-partner Website: [http://circa.europa.eu/irc/opoce/fact_sheets/info/data/relations/framework/article_7239_en.htm](http://circa.europa.eu/irc/opoce/fact_sheets/info/data/rerelations/framework/article_7239_en.htm); The shorter validity of the action plans for Moldova and Ukraine led to the start of negotiations for Association agreements with both partners in 2010 and 2009. During the current Hungarian presidency in the first half of 2011 a strategic review of the ENP was planned to also re-assess the need for new action plans, but this item was moved to the subsequent Polish presidency.

the progress reports that are drafted by country teams, mostly in close cooperation with the EC delegations on the ground. The first progress reports were published in December 2006 (European Commission 2006a, c, e) for a few countries and in rather rudimentary form, while the first set of comprehensive progress reports were published in April 2008, evaluating the ENP in 2007 and being prepared on a yearly base from that moment onwards. The overall assessment summarises in a few pages the main successes and challenges of the ENP in the proceeding year, finishing mostly with a mixed picture that praises that the EU cooperation with its neighbours gets closer but also outlines some important areas where more progress will be needed (see e.g. European Commission 2008d, 2010c). Furthermore, this more general assessment is accompanied by a sectoral report where activities in different policy areas and measures (like Twinning, TAIEX or also integration in EU programmes) are outlined (see e.g. European Commission 2008e, 2010b), and the Commission also prepares individual country progress reports for each partner country. These ENP progress reports are discussed in the different fora in the Council hierarchy and the member states take account of those regularly after their publication in the Council meetings. However, member states are not directly involved in evaluating the ENP, while the set-up of new cooperation frameworks like the Union for the Mediterranean and the Eastern Partnership can be considered as member states' attempts to contribute their evaluations to the EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours.

In a similar vein, the Commission published two Communications in 2006 that can be considered a more general evaluation of the ENP. First, the Communication “*Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy*” (European Commission 2006f), as already discussed in detail above, emphasised the Commission's ideas of how to make the ENP more coherent, more efficient and more effective. Secondly, the European Commission published a second Communication in 2006 entitled “*Europe in the World. Some Practical Proposals for Greater Coherence, Effectiveness and Visibility*” (European Commission 2006b) that not only dealt with the EU relations with the neighbourhood but with EU foreign policy-making in more general terms. The ENP was only mentioned once in this document under the heading “enlargement” stating in a similar vein that the ENP has to be perceived as “*priority of the EU's external relations*” whose “*success depends on the active involvement of a wide range of external and internal policies and offers a stake in the EU's internal market to the countries concerned*” (European Commission 2006b: 3).

This accounts show that the Council and the member states are involved in the evaluation stage in that far as they consider the reports submitted to them, but that it is again the Commission that shapes this stage by its publications and suggestions.

6.3. Conclusion: All New, or just ‘Old Wine in New Wineskins’?

In 2006 Judith Kelley published an article about the ENP in the *Journal of Common Market Studies* that she entitled “new wine in old wineskins”. The main argument of Kelley’s contribution there is that the Commission strategically adapted enlargement policies to expand its foreign policy domain, i.e. that it used “old wineskins” (enlargement instruments) that it filled with new content (EU relations with neighbourhood) instead of the CEEC pre-accession policies. However, when taking the perspective of comparing the EU relations with the neighbours before and after the set-up of the ENP, I would argue that it is even more appropriate to actually challenge with the assessment about “old wine” (same policies, same instruments) in “new wineskins” (new framework).

The thesis started with the question in what respect and to what extent the single ENP framework changed EU policy-making processes towards the neighbours. To be in the position to answer this question, this chapter analysed in detail the role of different EU actors in agenda-setting and policy-specification, in decision-making, in implementation and evaluation in EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours within the ENP framework. The first part showed that it was only the Commission where the set-up of the ENP had led to an inter-institutional adaptation by creating a new subunit for general and sectoral ENP coordination and subsuming the respective regional and country desks within the same unit. Other EU actors did not directly adapt their institutional structure to the ENP.

The ENP was set-up as a framework under which all EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours should take place. However, the empirical analysis showed that an intergovernmental assessment of the ENP would be misleading as it would assume that it is only member states that would shape those policies. However, it is not at all the case that it is only member states that shape the EU policy-making within the ENP framework, as the following two quotes illustrate even more provocatively:

“But frankly, I do not see actions that the Council does on its own, although it has the legal capacity in doing so.” (Interview No. 8, COM)

“I would not say that the Commission is not doing politics. The Commission is doing it in a different way.” (Interview No. 22, CS)

When looking at the narrow stage of decision-making, not many changes happened after the set-up of the ENP, as in political issues it is still the member states that have to decide by unanimity, while for external relations the Commission is in the driving seat, although member states still keep a certain degree of control through comitology.

However, the empirical material and the analysis of the other policy stages showed that a sole reduction of the analysis to decision-making would be misleading and would not capture the full

picture of EU policy-making towards the neighbours. Especially the Commission's role is not so much categorised by the formal decision-making power but it plays a crucial role in supporting, assisting and shaping member states' decisions, especially in the policy-specification and implementation stages.

In agenda-setting and policy-specification the main change within the ENP framework is clearly the drawing up of the one document of the action plan that outlines the reform priorities for the respective partner country, encompassing political, economic and cultural topics. While there is still a differentiation in terms of political issues being discussed in more detail by the member states, the Council Secretariat and the EUSR staff, it provides an invaluable advantage for the Commission to be the "master" of the text right from the beginning and also having prepared the Country papers that were used as a first analysis for needed reforms. The member states control the Commission carefully, especially when they get suspicious, but generally it is the task of the Commission to draw all the different amendments and comments together and negotiate the draft with the third country. The role of the European Council in this stage is mostly an affirmative one, inviting other actors to follow-up on the progress already achieved.

In this regard, the new ENP framework clearly differs from the EU policies towards the neighbours that had been established beforehand. Within the EMP the Commission associated and asked to contribute within its competences, but the main task of setting the agenda and drawing up specific work programmes was with the member states in the Council, and especially with the rotating presidency supported by the HR. Towards the Southern Caucasus, the Commission had a stronger impact in regard of implementation, but as those relations were younger and also more politicised, the agenda-setting role of the Council was traditionally more prominent. Therefore these results show that in this stage of agenda-setting and policy specification the ENP clearly shifted the tasks towards the Commission in terms of drafting and assisting in policy formulation, especially as the Commission is considered as the best-situated and best-suited actor. Commission officials are able to gather expertise and valuable information through their close link with the EC delegations, and furthermore the geographical desk officers in DG Relex have the possibility to get support from sectoral units within DG Relex or from other DGs (Trade, Agriculture etc.) that can provide their technical expertise.

The member states, as the deciding authorities, have the difficulty during these negotiations that *first*, it is impossible for them to look at every point and to assess the impact in detail, and that *secondly*, at this point of time the member states can only agree or disagree to the drafts, but they can not put forward comprehensive drafts themselves anymore. Furthermore, the Commission sometimes acts in a very strategic way to achieve acceptance of their proposed policies, especially if only a qualitative majority with the member states is needed during the comitology stage.

After the formal decision-making, it is the implementation stage where the Commission fulfils a very important role, that should not be reduced to economic and development aspects only. It is the Commission who is responsible for the implementation of the ENP action plans and the Association Agreements (or Cooperation and Partnership Agreements for the Southern Caucasus), administering the EU external assistance and other financial resources for the EU cooperation with the neighbours.

While the ENP shows certain features of EU policy-making that have already been in place beforehand, there was a clear adaptation of task allocation within the ENP framework. The next chapter will investigate in more detail the second research question of this thesis and look at the motivations behind this change, by answering the questions of why member states allow for a stronger involvement of other actors like the Commission, and why on the other hand the European Commission pushed for a stronger involvement.

Chapter 7: Explaining change in EU Actors' Tasks and Interactions within the ENP

The thesis so far showed the development of the ENP, and compared the tasks and roles of the EU actors in different policy stages within the ENP framework with the situation before the set-up of the ENP. This comparison has been done by drawing on and tracing the different ideas within the various EU documents and by showing the development over time, especially by investigating the EU foreign policy-making towards Morocco and Georgia. This analysis so far showed what changed in the task distribution and interaction of EU actors with the set-up of the ENP.

This chapter 7 moves its attention to the factors that explain the way that this change of EU actors' task allocation and interaction has taken place. It therefore directly relates to the second research question of this thesis about what factors explain the changes in interactions of actors in EU foreign policy making. After careful consideration it shows that his main question inherits two different aspects that are worth to be differentiated for the depth of the empirical analysis: first, in what manner this change has taken place, but secondly also why the action of and the interaction between EU actors has changed?

Foreign policy is perceived as the most sensible area to national sovereignty, and the pillar-structure that was introduced with the Maastricht Treaty is often argued to clearly show this reluctance of Member States to allow for a closer cooperation in this area at EU level (Corbett 1992). For some years scholars and practitioners have even argued that a re-intergovernmentalisation of EU policy-making is taking place, implying that instead of more integration we can observe a stronger involvement of member states and that therefore more cooperation instead of integration is taking place. These conclusions rest on the observation that especially the CFSP as well as the ESDP increased in activity and salience and that both policy areas became more prominent, because member states engage more intensely in the coordination of their foreign policies. But why would Member States then allow for the increased involvement of the Commission in foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood, as it was observed in the previous chapter? Did they not perceive the ENP as foreign policy, or quite on the contrary, did they have intentional reasons to allow for this change? These are the questions that this chapter is looking at in more detail.

The theoretical framework of this thesis (see chapter 3, p. 59 ff) specifies six different assumptions derived from the academic literature that might help to explain why the change in interactions in the ENP occurred. In the foreign policy analysis literature and especially in the bureaucratic politics approach scholars differentiate between reflexive goals and purposive goals. Reflexive goals are various organisational interests in terms of increasing competences or (financial) means, while purposive goals are targeted towards a policy demand and the idea of

how a specific policy should look like. In regard of the latter, actors recognize that they have to adapt their form of interaction to a more effective way of policy-making, what might be triggered by two different ways of reasoning: On the one hand an increased functional linkage of different policy areas might also ask for a more integrated approach at EU level (Christiansen, Jørgensen & Wiener 2001: 762; Stetter 2004: 720-721), while on the other hand a new policy demand might occur because of rational cost/benefit calculations or efficiency reasons. Following this logic member states intentionally decide to involve supranational actors for more efficient policy-making while applying a strict control mechanism, because the quantity and complexity of foreign policy output on EU level has grown and they lack the ability to pursue their policy ideas on their own.

In contrast to these intentional assumptions, some scholars argue that member states lack information and follow a bounded rationality, implying that at the point of time when they set up a new institution or framework, they are not totally aware of the consequences that this decision will have in the future. If this way of reasoning is applicable to the ENP it can be assumed that the ENP set-up was for example closely linked to the enlargement process, and that member states were not aware of what they actually agreed to when they set-up the ENP.

Following these different theoretical assumptions, this thesis assumed at the outset that the process of change varied between more conflictual and more consensual stages of interaction over time. Change and especially institutional change always asks for adaptations, and considering that the EU actors first have to get acquainted to the new situation and the newly established framework, it seems likely that at the beginning the relationships proved more conflictual. Furthermore, it is interesting to investigate to what extent these conflictual stages have been overcome over time and by what means. The theoretical framework of this thesis pointed out two factors that might have contributed to a smoothing out of potential conflicts over time: the process of socialisation and learning over time (assumption 3) as well as the available communication channels (assumption 4) as the main process that might explain the manner in which the change of roles and interactions took place after the set-up of the ENP.

Furthermore, it is assumed that the intentional factors of bureaucratic interest (assumption 1) and policy interest (assumption 2) as intentional factors, as well as bargaining advantages (assumption 5) and incomplete contracting (assumption 6) as situational factors might have impacted on the EU actors' choice to contribute to the process of change.

It must also be acknowledged here that motivations and underlying interests that shape actors behaviour are a complex and delicate unit of analysis for social scientists. Motivations can not be traced directly, and the reasons actors often name as source for their decisions do not have to be the real incentives and driving forces of their chosen action, but might represent their

interpretation of socially and politically acceptable reasoning. Hence, while this thesis does not claim to be able to trace all highlighted factors in the actors' motivations over time within the whole of the ENP and in its entirety, it attempts to analyse the collected evidence in a structured and critical manner to be at least able to identify tendencies that hint towards the explanatory power of the different factors. This implies that while the causal relationship between the identified factors and the process of change can not be shown in its entirety, the critical analysis and careful triangulation of empirical material allow at least for the conclusion which factors are more likely to have played a strong role and which factors do not show any explanatory power in regard of the analysed processes at all. This is done mainly by interpreting and analysing the expert interviews that have been conducted in Brussels and by taking into account other secondary analyses that elaborated upon potential motives for change. After careful triangulation of data gained through these expert interviews, certain tendencies and explanations can be considered as having had a stronger impact on EU actors' behaviour than others.

Last but not least, it has to be taken into account, that the main formal decision-making power to change the set-up of how the EU conducts its policies towards the neighbours has been and still is with the member states. This provides them with a strong position in pushing for their motivations and interests in changing the interaction, but at the same time we must not ignore the impact that the Commission might have, as the Commission of course might have had opportunities to frame certain suggestions and drafts in a way that favour its own idea of how the EU relationship with the neighbours should look like.

7.1. From Conflict to Consensus: Adapting to Change over Time?

When the ENP was set-up in 2003, it took quite some time before it was fully up and running. The first officials had been moved from DG Enlargement to the new ENP units in DG Relex, but were still working on enlargement dossiers until the new member states became EU members in 2004. It took some time until the financial instrument, the ENPI was set-up, and even in 2006 officials in different institutions emphasised that the ENP is still in flux and that the exact division of labour between different EU actors is still not fully settled (Interview No. 21, PR UK). It is not surprising that EU actors needed some time to adapt and find their place within the ENP framework, although the timeframe of two years after the adoption of the ENP strategy seems quite a long time for the new framework still not to be settled totally, especially as the first evaluations were already taking place in 2006.

A Commission official reported, for example, that at the beginning EU actors involved in ENP acted very cautiously, because the ENP was clearly perceived as foreign policy-making and something related to CFSP and hence to the intergovernmental mode of policy-making. This perception changed only slowly towards recognising that the Commission also has an important

role to play in comprehensive security issues (Interview No. 5, COM). This shift in perception within the ENP also coincided with the set-up of an own unit in DG Relex that was dealing with security issues (directorate A in DG Relex). While this new directorate was not directly linked to the ENP units, it of course impacted on the general atmosphere between Commission and other actors that developed during these months. Several interviewees confirmed that there is indeed institutional rivalry between different actors, especially between the Council and the Commission. And this rivalry is especially visible when it comes down to security issues (Interview No. 5, COM), but at the same time it should be taken into consideration that even within the various institutions fierce fights between different subunits had been taken place at this point in time (Interview No. 11, COM).

All actors involved in the ENP, however, are reported to have followed in their daily interaction a pragmatic approach of cooperation, and it was still considered to be work in progress to clearly define the roles and tasks of all actors involved (Interview No. 5, COM). Similar experiences were also reported from Commission officials of the ENP units, as the following quote points to some conflictual situations in the first months of the ENP:

“In general it has to be noted, that we had quite some confrontations with the Council at the beginning – but these were mainly problems at the beginning of a new policy.” (Interview No. 7, COM)

The Council learnt quickly to appreciate the role of the Commission in supporting long-term reform processes, but a certain degree of jealousy in the areas of CFSP naturally remained. But earlier strategy papers of the Council, like the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean, had shown to everyone involved that such initiatives have no effect at all if they do not involve and have the support of the Commission (Interview No. 7, COM). From the Commission side, this was one of the reasons named why the cooperation improved over the years. This change in attitude also shows in the fact that at some point the Council and the Council Secretariat even started to ask for expertise from the Commission. Since the Amsterdam Treaty, the High Representative Solana had constantly worked on building a huge team around him that despite its size had to realise that “*they can not do everything alone*” (Interview No. 7, COM). Several times they tried to draft their own policy papers and suggestions, in which they also clearly interfered in first pillar competences. However, their attempts failed and were not really successful in practice, as for example a draft paper on a border assistance mission to Israel showed. This project failed miserably because it was neither effective nor coherent without the Commission’s involvement (Interview No. 7, COM). According to Commission officials, this kind of experience showed to all involved actors that such behaviour is rather unproductive and should be avoided in the future conduct of EU foreign policy-making (Interview No. 7, COM).

In the case of the EU relations with Georgia, problems in organising the interaction between EU actors just occurred during the negotiations about the role of the Special Representative for the Southern Caucasus (EURS) in 2003, but those turf-battles at the beginning of the ENP could be soon overcome, as the following quote illustrates tellingly:

“I would be lying if I would say that at the beginning there was no confusion and some sort of conflict. Everybody tries to defend its own camp, and so when we were discussing the mandate of the EU special representative we had the Commission being very careful to be sure that the EURS well not impede on their competences. [...] Now this is working well, also as a result of the concrete people involved. It has to do with the personalities a lot.” (Interview No. 22, CS)

In the case of Georgia in 2003, the Council, the Commission and the team of the Special representative after a short period of customising appreciate their mutual and consensual interaction very positively. Repeatedly the involved actors emphasized that they have a very pragmatic share of work and that they work as a team (Interview No. 5, COM; Interview No. 14, CS; Interview No. 22, CS; Interview No. 19, COM).

This might lead to the misconception that the increasing involvement of the Commission did not create any problems after the first starting months, but especially the member states have sometimes certain concerns about the Commission’s behaviour when they have the impression that the Commission tries to hide information or that they loose the control over the Commission, as will be shown later on especially in the EU relationship with Morocco. These accounts, however, also highlight the importance of two factors that have not been taken into account explicitly in the theoretical framework: it is crucial to have a good interaction in terms of communication, building trust and establishing a good working relationship with the people of the different institutions, what mostly comes down to personal relationships. Additionally, it is not always so much what different actors do, but how others perceive them and their motivations.

Communication channels are important to coordinate and work together, but what is surprising in regard of the empirical evidence is that the smooth working between different EU actors does not so much follow the logic of socialisation that takes place automatically as soon as actors have regular contact, but that successful communication mostly comes down to personalities of the respective officials and their perceptions. It was surprising to experience in interviews that the interaction of EU actors towards the Southern Caucasus was reported to be generally smoother and less conflictual than the cooperation between EU actors towards Morocco. This was surprising in that far as in the EU policy-making towards the Southern Caucasus a higher variety and number of actors is involved, the content is more politically salient because it also covers crisis management issues, and the EU policy is younger and not institutionalised on a very high level. However, EU actors involved in shaping the EU policy towards the Southern Caucasus were talking highly appreciative about each other, seem to have good and close

communication channels, know each other well and generally work closely together in a consensus seeking and friendly atmosphere. The EU policy-making with Morocco, on the other hand, encompasses more technical elements, is well institutionalised and follows a long tradition over time. Nevertheless it was the latter where conflicts between EU actors occurred, especially between member states and the specific country desk officers in DG Relex. It showed that these conflictual situations occurred because of various personalities in the responsible Commission unit that displayed a very strong confidence and conviction of their own ideas rather than showing a strong sense of cooperation with the member states (Interview No. 18, PR Germany; Interview No. 17, PR France). Furthermore, the member states had to recall proposals from this unit to third countries several times, as these drafts clearly exceeded the mandate of the Commission and were not in the interest of the member states (Interview No. 18, PR Germany). Hence, it was observable in the investigated cases of Morocco and Georgia that the coordination of and with other actors is highly depend on the respective personalities in charge. Representatives from the Council Secretariat as well as from the member states complained about the bad cooperation with some Commission officials in unit F of DG Relex, as they often were not informed in an appropriate way. The member states ascribe these problems not generally to the Commission but specifically to this unit. In the Southern Caucasus unit this kind of problems did not occur at all, and the Council, the Commission as well as the team of the special representative emphasized their team-like way of cooperating. The EU approach towards the Southern Caucasus must not directly be compared to the Southern dimension, but this observation indicates that personal contacts and the attitude of the individual officials towards cooperation with other institutions play a significant role (Interview No. 5, COM; Interview No. 14, CS; Interview No. 22, CS).

This leads to the consideration of the first aspect that was not taken explicitly into account in the theoretical framework: persons matter. Personal relationships matter and can shape the atmosphere in which EU foreign policy-making is conducted in a positive manner, as the following two quotes illustrate:

“It depends also on the personal relationship. I have a very good relationship with some Commission colleagues, with others we do not exchange so much information, as they want to keep their staff or we might disagree on certain approaches.” (Interview No. 15, CS)

“I mean contact is good – I hope the others would confirm that - even on Maghreb/Mashreq where debate can get heated on issues like the MEPP. I think we have quite personal relationships because of the fact that we meet twice a week, through also a range of social contacts, lunches and stuff like that. We know each other quite well which makes a huge difference because it is very easy to get annoyed with each other” (Interview No. 21, PR UK)

The first quote shows that positive personal relationships can of course not be established with everyone involved but are selective, and that also the interpretation of the contact partner in terms of policy content might impede on these personal relationships, especially when we

consider later that some Commission units have quite a different approach to drive development forward in partner countries than member states. The second quote refers mainly to the relationship between member states in the Council hierarchy and it pinpoints to the idea that regular contact facilitates a good atmosphere to smooth out conflicts, but that of course such personal relationships do not re-shape interests in a way that there are no conflicts.

Furthermore, it is not only personalities but to a huge degree it is perceptions of different actors towards each other that seem highly crucial for the mode of EU actors' interaction. This second aspect that was rather implied than explicitly developed in the theoretical framework follows a more constructivist perception, arguing that, for example, the member states will not only sanction the Commission if the latter goes to far, but emphasising that the member states will already sanction the Commission when they *perceive* that the Commission impedes on their competences and national interest. The impression that certain behaviour leaves with member states can often cause even ill-founded mistrust between the interacting institutions, and once mistrust emerged it is rather difficult to get it out of the involved actors' minds again, as the following quote illustrates:

"I think strengthened coordination and dialogue is extremely important, and I think the Commission has to be careful that the member states do not feel like it tries to bring everything through. Because that would lead to break down in cooperation and a suspicion on the minds - Trust is the key, and suspicion and feelings have to get balanced and if not, if that is not the reality, if you have got the feeling. Because a lot is about impression and so on; I mean that could project on the tracks very, very quickly." (Interview No. 21, PR UK)

It also showed in other interviews that it is not so much about the actual doings of the Commission, but if the member states get the impression that the Commission plays on its information advantage or tries to hide something from member states, they become suspicious and their attitude turns more conflictual, even if nothing happened yet or it was just a matter of miscommunication or misinterpretation (Interview No. 16, PR France; Interview No. 17, PR France).

This thesis had started out by formulating two assumptions about the way the change might be shaped and positively influenced by two factors: First, it was assumed that the longer actors are able to adapt and the longer they experience their new roles, the better the interaction will become over time (assumption 3 about the time factor). Secondly, a communication-factor was assumed to impact on the mode of change, assuming that the more the institutional set-up would ask and allow for direct contact between the actors and the exchange of their opinions, the more likely it would be that a consensual form of interaction would emerge over time (assumption 4).

Both assumptions can be verified to a certain extent though not in their entity and can profit from a slight adaptation. The factor of time proved surely crucial to lead from a more conflictual relationship to a more consensual interaction, especially as over time the different actors learn to

work within their prescribed roles and as they finish defining their limits. However, it was not observable that involved EU actors socialise in a constructivist sense in that far as they would adapt their interests and positions through regular interaction that might converge at some point. It was rather a more rational approach to learning that could be observed: EU actors learn to use their roles in a way so that they do not conflict constantly with other actors' role perceptions and that it allows for an efficient way of policy-making¹⁰⁶. It seems likely that exactly this kind of process also took place within the ENP framework, although a more specific follow up study on the exact mechanisms would be necessary to highlight the exact processes that have taken place.

Also the second assumption (assumption 4 from the theoretical framework) pointed in the right direction and shows that communication channels are important elements to consider in this change of interactions within the ENP, but again the detailed factors proved slightly different than assumed. The empirics showed that it is personal relationships and perceptions within this communication channels that matter the most. Just because actors have the possibility to exchange their views, opinions and arguments for positions does not automatically lead from a conflictual to a consensual relationship, as the assumption formulated. But regular contact and efficient communication allows for the establishment of a good working environment and for a getting to know of the different actors. On these grounds personal relationships can be build that in a next step facilitate a smooth form of interaction. Hence, communication channels seem necessary prerequisites for such personal relationships to emerge, but they are not sufficient to establish a good and friendly working environment. Furthermore, communication channels might be in place, but if the respective actors mistrust each other (as was the case between the member states and the desk officer for Morocco in DG Relex) these channels alone are not able to contribute to a more consensual relationship. The latter also emphasises the need to take into account that it is not the action of different actors that matter, but that perceptions about certain situations are more important to take into account when looking for conflictual situations. Hence, while both assumptions point in the right direction and can be partly verified, they have to be adapted in that far that they take into account the importance of personalities and the salience of perceptions instead of actual events and behaviour.

7.2. Explanations for changing Roles and Interaction within the ENP

Next to these two procedural factors four factors have been identified in the theoretical framework that could explain why the ENP framework was set-up in the first place and why the interaction changed. The factors of bureaucratic interest and of policy interest would assume an

¹⁰⁶ Similar adaptations and rational learning processes were observed in the Council CFSP working groups where academics termed this way of learning as "strategic socialisation" (Juncos & Pomorska 2006).

intentional change that was deliberately asked for by the involved actors, implying that they changed the interaction because it would bring them more political power (e.g. in terms of competences, financial means, policy steering capabilities) or because they considered a certain functional need to have a coherent framework or follow a specific policy that could not be achieved successfully within the prior existing frameworks. On the other hand the factor of bargaining advantage and incomplete contracting are situational factors that might enable or restrain change in a certain direction but can not be considered as active factors that motivate actors' behaviour.

When asking actors why the ENP framework was set-up and why the interaction of the involved EU actors was adapted it became quite clear that this was an intentional move. Especially member states acknowledge that the enlargement and the need for a stronger cooperation with neighbouring third countries, as in the area of migration and energy, asked for a new framework that would allow for more comprehensive and stronger ties. In a similar vein, all actors highlighted the need to cooperate in an even stronger cross-pillar mode and to adapt the interaction in a way that would allow for the most effective policy output. It is especially worth to mention that it was also the member states and officials from the Council Secretariat that emphasised the need to get the Commission more involved, as otherwise this framework might not work or member states might not be in the position to use the framework to achieve their objectives. Generally, most of the reasoning that was provided for to explain this move can be structured around three tasks that interestingly enough Christopher Hill identified as core tasks of national foreign policy bureaucracies (Hill 2003: 77): routine information gathering, assistance in formulating policies, and providing coherence over time. The use of those categories shall not imply that the Commission has to be considered acting like a national foreign policy bureaucracy, because this would need a more careful consideration and elaboration and a different research design. But this categorisation is used in the next parts to structure what reasons member states were putting forward to explain their decision to allow for such a strong involvement of other actors. At the same time, these accounts also show that member states also tried to stay in control and that there were also other constraints and incentives at work that added to the conviction of having to create a more efficient policy framework with the ENP.

7.2.1. Routine Information Gathering

The ENP framework brings together 27 EU member states and 16 partner countries in the neighbourhood. It encompasses all different kind of policy areas that the EU embarks upon in their cooperation with the partner countries and is based on a complex set of institutional structures. The complexity and diversity that is brought together within the ENP framework also

puts a certain pressure and constrain on actors involved to always be up to date and to provide expertise in all the different aspects covered by the ENP. The gathering of information, processing of the collected data and application of this gained knowledge and expertise for policy formulation therefore is more difficult to achieve than in more simple frameworks, like for example the EMP had provided for with its clearly separated baskets.

Within the ENP it is the most important task of DG Relex to collect and provide information to assess and monitor in a very detailed manner the implementation of the association agreements and of the ENP action plans (Interview No. 10, COM). The country desk officers are the focal points that can rely on the EC delegations' expertise about the on-site situation as well as on the more technical assistance of the sectoral ENP units and of other DGs (Interview No. 7, COM; Interview No. 8, COM). And although the member states and the Council Secretariat closely observe the involvement of the Commission, they view the role of the Commission in gathering information very positively and acknowledge that it fulfils a very important task that in the existing multi-level governance system of the EU can only be sufficiently performed by the Commission (Interview No. 21, PR UK). Nevertheless, the member states become sometimes also quite jealous of the advantages that the Commission has at its disposal (Interview No. 13, CS), especially when they get the feeling that the Commission relies on its information-advantage:

“Vis-à-vis the working groups they [*Commission officials*] explain certain positions on a punctual basis but not regularly, and concerning information it depends – when they only need majority vote they often wait quite long and give the proposals to the member states just some days before the decision – so that they do not have time to look at the proposals in exact details and find points they would disagree with. For us it is not possible to look at every point in detail, especially when there should be a joint paper afterwards. It is a game.” (Interview No. 17, PR France)

Officials of other member states also confirm this problem, although they emphasize that this cannot be generalized to the Commission per se, as the delivery of information depends very much on the personal attitude of the civil servant whom they are working with (Interview No. 18, PR Germany). Additionally, after some problems at the start of the ENP member states also developed their own ways of getting information about what is discussed within the Commission and within other fora. One British representative, for example, emphasised the need to be pro-active in terms of seeking information from the Commission:

“You have got to just hang out in the Commission basically, set up meetings, have special working groups and so on. You just have to get tight in.” (Interview No. 21, PR UK)

But not always the way of seeking information is done in such a subtle and positive approach, and member states also from time to time have to retort to more drastic measures to be heard by the Commission in their plea for more information:

“Sometimes head of units do not want to answer questions of member states – like the Italian [*country desk officer*] during ENPI negotiations – so what we did, we [*the member states*] called his boss, his head of unit, the deputy director-general, the director-general and we drowned them in non-papers.” (Interview No. 18, PR Germany)

Furthermore, it was repeatedly emphasised from different actors that the sharing of information is not a problem anymore during the negotiations with third countries, as all involved actors are aware of the importance to have a common standpoint vis-à-vis third parties (e.g. Interview No. 15, CS). Officially, also the Commission highlighted the need to improve the exchange of information with the Council and the member states as a very important asset to strengthen the role of the EU as foreign policy actor (European Commission 2006b: 7-8).

In regard of collecting information, especially about the situations in third countries, it is the EC delegations that are of major importance and provide an important source for the Commission. Some member states, especially the bigger ones and those with special links to certain countries, of course, have mostly their own well-equipped embassies in those countries that provide this kind of information, but compared to the whole of EU member states the EC delegations surely support the Commission in being perceived as the focal point and expert. At the same time, even representatives of bigger member states appreciate the role of the Commission on the ground, because it focuses on traditionally more technical and often more trade related aspects than the more politicised national embassies. This is tellingly illustrated by the following quote:

“I think it is quite a good thing. I think it is quite useful because it goes back to what I said: you need some technical experience and time to devote to sit down really to know the country inside out. And know the technical issues. If you think at Rabat where the Commission delegation is – they have a real strong presence and they have technical experts who can look at things, at issues that we would traditionally not look at in great depth and they make recommendations on that. And I think that it is an extremely useful starting point, because you need that. You need to know where you are before you start your judgements. And you need that detailed technical stuff that the Commission provides.” (Interview No. 21, PR UK)

The importance of the EC delegations was also a salient topic during the negotiations of the constitutional draft treaty and the Lisbon treaty respectively. By upgrading EC delegations to EU delegations, the Council Secretariat as well as the member states expected that through the set-up of an External Action Service they would be able to “*use this huge potential*” of the EC delegations more directly (Interview No. 15, CS). The Commission, of course, viewed this development more sceptical, as it feared losing an important source of power vis-à-vis the other actors.

These accounts show that generally it was assessed as crucial to install the Commission as main focal point to gather information within the ENP framework. Again the personal relationship between member states representatives and specific Commission officials had been highlighted as an important factor shaping the flow of information. Furthermore, member states get suspicious, if they get the impression that the Commission is playing on its information

advantage. On the other hand, the Commission of course is aware of its advantage in terms of expertise and information vis-à-vis the member states, and sometimes it uses this advantage for its own purposes.

Concluding it can be assessed that in terms of gathering information the policy-factor showed strongest, especially when it is read in regard of increasing efficiency and effectiveness, i.e. that installing the Commission as focal point for information gathering is the most efficient way of sharing information and it allows for the most efficient information flow. To a certain extent it can also be argued that there was a functional need to have the Commission as focal point, as it clearly had shown beforehand that member states would not be able to gather, process and analyse this bulk of information themselves, while at the same time it was clear that these information gathering would be necessary to make the ENP work.

7.2.2. Assistance in formulating Policies

Apart from information gathering and formulating its own ideas for future policies, Hill's categorisation of traditional roles of foreign policy bureaucracies highlights an important feature that proved as important in foreign policy-making and can also be observed at EU level: the Commission might not be always successful and allowed to formulate its own policy ideas, but surely it fulfils an important role in supporting member states in formulating policies. This means that because EU foreign policy incorporates intergovernmental features, it is not the Commission itself who just formulates these policies. But drafting documents that serve as starting point for member states' deliberations provide it with an important role in EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood - even if in the end other actors might have the sole competence to decide.

In 2004 and 2005, the Commission prepared the country reports, which highlighted the most needed reforms in the partner countries and were the starting point for further policy developments. It drafted the more detailed and very technical ENP action plans, which afterwards were discussed with the member states (Interview No. 14, CS). And even if member states still add certain political items later on or suggest certain changes, it is always an advantage to put forward a draft that can only be altered but not totally dismissed by other stakeholders. In putting forward drafts the Commission can also rely on the multitude and diversity of member states, because there might be one or a few that oppose certain paragraphs or suggestions, but generally the Commission's proposals should at least have the support of the majority of member states. In negotiations those member states opposing can then try still to get certain concessions and to get certain alterations accepted, but they are not really able to get rid of the proposal in total to put forward their own ideas (Interview No. 17, PR France). Furthermore, member states as the deciding authorities have the difficulty that during this later

involvement it is impossible for them to look at every point and to assess the impact in detail (Interview No. 17, PR France). According to the experience of this latter French official, the Commission sometimes also acts in a very strategic way to achieve acceptance of their proposed policies, especially if only a qualitative majority is needed during the comitology stage. Through tactically linking different issues (for example agriculture and the free movement of workers) in one discussion it “*tries to persuade the member states*” (Interview No. 11, COM). Therefore the member states sometimes have the feeling that the huge power of drafting proposals “*culminates in a rule of the Commission*” (Interview No. 16, PR France) in the framework of the ENP. Not all member states formulate it in a such rigorous way, but they agree that the power of the Commission increased steadily during the last years (Interview No. 13, CS; Interview No. 18, PR Germany).

If the member states have such trouble in controlling the Commission and show quite a lot of incidents with strong mistrust, why did they allow for an involvement of the Commission in the first place? Considering the situational factors we might argue that it was an intended consequence of prior institutional change, i.e. that when the Member States adopted the ENP framework they were not aware of the kind of political power shift that this would lead to. Yet this argumentation seems rather illogical, as it is still the member states that decide, and they would within the ENP framework formally still be in the position to ignore the Commission’s proposals and drafts. In a similar vein also the second situational factor of a potential bargaining advantage does not show any explanatory power in this case, because it was the member states who had a much stronger position in setting-up the ENP and it would not seem to follow a rational logic that they install a system that would harm their own interests and make them loose control over the Commission.

So why did and do member states still allow the Commission to put forward drafts or even more precisely, why do they even ask the Commission to put forward drafts within the ENP time and again, if they experienced that sometimes that makes them worse off in the inter-institutional bargaining system? To be able to explain this situation, we have to turn to one of intentional factors that have been assumed to explain why member states agreed to this change in actors’ interaction: the policy interest factor. It became quite apparent when the ENP was set-up that the member states perceived a strong need to create a more comprehensive and efficient framework to deal with the new neighbours at its borders. This functional need was also shared by the Commission, in that far as all actors involved emphasised as main ENP objective the need to create stability and security in the EU’s neighbourhood, as the following examples illustrates:

“Inter-institutional fights are sometimes even stronger than the fights between institutions. However, in terms of content there is no discussion – they follow the same objective.”
(Interview No. 11, COM)

This observation was also confirmed by Mayer's analysis of the EU policy towards the Southern Caucasus, where he concludes that the EU relations with the Southern Caucasus countries might be driven and motivated by different interests and preferences, but that those interests not contradict each other but rather create a multi-faceted picture (Mayer 2006: 233). Hence, the policy interest factor explains what happened in that far as it assumes that all involved EU actors agreed on the main common objective of the ENP framework, and that they perceive the need to have this framework and the respective task allocation to be able to achieve this objective.

At the same time, this policy interest factor, however, can even be interpreted even stronger to assume that the actors were convinced that a certain division of labour would also increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the ENP framework in achieving security, stability and prosperity at the EU borders. Again, this was also an aspect that Mayer confirmed in his study on the EU-Southern Caucasus relations, as he argues that the Commission was mandated by the Council to implement TACIS and the financial aspects, because it would have been more expensive and too complicated to establish another institutional framework in which these tasks could have been performed successfully. He argues, therefore, that although the Commission was not the preferred choice of the Council in absolute terms, it was in relation to the costs and under considering all other factors the only practical choice that was possible (Mayer 2006: 234).

At the same time, it also showed that the Commission repeatedly frames its expertise in a way that emphasises its positive impact on similar process like they can be expected to take place in the ENP framework. The Commission considers the accession process of the 2004 enlargement as the most successful EU foreign policy, and argues that it showed there convincingly that it is able to transfer EU rules, norms and stabilise third countries. Hence, by using the arguments of the successful 2004 enlargement round, the Commission pushes for more room of manoeuvring in the political steering of day-to-day foreign policy making towards the neighbourhood, i.e. it pushes for more bureaucratic influence in order to achieve the commonly accepted goal of creating stability and security in the neighbourhood.

Apart from the general agreement of all involved actors that the main objective of the ENP is to create stability and security for the EU by creating a stable and prosperous neighbourhood, all involved actors indeed also emphasize that the Commission is doing a very important job that could not be done by the MS or the Council alone (Interview No. 21, PR UK):

"I think this is very useful and that is what the EU is very good at. Because we can very often talk in very vague terms about reform, we need this, we need that country to do that. We need to break that down and go into real depth, which I think the Commission is in particular good at. You know what the benchmarks in sanitary affairs are that they need to meet to access the EU market? I mean these things are quite technical – or at least it seems so – but they are highly important in terms of trade access which can make a real difference." (Interview No. 21, PR UK)

All actors agree on the main ENP objective and that it is necessary for an efficient ENP framework to have the Commission closely involved, as it is also emphasised in the European Security Strategy (European Council 2008: 8; see also Ferrero-Waldner 2006: 2; for a scientific discussion see Christiansen, Petito & Tonra 2000: 390-391), but it also becomes visible time and again that sometimes different perceptions and convictions exist about how this stable environment shall be reached, i.e. what instruments and mechanisms should best be used to achieve stability and prosperity in the neighbourhood. The EU actors not always agree on what instruments and processes they assume most efficient and effective to achieve the agreed goal, and this controversy the traditional divide between technical approach and political approach becomes apparent. Some actors argue that technical cooperation for development in a third country should also follow political objectives, while others emphasise that technical cooperation for development is a goal in itself that should not be hampered by political considerations. These cleavages do not only show between the Commission and the Member States, but often also different approaches exist between member states and different perceptions within the Commission (e.g. DG Trade vs. DG Relex):

“In the Commission there is a huge competition between DGs: trade against Relex, trade against agriculture etc” (Interview No. 15, CS)

In this discussion at the same time a certain discrepancy evolved, as on the one hand member states and Council Secretariat officials often accuse the Commission of interfering in political dossiers, while on the other hand Commission officials claim that member states often unnecessarily politicise their technical attempts to support developments in partner countries.

Formally, there is of course still a clear division between economic Community competences and political competences of the member states. But Council Secretariat officials as well as the member states often get the impression that the Commission also wants to cover political aspects (Interview No. 15, CS; Interview No. 16, PR France). But first of all this is nothing specific to the ENP but it had been observed in EU foreign policy-making for years (Nuttall 1992, 2000; Dijkstra 2009) that the Commission on the one hand tries to extend its own ground of working, or to formulate it more neutral, that the Commission perceives the distinction between political CFSP issues and communitarised external relations issues differently than member states. Yet and quite naturally, the latter carefully control what the Commission is including in its negotiations with the third countries (Interview No. 1, PR Austria).

All involved actors agree that action plans are a useful and indispensable instrument for the ENP to identify the main areas of cooperation with the partner countries. However, while member states often would ask for a more strict use of political conditionality, most Commission officials reject this idea in that far as they consider it not efficient and even harming the already achieved results. Or as one Commission official formulated:

“We can not buy reforms, and not force them out from other countries; it will always depend on the willingness of the third country to embark on certain reforms” (Interview No. 7, COM).

Commission officials also rather agree that they have a more long-term view on the EU relationship with the neighbours, while they consider the Council to be more interested in political issues and having a “*totally different timeframe in mind*” (Interview No. 7, COM). In the Commission’s view, reforms need time, and the EU should grant this time to their partner countries instead of interfering in those reform processes with often unsuccessful political initiatives or by applying political conditionality. At the same time, Commission officials also point out that there is not only a different perception present in the Council, but that also within the Commission different approaches to this question of linkage between economic and political goals can be observed (Interview No. 7, COM). At the same time, Commission officials seem to agree on a rather more pragmatic assessment of what the ENP can deliver than what the member states would consider. The former highlight that reforms as agreed upon in the action plans can only be successful and sustainable if third country also recognises their usefulness. And in this regard they would prefer the EU to have more clarity on this approach that “*in the end the ENP is a reform anchor for willing third countries*”, not more and not less (Interview No. 7, COM).

Closely linked to this wariness of the Commission to link political objectives to technical measures to improve the situations in third countries is the conviction of especially sectoral policy officers in the Commission that it does not matter where a certain project is conducted, implying that the political sensitiveness of differentiating between different political partners is inappropriate to achieve success in terms of social development on the ground. They are for example interested to improve the quality of drinking water, and then it does not matter for them if they embark on this project in Beirut or in Odessa, as they will always need the same expertise (Interview No. 7, COM). In a similar vein, generally it is desirable to have a coherent approach, but Commission officials also do not see the usefulness of creating artificial cross-linkages that just harm the reform process in a certain technical area, i.e. if improvements in the transport sector are at the core of a certain activity, then their success should be the main objective, and they should not be hampered by human rights debates, as the latter have nothing to do with what the reform process is actually about. This reluctance to consider political aspects in their more technical work is one of the main points of critique from other actors, as the following quote illustrates about the EU-Morocco relations:

“For example, I find that the unit dealing with Maghreb has a very trade-orientated vision and considers aspects like human rights or governance as irritants.” (Interview No. 15, CS)

Another aspect related to this difficult intersection between technical and political issues is the problem that it is often difficult to clearly distinguish between CFSP and external relations, as it has been experienced in the Southern Caucasus. There the Commission covers also political

issues in its day-to-day policy-making, also because of the strong emphasis on conflict resolution and post-conflict development, and it provides suggestions and ideas to the Council Secretariat and the presidency. However, in the EU policy-making towards the Southern Caucasus this intersection between technical and political aspects of the EU policies was overcome by a quite pragmatic approach of all involved EU actors to share the work (Interview No. 16, PR France). The Commission at the same time proved careful not to go beyond its competences, but at the same time all involved EU actors agree that it represents continuity and expertise that complements the activities of the EUSR and other political elements of CFSP in an efficient manner.

The use of political conditionality is often mentioned as one aspect that shows a clear disagreement between Commission and Council, especially when it comes to the use of negative conditionality. However, when investigating the perception of EU actors in regard of this instrument for sanctioning and providing incentives for partner countries in more details it shows that the assessment that the Commission would generally oppose political conditionality, while member states would like to use it more often is rather too superficial and does therefore not catch the complexity of this topic. The Commission generally does not reject the idea of political conditionality per se, but it highlights some practical problems that it considers to harm this instrument. First of all, in regard of its bureaucratic interest the sanctioning of a third country by freezing certain financial assistance is considered counterproductive by the involved desk officers, as towards a partner country allocated financial means not spent within two years are “*lost for DG Relex*” and go back into the general budget (Interview No. 4, COM; Interview No. 2, COM). But it is not only a self-interest that the Commission puts forward as argument against the use of negative conditionality, but they also show a high degree of conviction that such sanctioning mechanisms would not work within the ENP, as the Commission does not have the leverage by using any other means to convince the third country (Interview No. 11, COM). Furthermore, Commission officials highlight that it is not only them who seem reluctant towards the use of freezing financial assistance, but that it was hardly every the case that all member states would agree on the use of negative conditionality and that it is most likely that there is at least one member states that would oppose such measures (Interview No. 3, COM). This latter argumentation is also shared by officials in the Council secretariat and member states’ representatives (Interview No. 14, CS; Interview No. 21, PR UK), who would generally welcome a more flexible approach of using this instrument, also highlight the political unlikelihood that it might actually be put in to practice (Interview No. 13, CS).

Another element where Commission officials as well as member states agree is that it is useful to be able to use the “carrots” of financial assistance for political reforms in third countries, but that those reforms are only effective when they also fit in the reform programme of the third

country and when the government of the partner country backs the agreed objectives for reform that have been agreed upon the action plan and makes them part of their broader reform project (Interview No. 21, PR UK).

These empirical accounts show that the policy factor of achieving an efficient and successful cooperation between EU actors to work towards the general ENP objective of creating stability and prosperity in the neighbourhood is strongest in regard of the Commission supporting the member states in drafting and formulating policies. While also here the functional interpretation of increased external pressures are at work that ask for an efficient EU response to cooperate closely with partner countries, there is also a strong conviction among the involved actors that an adapted interaction within the ENP framework is necessary to make this new framework towards the neighbours work successfully. At the same time, there is potential for conflict because of the different perceptions of how these general objectives can be best achieved, contrasting a rather technical approach by some Commission officials with a more politicised approach by member states and some other actors. However, after a short period of conflict at the start of the ENP the EU actors learnt to be sensitive towards those diverging perceptions and with the exception of some minor conflicts they established a consensual way of working together towards the agreed ENP objectives.

7.2.3. Providing Coherence through Institutional Memory

Next to the task of gathering information and assisting member states in formulating policies, Hill considers the providing of coherence through institutional memory the third essential contribution of national foreign policy bureaucracies. While coherence in the first chapter of this thesis has been defined rather in institutional terms, Hill's interpretation (Hill 2003: 77) refers mainly to the idea of providing coherence over time, i.e. ensuring that EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood is not hampered by a constant stop-go-process but that certain objectives and policies are pursued strategically over a longer period of time.

At European level this task is meant to be performed by the Council Secretariat whose primary task is to assist the rotating presidency and ensure continuity in the formulated policies of the Council. The civil servants of the Commission view themselves performing this task in the area of the ENP, as in their view also the officials in the Council Secretariat change regularly (Interview No. 8, COM; Interview No. 19, COM). Furthermore, Commission officials highlight that for such slow-moving processes like the ENP and the EMP the day-to-day policy-making of the Commission is more important than short-term political ad-hoc decisions of the Council. Profound improvements take time and need the support of more technical and long-term strategies (Interview No. 7, COM) which in the end make the EMP and ENP more successful than possible alternative, more interventionist approaches (Interview No. 1, PR Austria).

The argument of achieving coherence and consistency over time is predominantly used by the Commission to argue for its stronger involvement in EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours, but it was not at all emphasised as an important motivation by member states. When considered in more detail, it becomes clear that this quest for coherence allows the Commission to frame its bureaucratic interest for a stronger involvement in more altruistic terms, as in practice it also has to be kept in mind that also Commission officials switch within DGs in regular intervals of three to five years. Hence, in regard of the ENP this third function of providing coherence is mainly used as a well-sounding reason of the Commission that allows it to frame its bureaucratic interest in a more general EU interest to improve EU foreign policy-making. This was also visible in the ENP strategy document where the importance of coherence was emphasised by the Commission. Member States generally do not seem to disagree with this assessment, as it was also highlighted as an important factor in the European Security Strategy in 2003, but they did not explicitly put coherence up front as motivation for adapting the interaction of EU actors in the ENP framework.

7.3. Conclusion: When theoretical Assumptions meet Empirics

The aim of this chapter was to investigate which assumptions prove most likely to explain in what mode and why the contribution of various EU actors in foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood changed with the set-up of the ENP. In doing so it related to the assumption that had been put forward in the theoretical framework of this thesis.

First of all, it was assumed that the change towards the new way of interacting within the ENP framework created conflict and confusion with the involved EU actors. It was confirmed by different sides that at the beginning of the ENP conflicts emerged, although it was also always emphasised that these were mainly problems related to actors finding their new position within the new policy-making arrangement and that those could be overcome after some time of getting used to the adaptations. The theoretical framework in regard of the mode of change had identified following two factors that might plausibly explain the way this process of change developed over time from a more conflictual mode to a consensual interaction:

Assumption 3 (time factor): The longer the actors are able to adapt to the new form of interaction and the longer they have time to experience their new roles, the better the interaction will become over time. Hence, their new form of interaction improves over time.

Assumption 4 (communication factor): the more the institutional set-up asks for direct contact between the actors and exchange of their opinions, the more likely a consensual (change in) interaction between these actors gets.

The empirical analysis confirmed that the factor of time provides a strong explanatory power. Commission officials were cautious in the first weeks of the ENP, as they were not sure how to

work within the new cross-pillar framework without impeding on political issues that were traditionally dealt with under CFSP. In these first months several conflicts over competences were observable, but over time this cooperation became more smooth and consensual. However, this should not imply that conflicts were not taking place at all anymore. On few occasions member states got suspicious of what the Commission was suggesting, claiming that it got involved in too political dossiers or claiming that the Commission does not take into account their national interests sufficiently. At the same time it was surprising to observe that it was actually in the EU foreign policy-making towards the Southern Caucasus that the interaction adapted quickly to a consensual and cooperative way of interaction. This was surprising in that far as the EU relations with the Southern Caucasus are generally more politicised, given the content of the cooperation focusing to a large extent on crisis management, post-conflict development, and developing sound governance structures. However, in this case the involved EU actors managed after few quarrels about the exact mandate of the EUSR to establish a good working climate that allowed for solving conflicts over competences in a more consensual manner. Quite on the contrary, it was in the rather technical, highly institutionalised and long-standing EU foreign policy-making arrangements towards Morocco where repeated conflicts between member states and Commission officials occurred. These conflictual situations proved to be mainly caused by difficult inter-personal relationships and by member states developing a serious mistrust towards some of the Commission officials involved.

The empirical analysis showed that both prior formulated assumptions can be verified to a certain extent, while at the same time their explanatory power would profit from a slight adaptation, allowing for taking into account the importance of personalities and perceptions.

The factor of time surely contributed to the switch from more conflictual relations to a consensual mode of interaction and cooperation, however it showed that this was not because of socialisation and adaptations of interests, but the involved EU actors learnt in a more strategic way of how to interact without creating constantly conflicts and stalemates. In regard of the institutional possibility for close contact and communication, it has to be pointed out that regular communication channels alone are not sufficient to lead from conflict to consensus, but that those communication channels rather act as necessary conditions that are necessary for EU actors to get to know each other. Yet, the pure existence of these channels alone is not sufficient, as it then depends on the personalities involved if the interaction can become more consensual or not. In the case of the EU relations with the Southern Caucasus, this showed to be the case, while in the case of EU foreign policy-making towards Morocco existing communication channels were not able to overcome the dislike and mistrust between member states on the one hand and the involved personalities from the Commission on the other hand.

The second aspect of the research question about factors explaining the change of tasks and interactions within the ENP framework focuses more on the factors that explain why this change occurred at all. In this regard, following four assumptions had been identified in the theoretical framework:

Assumption 1 (bureaucratic interest): The more actors believe that a change in interaction would enhance their bureaucratic status quo (e.g. competences, financial means), the more they are willing to support and accept a change in tasks, roles and interaction.

Assumption 2 (policy interest): The more the involved actors acknowledge the demand for functional linkages of policies and for an effective policy in a changing international environment, the more they are willing to change their interactions with other actors.

Assumption 5 (bargaining advantage): If an actor is aware that it has certain bargaining advantages vis-à-vis others, it is more willing to change interaction, as it is more likely that it might gain even more advantages.

Assumption 6 (incomplete contracting / unintended consequences of institutional change): The interaction of actors was not intentionally and in detail decided during treaty changes, but is shaped through incomplete contracting and unintended consequences of institutional change that took place at an earlier stage.

The first two assumptions about the bureaucratic interest and the policy interest are considered to lead to intentional change in that far as those might be motivations that actors pursue actively because they are convinced that a change in task allocation and interaction would satisfy those motivations. On the other hand, the last two assumptions of bargaining advantage and incomplete contracting are rather situational factors that might limit or enable change in a certain direction but can by themselves not trigger the change.

The empirical results of the analysis show the change in tasks and interaction was rather intentional than a passive coincidence. The bargaining advantage does not really provide strong explanations, apart from the fact that it might hint towards a certain path-dependency: once the Commission was asked to be involved in setting-up the ENP, the latter also made sure to foster its own bureaucratic interests. From the perspective of the member states this assumption 5, however, does not provide any real explanation. And while member states not at all stages in the set-up process might have been aware of what the set-up of the ENP and the task allocation means for certain actors, they did not show totally ignorant to the fact that they allow for the involvement of another actor, especially in the policy-specification and implementation stage. However, the constant struggle of the member states at the same time to ensure control over the Commission also shows that they were quite aware of the consequences of the changing roles and tasks. From the out-set it might not have been too obvious that the set-up of the ENP framework would imply such a strong involvement of the Commission in the day-to-day policy making, but at the same time some of those task allocations also developed over time and

member states seemed rather confident, if not pleased to have the Commission involved. Member States quite knew about the changes introduced by the ENP framework, and most of the time also appreciated a stronger involvement of the agent Commission

This also implies that it is rather the intentional factors that allow for an explanation of the change in EU actors' task allocation and changing interaction. And within those two, it is mainly the policy-demand factor that could be identified as the core motive for change.

The policy-demand factors is quite visible when the Council Secretariat and the member states acknowledge the decisive involvement of the Commission in the current ENP policy process, because they emphasise that they would not be able to formulate the complex policies towards these countries on their own nor would they be able to deal with the huge amount of necessary information that has to be gathered to fulfil those tasks. This has changed considerably during the last ten years in the EU foreign policy-making mechanisms towards the neighbourhood. Within the prior frameworks towards the South and the East, the Commission was only meant to fulfil administrative tasks like preparing the meetings. But after some time the member states acknowledged that they also have to allow for an involvement of the Commission. The latter has the capacity (and especially its delegations in the third countries) to gather information and draft policy documents, what Member states alone would not be able to do effectively on their own. Given the highly technical nature of some ENP documents, the Member States repeatedly acknowledged that they would neither have the expertise nor the time to look at all these details in their meetings.

However, in line with the bureaucratic interest-hypotheses general turf battles between the institutions also become visible, especially when the Member States get the impression that the Commission "is playing games" with them and wants to sell them a policy that they might not agree to. But the Commission also puts forward policy-demand arguments when explaining for their push to be more strongly involved in the ENP. Commission official repeatedly highlight that their technical, more long-term perspective of pushing for change in third countries is more effective than the often ad-hoc reactions of the MS within second pillar. Furthermore, they were able to gain valuable experience during the enlargement rounds, and their instruments and procedures so far seem to be better than strict political conditionality or political discussions. In contrast, member states but also other Commission DGs criticise this rather technical approach to development in third countries, what from time to time leads to conflicts about the concrete instruments and mechanisms that should be used to achieve the commonly agreed ENP objective of creating stability and prosperity in the neighbourhood.

Concluding it can be assessed that it is not always only bureaucratic self-interest that motivates EU actors, but that in the case of the ENP it was especially specific policy-ideas and policy-

demands that have been taken into consideration. Unintended consequences of prior institutional change, like the enlargement process, explain why the idea for a new framework has arisen at all, but, but this factor alone for sure is not enough to understand Member States' motives to allow for the ENP.

Traditional theoretical approaches would predict that member states would strictly oppose this involvement of the Commission into this foreign policy domain due to sovereignty concerns, but, interestingly, there is quite a consensus between member states that the Commission fulfils quite important tasks in gathering information, assisting in formulating policies and providing coherence within the ENP. The member states, of course, try to closely control the Commission, so that it does not exceed its limits, but on the other hand the Commission also learnt that it does not make sense to pursue a policy that is strongly opposed by member states, as then it would only risk strong opposition to its proposals. This led from a more conflictual interplay of EU actors during the first months of ENP to a more consensual policy process, although from time to time, of course, turf battles about bureaucratic interests still occur, although here it can be assumed that here another factor comes in play that was not considered from the outset: the personality factor of the respective people in the posts.

Part III – Conclusion

Chapter 8: What the Empirical Analysis tells us - Comparing and Analysing the Results

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) had been launched in March 2003 and finally established in 2004 with the main objective to provide security and stability for the European Union by establishing a stable and prosperous neighbourhood. Externally the aim is to reinforce the cooperation with the neighbours to the East and the South, in order to support those third countries in their reform attempts. EU internally, the ENP is meant to achieve a long-aspired goal: to provide more coherence in EU foreign policy-making and to overcome the so often criticised separation between the EU pillars by establishing one framework that would bring together all EU activities. More coherence was emphasised as the main factor to allow the EU to be an effective and strong partner towards and for its neighbours.

This thesis aimed at investigating the European Neighbourhood Policy in regard of the EU-internal objective of providing more coherence. It is especially focusing on the idea of institutional coherence, i.e. the coherence between different pillars and their respective actors. Therefore it puts forward the question, **in what respect and to what extent the single ENP framework changed the EU policy-making processes towards the neighbours**. The rationale behind this question is that it can not automatically assumed that overall horizontal coherence between EU activities can be established by just uniting different policy areas with different EU policy-making modes under one framework. Therefore the question is scrutinising to what extent and in what way the ENP also asked for an adaptation of task allocations and interaction between EU actors. Hence, the thesis assumes from the outset that the different policies were not only subsumed under one ENP framework, but that this closer link under one framework also changed the involvement of and interaction between various actors. The selected timeframe under investigation runs from 2002 to 2007, and as empirical illustrations particular attention is paid to EU foreign policy-making towards Morocco and Georgia.

Yet, this thesis also assumes right from the start that it is not enough to just provide a rather descriptive account what the various actors contribute to EU policy-making towards the neighbourhood, but in case such a change would show empirically, it seems even more relevant to assess **what factors explain changes in interactions of actors in EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood**, and to ask **what constraints the ENP single framework did encounter at the same time**. The rationale behind this second question is derived from the consideration that the changes in task allocation and interaction might only be sustainable and long-lasting, if the involved actors intentionally decided for these changes, because they considered them to be necessary in terms of pursuing a better and more effective

policy and because they were convinced that an adapted way of EU foreign-policy making would be profitable to achieve their commonly agreed ENP objective to provide security and stability for the EU by ensuring stability and prosperity in the neighbourhood.

This concluding chapter first presents the main research findings of this thesis, and in a second step it critically reflects on the contribution that these results provide in terms of political relevance and in terms of contributing to ongoing academic debates. By doing so, the merits of this research but also certain challenges in terms of research design and method are pointed out. Last, few future research avenues are discussed that the research findings of this thesis point to.

8.1. The main findings of this research project

This thesis looked at the European Neighbourhood Policy from an institutional and EU-internal perspective, assuming that the single framework approach of the ENP did not only add together different policies towards the neighbours, but also changed the way these policies are made at EU level.

After the set-up of the ENP, was it “business as usual” when looking at the way that EU foreign-policy making towards the neighbourhood was conducted at EU level? This thesis claims that this was not the case, because within the ENP framework considerable alterations to the way EU actors are involved in shaping, setting-up, and implementing EU foreign policy towards the neighbourhood are observable. However, a careful tracing of developments over time followed by a critical investigation reveals that not all was “new” within the ENP, but that certain tendencies of informal interaction were already present beforehand that got further institutionalised and broadened within the ENP framework. In a similar vein, these findings should not be misinterpreted in a way to imply that the ENP caused or lead to an integration of EU foreign policy-making, i.e. that the (former) first pillar hijacked and took over EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours. The empirical evidence suggests that the processes taking place within the ENP are more complex and varied than a sole differentiation between intergovernmental and supranational policy-making at EU level would allow for. At the same time, the empirical analysis also clearly rejects a purely intergovernmental interpretation of EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood that would assume that it is only member states that shape this kind of policy. Hence, while this differentiation might be useful to be applied in some policy-areas, this opposing concepts do not really help to understand what is going on within the ENP.

Before looking now into detail of how to answer the two main research questions of this thesis, the empirical accounts also points at certain minor findings about the ENP that for a better understanding of the main arguments are worth to be kept in mind from the outset.

First of all, the ENP was designed *not as new policy*, with new content and new instruments, but it was set up *as a policy framework* that would “*unite the EU’s existing neighbourhood policy towards these regions*” (European Commission 2003c: 9). When the agenda-setting and collecting of different ideas about the new policy framework for “Wider Europe” started, it became very clear that there was not one blueprint of how this new initiative should look like. Its taking shape, therefore, was also not taking place in any hierarchical manner, but various actors contributed with their own ideas and comments, creating a vast amount of aspects that had to be negotiated and agreed upon. During this set-up process a clear dominance of single member states and the Commission took place, with the European Council playing only a rather affirmative role. The European Parliament also presented various far-reaching ideas, and although many of them were just ignored by the other actors, it was the European Parliament in combination with pressure resulting from external events (e.g. the Rose revolution in Georgia) that made sure that the Southern Caucasus countries were taken into account and finally incorporated within the ENP framework.

Secondly, it was surprising to see that during the coming in shape of the ENP and the debate about the Wider-Europe initiative all involved EU actors made use of a security-discourse. While it is often assumed that this kind of discourse is rather used by the member states or the various actors in the Council Secretariat (e.g. the High Representative) only, it was also the Commission during these months that strongly relied on the discourse of how important it is that EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours is driven by a strong EU security-concern. While this choice might at first sight seem surprising, it fits well into the overall strategy that the Commission used to get its voice heard, and it also complements the tensions that we could observe during the implementation stage of the ENP: while all involved actors agree on the overall objective of the ENP to provide security for the EU and its citizens by supporting stability and prosperity in the neighbourhood, there were also different perceptions at work how this main objective could best be used. The Commission in this regard made use of the strong argument that it had had a very positive impact on the EU accession processes during the 2004-enlargement, which in their view was the most successful EU security policy that the EU had ever embarked upon. Hence, the Commission argued that the technical knowledge gained during these processes should also be used towards the neighbours.

Last, the ENP was set-up as a policy framework to bring together all policies of the EU towards a respective country, while at the same time it was also meant to harmonise the instruments and mechanisms applied by the EU towards the different partner countries. The ENP complements existing multilateral and regional frameworks, and was based on the legal agreements that had already been in place (i.e. Partnership and Cooperation Agreements, or Association Agreements). The geographical coverage of the ENP was not clearly set right from the

beginning when the initiative was put on the agenda, but originally it was only meant to cover the new neighbours in the East, following a clear functional logic of external spin-off of the 2004 enlargement process. After the first five months of mainly emphasising the new framework to be targeted towards the East, it however showed that other member states with an orientation towards the South would not agree to such a narrow focus, and hence the geographical coverage was widened to the East and the South. It was at last the Southern Caucasus that only was incorporated into the ENP framework in 2004. From the 16 partner countries that are now encompassed under the bilateral ENP framework, 12 used the opportunity to establish a closer cooperation with the EU, while there were also four “problem” cases (Algeria, Syria, Belarus and Libya) that were formally part of the ENP but did not establish any action plans.

8.1.1. Changing roles and interactions of EU actors within the ENP?

The thesis started with the question in what respect and to what extent the single ENP framework changed EU policy-making processes towards the neighbours. To be in the position to answer this question, a reference point for comparison was first established by investigating how the EU frameworks with the respective neighbours was designed before the set-up of the ENP, and what role specific EU actors fulfilled within those frameworks.

The multilateral framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) had been established in 1995 and was at this time intended to also provide a coherent framework that would subsume economic, political and cultural aspects of the relationship between the EU and the partner countries. Yet, considering the slow pace of this framework because of its multilateral nature and the clear separation of dossiers in different baskets, the EMP was often criticised as not providing the right impetus for reform-willing partner countries. The Common Strategy on the Mediterranean was one attempt to reinvigorate and strengthen the EMP, but it fell rather short in terms of strategic thinking, as it mainly clarified the task allocations among EU actors. This document emphasised formally again that it is the rotating presidency as representative of the member states that should provide impetus and implement the EMP. The Commission was associated in its area of competences and together with the Council said to be responsible for ensuring coherence, but for the rest the Common Strategy on the Mediterranean did not provide any formal role for the Commission. However, in practice research showed that the implementation of the EMP was mainly shaped by the Commission within the MEDA framework. Additionally, the Commission provided support in terms of working as EMP secretariat. In regard of interests, member states had for a long time emphasised economic and trade interests, while more recently migration and strategic security concerns, also in terms of energy security developed.

Towards the Southern Caucasus a reverse trend could be observed. Before 1999 it was mainly the Commission that was dealing with this region in terms of implementing TACIS and supporting reform and stabilisation. It was only after the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements in 1999 that member states showed increased interest in the countries of the Southern Caucasus. During this process new priorities of rule of law, support for civil society, fight against poverty and conflict prevention had been emphasised, while during the last years migration and the fight against organised crime also entered the agenda of cooperation more prominently. In terms of EU actors' involvement before the set-up of the ENP, the EU relationship with the Southern Caucasus differs from the EU-Mediterranean relationship in the more active involvement of several actors of the Council Secretariat, especially the EUSR and the Head of Mission of EUJUST Themis. In comparison to the often highly technical relationship with the Mediterranean neighbours, the engagement with the Southern Caucasus countries was much less institutionalised before 2003, and focused primarily on energy concerns, humanitarian assistance, and attempts for conflict resolution. The Commission is similar to the relationship with the Mediterranean responsible for the implementation of projects and external assistance, but the Council more often and in more detail discussed the relationship with the Southern Caucasus around 2000-2003, especially in the context of CFSP about conflict resolution (Nagorno-Karabakh as main frozen conflict in the region) and with the set-up of the first rule of law mission in Georgia.

With this reference point in mind, the set-up of the ENP only triggered institutional adaptation within the Commission, where a new ENP unit for general and sectoral coordination was established and country desk-officers were moved together within one directorate. Most of these first ENP desk officers were recruited from DG enlargement, considering that their technical expertise should not be lost and might be usefully applied also in EU relations with the neighbours. For the other actors, the establishment of the ENP did not have any direct impact in terms of institutional organisation, apart from the slight adaptation that from 2005 onwards most ENP dossiers within the Council were now not passed through PSC anymore but went directly to COREPER II.

In terms of policy stages, the decision-making stage was the one where nothing fundamentally changed with the set-up of the ENP. It is the member states that have the final say in formal decision-making in regard of political aspects, while in external relations the Commission is at the forefront, with member states exercising a certain amount of control through comitology. However, a close analysis of the involvement of EU actors within the different policy stages shows that it is in particular in the policy-specification stage and during implementation that the Commission plays a crucial role in supporting and shaping member states' decisions.

During the policy-specification stage the Commission is in charge of putting forward drafts for the action plans, and while they are consulting and coordinating with the Council Secretariat and the member states especially on the political aspects, it provides a huge advantage for the Commission to be the one actor that puts these drafts forward and up for discussion. Member states try to exert close control over the Commission, especially when they see reason to become suspicious. In this regard it should also be noted that the Commission managed to shape the ENP framework in terms of instruments and fundamental concepts quite closely to its own experience by emphasising time and again the importance of joint ownership, differentiation and added value in public and in working documents. While the Council as well as the European Council often reaffirmed this emphasis on certain mechanisms, the analysis clearly showed that those elements were mainly coming from the Commission. To triangulate these research findings and test them more critically, it was also traced to what extent the rotating presidencies in the Council provided for strategic leadership and putting forward specific drafts in regard of the ENP. The analysis showed that apart from the Irish presidency in the first half of 2004, most rotating presidencies did not consider the set-up of the ENP or its working methods as a priority of their six-month work programme. From 2004 onwards, several presidencies emphasised the inclusion of migration and energy issues as important aspects of closer cooperation with the neighbours in their presidency programmes, but for the rest there is no empirical evidence that would suggest a strong policy shaping impact from the presidency. In a similar vein, the role of the European Council in this stage is mostly an affirmative one, inviting other actors to follow-up on the progress already achieved.

Regarding agenda-setting and policy-specification the ENP clearly differs from prior EU frameworks towards the neighbours. While the Commission could, of course, suggest certain ideas within the EMP, it did not have any comparable influence at this stage of the policy process.. Therefore these results show that in this stage of agenda-setting and policy specification within the ENP the tasks of drafting and assisting in policy formulation shifted clearly towards the Commission, especially because the Commission is considered as the best-situated and best-suited actor.

Next to this strong role in specifying and shaping policies at the drafting stage, the Commission fulfils a strong and important role during the implementation of ENP, that must not be reduced to economic and development aspects only. It is the Commission who is responsible for the implementation of the ENP action plans and the Association Agreements (or Cooperation and Partnership Agreements for the Southern Caucasus), administering the EU external assistance and other financial resources for the EU cooperation with the neighbours and being responsible for drafting the Annual Action Programmes. The latter can be rejected by member states during

comitology, what proved however rather unlikely in practice, as they would need a qualified majority to do so.

While the ENP shows certain features of EU policy-making that already existed beforehand, there was a clear adaptation of task allocation within the ENP framework, especially in terms of assisting the member states in drafting and specifying policies. Furthermore, the clear differentiation and separation between policy documents dealing with EC issues and documents discussing intergovernmental CFSP issues vanished, as now all reform suggestions were negotiated within one action plan with the partner country. Some of these tendencies already showed in prior relations with the neighbours, although only to a certain extent and on an irregular basis. The ENP therefore can be assessed as a next step of formalising already existing informal practices that got stronger and more visible through the single framework approach of the ENP.

8.1.2. Why change?

The second research question of this thesis asks what factors explain changes in interactions of actors in EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood, and what constraints the ENP single framework did encounter at the same time. This question points on the one hand to the mode of change (from conflictual to consensual), while on the other hand it also asks for the factors that triggered the change in task allocation and interaction.

It was confirmed by all involved actors and in both cases of Morocco and Georgia that at the beginning of the ENP conflicts between actors took place on a regular basis. However, all actors also added to this observation that those conflictual interrelationships soon improved and became consensual, after actors found their positions and roles within the new framework and after they got used to the new ways of interacting with each other. The factor of time in this regard contributed positively to this development from conflictual to consensual interaction, although this also does not imply that conflicts did not occur anymore once in a while. At the same time, also the factor about communication-channels could be confirmed to a certain extent, although in both cases a slight adaptation of the logical argumentation proved useful after the empirical investigation to strengthen the explanatory power of the two factors.

In regard of the time factor it was assumed that actors learn over time how to cooperate (what was confirmed) but it also clearly showed in the case of the ENP that actors did not socialise in a way that constructivist accounts would assume, i.e. they did not adapt their interests because of regular interaction, but they rather learnt strategically of how to interact in a way that would allow progress and would not result in constant conflicts and stalemates. It was especially surprising to observe that it was the EU actors' interaction towards the Southern Caucasus that soon became consensual and smooth, in huge contrast to the prior assumptions that in this case

there would be more potential for conflict because of the more politicised issues at stake and the higher number of different actors at play. In case of EU foreign policy-making towards Morocco, however, the empirical material suggested to take another factor into account that had not been considered beforehand: personalities and personal relationships. The case of Morocco showed that there were several incidents of conflictual interaction between Commission officials and member states, because member states felt ill-informed, ill-represented and ill-treated by the respective Commission officials in certain occasions. Appropriate communication channels are therefore necessary in terms of supporting the potential establishment of good personal relationships, but they are surely not sufficient to turn a conflictual interaction into a more consensual one. This consideration points to the second adaptation that showed important to keep in mind theoretically: it is not always what actors actually do, but perceptions play an even more important role in terms of EU actors' interaction. Member states did not become suspicious because of what the Commission did or what happened within the ENP, but if they got the impression that the Commission tried to trick them or sell them something that was actually against their own national interests, they developed mistrust and resistance towards proposals of the Commission, even if in terms of content they did actually agree. Hence, the interaction was in most cases not hampered by disagreement about the policy content, but about the perceptions that emerged during the interaction process.

But why then did EU actors allow or even push for a change in roles and interaction, when it was plausible to assume that (institutional) change upsets a system or a framework, and might also lead to counterproductive conflicts? And why did especially the member states allow for more involvement of the Commission, considering that it proved often difficult for them to keep the Commission under control and in line with their own interests? Or was it rather that member states did not agree to this change intentionally, but that it was just an "accident" or coincidence? The theoretical framework of this thesis distinguished between intentional motivations of actors (i.e. policy-interest and bureaucratic interest) and situational factors (bargaining advantage and unintended consequences of prior institutional change). It has been assumed from the outset that only intentional change would have the potential to lead to a sustainable and long-lasting adaptation of EU actors' interaction within the ENP, because if these changes were unintended but are now visible, it would be likely that actors try to reverse the adaptations and go back to the earlier form of interacting with other actors.

The elaborations in the last part of this research project provide evidence that within the ENP mainly intentional motivations were at play rather than passive situational factors. There is no empirical evidence that would suggest that the factor of bargaining advantage played any considerable role. The Commission already in 2003 set the ground to be involved in shaping the ideas for the "Wider Europe" initiative to make sure that it has a stake in the new framework,

but this has to be rather interpreted in terms of bureaucratic interest. There is some evidence that would allow assuming that during the early considerations of the framework the member states did not fully consider what this would imply for EU actors' involvement, because in their deliberations the task allocations and interaction of EU actors was not explicitly considered or discussed. In this regard, it can be argued that there is some evidence for this factor to apply in terms of incomplete contracting, but the interpretation in regard of unintended consequences of institutional change is rather weak. Quite on the contrary, it was also the member states that highlighted several times the weaknesses and insufficiency of the former EU frameworks to conduct foreign policy towards the neighbourhood, as the case with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership illustrated tellingly. Hence these assumptions about situational factors at play have to be discarded in particular, when considering the much stronger explanatory power of the intentional factors, especially of the policy-interest factor.

Member states seem confident if not even pleased to have the Commission involved in EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood, because they share a strong conviction that the Commission fulfils important tasks in gathering routine information, processing this data, and applying this gained knowledge in assisting member states in drafting policies. They especially welcome the Commission's involvement in this regard, because they know that they would not be able to fulfil these tasks themselves. They would be unable to investigate and provide all the necessary technical expertise that is needed to draft the policy documents, and the Commission provides an important focal point to collect information from stakeholders of third countries, civil society representatives and other stakeholders involved in the field.

However, in line with the bureaucratic interest hypotheses turf battles between the institutions also occurred time and again, especially when the Member States get the impression that the Commission "is playing games" with them or uses its information advantage to sell them a policy that they might be detrimental to their own national interests. The Commission quite understandably is motivated also by a bureaucratic interest in terms of being involved, as the ENP framework provided a good opportunity to extend its impact on EU foreign policy-making. This push for the Commission to be involved was very visible in the negotiation stage towards the ENP strategy paper, where it actively pushed to put its ideas forward and be heard, by presenting comprehensive drafts and suggestions to member states that those seemed quite pleased to take on board. At the same time, the Commission also puts forward policy-demand arguments when explaining for their motivation to fulfil a more comprehensive role within the ENP. Commission officials repeatedly highlight that their technical, more long-term perspective of pushing for change in third countries is more effective than the often ad-hoc reactions of the member states acting within the CFSP domain. Furthermore, the Commission was able to gain valuable experience during the enlargement rounds, and their instruments and procedures so far

seem to be better than strict political conditionality or political discussions. The Commission defends this line of argumentation quite strongly, and it shows that the Commission did not only follow bureaucratic interests but that it was also highly convinced that their approach to development is more efficient in the long term perspective and hence more successful to achieve the commonly agreed ENP objective of creating stability and prosperity in the neighbourhood. In contrast, member states but also sometimes single Commission officials criticise this rather technical approach to development in third countries, what from time to time leads to conflicts about the concrete instruments and mechanisms that should be used to achieve the commonly agreed ENP objective of creating stability and prosperity in the neighbourhood.

Summing up, this thesis showed that the ENP framework in terms of EU actors' roles and interaction was not just 'business as usual', but that a considerable change in EU actors' involvement in EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours took place with the set-up of the ENP. While this change trigger conflicts at the beginning when the ENP framework was put into place, the interaction soon turned more consensual, although this depended to a large extent on the concrete persons involved and on mutual perceptions. Rather than unintended consequences of prior institutional change or incomplete contracting, the motivation for changing the EU actors' involvement within the ENP is best explained by intentional decisions of involved actors that were based on the conviction that an adaptation of EU actors' interaction is best suited and also necessary to achieve the commonly agreed ENP objective of fostering stability and prosperity in the neighbourhood.

8.2. The wider relevance of the research findings & future research suggestions

What implications do these research findings now have in terms of political relevance and academic contribution? What can the results of this research project contribute to the broader debates about EU foreign policy making, coherence and the EU relations with the neighbourhood?

In regard of the socio-political relevance, this thesis delivered a detailed account of how the ENP framework developed and how it works in practice on a day-to-day basis. A comprehensive understanding of certain features and even weaknesses of the ENP is only possible when taking into account the way this policy framework developed and how it was shaped by different actors and their ideas. By showing why certain ENP elements were shaped by various motivations and deliberations contributes to a deeper understanding of why the ENP was set up and why it looks the way it is now. Furthermore, the observations of this thesis can be relevant when adapting policy frameworks towards other regions or third countries in the future, as it points to the importance to take into account if a policy framework deliberately

changes the interaction of actors, because it seems unlikely that a new policy framework has any additional impact, if not also the institutional interplay is altered.

The detailed empirical accounts presented in this thesis of how EU foreign policy-making is formulated and implemented on a day-to-day basis towards the neighbours deepens our understanding of how these processes take place and what mechanisms are at work also at a more informal level. By being able to identify the involved actors and their different motivations it is possible to understand EU foreign policy-making in a comprehensive manner. This thesis showed clearly that a rather intergovernmental account would ignore important aspects and developments, and therefore it seems absolutely necessary to also adapt our understanding of EU foreign policy-making to allow for the consideration of more informal interaction and processes outside the narrow decision-making stage. The thesis showed that although the Commission does not have a formal role in decision-making and although it is formally the Council presidency and the High Representative that are supposed to put forward drafts and provide leadership in EU foreign policy-making, the ENP provided a strong role for the Commission in terms of providing information, expertise and knowledge and in terms of assisting member states to formulate policies.

In contributing to the academic literature, the research findings of this thesis contribute to EU integration research, and they also provide interesting empirical findings for Foreign Policy Analysis. During the last ten years a considerable amount of academic research about the ENP has developed, but there the focus was mainly on the used instruments, the mode of interaction with third countries, or the impact on the ground. While this existing body of research is highly interesting and crucial for our understanding of the EU as an international actor on the ground, it often takes as starting point the formally described roles of the actors as outlined in the treaties and therefore overemphasising the role of member states in EU foreign policy-making. This thesis, however, showed that there are more actors involved than just the member states, and that there is a vast amount of dynamics, perceptions and informalities going on that deepen our understanding for why a certain foreign policy was embarked upon in a certain way. Scrutinising the roles of various actors in different stages of the policy process and by considering also their motivations and general perceptions provides a better understanding for the decisions taken, i.e. the EU output. In ENP research until now this EU output, however, was often used as the starting point in a rather superficial manner for researching EU outcome (in terms of instruments and applied mechanisms) and on EU impact on the ground, and those academic contributions did not questioned in how far the dynamics underlying those EU output also might impact directly on the EU outcome and EU impact on the ground. While it therefore would have gone too far for this thesis to investigate the link between those different aspects, it shows that the motivations of actors and their different perceptions of how commonly agreed

objectives can be achieved must not be ignored in the analysis of EU outcome (in terms of instruments, mechanisms) and the EU impact on the ground.

At the same time, this thesis contributes to the wider EU integration research, as it provides insights that allow comparison to research findings from other policy areas. In this regard the question can be asked, to what extent EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbours within the ENP framework is specific and different than policy-making in other policy-areas, or to what extent we can observe general trends that are common to the majority of EU policy-making. At the same time such a comparison would also allow for a closer communication between comparative politics accounts (as mostly applied in EU integration research) and the here applied Foreign Policy Analysis.

The results of this thesis are furthermore relevant for the more general field of foreign policy analysis, because the more general framework developed by Carlsnaes to explain a foreign policy action was used as a starting point to structure this research inquiry, and because the prior assumptions of the theoretical framework were drawn from bureaucratic politics but also more general Foreign Policy Analysis. The empirical analysis of the motivational and situational factors underlying the change in EU actors' interaction showed that not all factors have a strong explanatory factor, while at the same time it also pointed towards two factors that seem still rather ignored in foreign policy analysis: the role of persons and personal relationships, as well as the importance of perceptions. While there seems currently a revival of pointing at the salience of individuals in International Relations research, this aspect of personal relationships, personalities but also personal role perceptions might constitute an interesting aspect to consider for future EU research. Perceptions are, of course, the focus of more constructivist approach in International Relations and Foreign Policy Analysis, but the results of this thesis also show that more comprehensive research about how these perceptions are at work would be interesting and highly relevant. So far constructivist accounts are often used as contrasting alternative accounts to challenge the main theoretical assumptions drawn from liberal intergovernmentalism, but considering the results of this research project in terms of pointing to the salience of perceptions, the latter might play a more important role in explaining policy-making at EU level than is assumed in EU integration research, and especially in EU foreign policy analysis.

Last but not least, this thesis contributes to the broad debate on coherence in EU foreign policy making, with a special focus on institutional coherence. The often criticised lack of coherence is in the political debate but also in academic research mostly assumed to be the outcome of turf-battles and bureaucratic interests, and in this regard the results of this thesis seem rather surprising: although bureaucratic interests were at play as well, a common policy-interest was strongest in terms of explaining the observed changes. And while actors might have different ideas and convictions of how a certain policy might be best achieved, they often worked

together to overcome their differences in opinions, because they all agreed on the need to deliver a common and strong policy to be able to achieve the commonly agreed objective. This strong explanatory power of policy-interest questions the often cited account of bureaucratic turf-battles that are said to dominate the Brussels-machinery in EU foreign policy-making.

Yet, this thesis not only answers the two research questions that were developed at the outset of this research project, but its results also suggest potential future research ideas, of which five are outlined in the following paragraphs.

First, the thesis showed that learning over time contributed strongly to the development from conflictual to consensual interactions within the ENP. However, this thesis was not able to go into detail to investigate how this learning process is taking place and which mechanisms shape it. The results of this research project also show that learning does not always have to be necessarily connected to socialisation, which assumes a constant adaptation and change of interests during the learning process. Actors within the ENP framework followed rather a more rationale motivation to find their place within the new framework to avoid constant turf battles and conflicts with other actors and to be in the position to deliver policy output. The latter has been termed “strategic learning” in the academic literature, but there is little comprehensive empirical research into this concept and its potential mechanisms. Furthermore, the question could be raised conceptually and empirically to what extent every process of “getting used to” should be considered a learning process.

Second, the research findings of the changing interactions within the ENP also provide an interesting starting point for comparing dynamics within this area of EU foreign policy making with general tendencies in the multi-level governance system in the wider field of EU public policy making. Policy frameworks are also time and again established in EU public policies, but it can at the same time be assumed that the ENP framework might be specific because of its cross-pillar nature. However, this would be an interesting research assumption to start from, especially when considering the formal abolition of pillars with the Lisbon Treaty. A more structured approach in investigating therefore the concrete differences between those public policy frameworks and the ENP might provide interesting insights in how far EU foreign policy really has to be considered to be different when it comes to inter-institutional dynamics, processes of change and motivations of actors for role adaptation.

Third, this thesis contributes to our understanding of institutional coherence within the ENP. However, it would be a useful exercise to apply the concepts and assumption of this thesis also to EU foreign policy-making towards other regions and countries, and even to other EU foreign policy frameworks. The ENP so far was the most encompassing and most prominent framework

that was tasked to tackle the lack of coherence. But it would be interesting to check if general tendencies like the stronger involvement of the Commission in the policy-specification stage are specific to the EU policy-making towards the neighbours, or if similar tendencies are also observable in EU relations with other third countries. Generally there is some evidence that suggests that the Commission tries to harmonise its instruments, procedures and frameworks towards all different kind of regions, and hence this thesis could be a good starting point for comparing other areas and their trends in EU actors' involvement with the ENP to see parallels but also variations.

Forth, the timeframe of this thesis had to be limited in terms of the time period under investigation, ending in 2007 and hence not taking into account anymore the Russia-Georgia war in 2008 and even more importantly, the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty. The Lisbon Treaty formally abolishes the pillar structure, although CFSP is still kept separate from EU community policies. Therefore it can also be assumed that even if the pillars are formally not in place anymore, the same kind of interaction and task allocations are kept like they have been beforehand in EU foreign policy-making. The Lisbon Treaty also creates the post of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs, who is chairing the Foreign Affairs Council and hence also providing the thematic leadership in the Council. Even more prominently this adapted HR post also subsumes the post of the Commissioner for External Relations, with the idea that this post provides a bridging function between the Council and the Commission, and therefore also contributes to a more coherent EU foreign policy. This new HR is supported in this role by the European External Action Service that is considered a separate body which is made up among others of officials from DG Relex, the more political posts from DG Development, and staff from Council Secretariat. The changes of the Lisbon Treaty highly upset the conventional form of EU foreign policy-making in Brussels, and it will be interesting to observe in the next months to what extent the EU actors now adapt to the new policy environment and also to the European External Action Service as new actor. It can be assumed that similar factors like they have been observed in the ENP might be crucial to lead from a conflictual to a more consensual interaction within the new EU foreign policy system, and at the same time the question can be asked what motivated especially member states to adapt the system in such a radical way. Informal accounts of member states often seem to hint towards a common understanding of EU member states that they need a strong High Representative to make EU foreign policy more coherent and more effective – what would fit also well with the logic of a common policy-interest. The findings of this thesis in conceptual and theoretical terms therefore might provide an interesting starting point to be applied to the broader area of EU foreign policy-making post-Lisbon.

Last, reflections about future research possibilities can also not ignore the events that have taken place in the Mediterranean during spring 2011. The revolution in Tunisia, the democratic upheaval in Egypt, as well as the crisis in Libya since March 2011 bring the question to the fore, in how far the ENP failed in those countries or at least becomes obsolete because of these external events. The effectiveness and added value of the ENP is suddenly questioned, as many critics assessed that these few weeks of civil-society upheavals changed more in these countries than years of cooperation with the EU within the ENP framework. And although this might sound like a convincing assessment, this criticism should rather be targeted towards EU foreign policy in general than the ENP framework in particular. The thesis showed that the ENP brings together a variety of actors, and that it is often torn between technical and more politicised accounts about how the objective of providing stability and prosperity in the neighbourhood can be achieved. It also showed that the Commission to a large extent follows a more long-term and technical approach in its external assistance that also reflects in the implementation of the ENP. In this regard, the Commission also convincingly argues that too quick political changes in the partner country might even more likely lead to instability and unrest, what is detrimental to the overall goal of the ENP. Those current events in the Mediterranean are currently also used by some member states to again ask for a stronger political interference in EU foreign policy-making towards the neighbourhood, and it will be interesting to observe in the upcoming months how this debate will develop and reflect back on the way the ENP works.

In line with the special focus of this thesis on the changing roles and interactions of EU actors in the ENP policy process, these current events are, however, even more interesting in providing an extreme empirical case study: it is the reaction of the EU, or more specifically the reactions of the different EU actors and their contributions and interactions in regard of those events that might provide valuable empirical insights into the state of the EU as an international actor. Those events can be considered as extraordinary situations and therefore they provide the most-difficult cases for testing the assumptions of this thesis empirically. Through a comparison of dynamics between actors in every-day ENP policy making (as it was done in this thesis) with EU actors' interactions in crisis-management and conflict situations (as it is currently observable in the Mediterranean) valuable insights could be gained about the coherence of the EU as an international actors after the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty. This thesis showed that although bureaucratic interests and turf-battles were present, it was still the policy-interest that prevailed for changing EU actors' interaction. If this could be even shown in such extreme cases like in the Mediterranean in 2011, we can assume that even if a common European interest or a common European Foreign Policy will not exist in the near future, EU actors show in their interactions a strong tendency to be motivated by a common policy-interests - what might not be totally satisfying for some observers but is surely good news for EU foreign policy-making.

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Annex I: Budget for external relations in subheadings 2001-2006

Budget for external relations in subheadings, 2001- 2006 in million Euro and % of total

	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005 ²		2006 ²	
		%		%		%		%		%		%
Relations with the Middle East and southern	815,2	25,7	754,0	23,3	768,0	23,5	953,0	27,0	1.050,0	31,5	1.083,4	34,2
Relations with Asia	387,4	12,2	541,0	16,7	538,0	16,4	562,0	15,9	782,0	23,5	813,9	25,7
Relations with eastern Europe, the Caucasus	411,6	13,0	413,0	12,8	459,0	14,0	579,0	16,4	485,0	14,5	495,2	15,6
Relations with western balkans ¹	694,1	21,8	645,0	20,0	604,0	18,4	467,0	13,2				
administrative expenditure	363,8	11,4	336,0	10,4	377,0	11,5	404,0	11,5	374,0	11,2		
Relations with Latin America	290,6	9,1	317,0	9,8	282,0	8,6	284,0	8,1	311,0	9,3	318,1	10,0
EIDHR	110,3	3,5	108,0	3,3	102,0	3,1	126,0	3,6	128,0	3,8	113,9	3,6
CFSP	32,7	1,0	30,0	0,9	47,0	1,4	63,0	1,8	63,0	1,9	102,4	3,2
multilateral relations and general external	37,2	1,2	36,0	1,1	61,0	1,9	53,0	1,5	99,0	3,0	102,1	3,2
Policy strategy and coordination			17,0	0,5	19,0	0,6	18,0	0,5	25,0	0,7	21,0	0,7
Relations with non-OECD countries	35,1	1,1	36,0	1,1	18,0	0,5	17,0	0,5	17,0	0,5	16,3	0,5
	3.178,0		3.233,0		3.275,0		3.526,0		3.334,0		3.167,3	

¹ In 2005 the budget for the relations with western Balkans was moved to the subheading of enlargement

² These data are from the financial reports of the European Communities that are published the consecutive year and give the effectively amount of money provided. The numbers fluctuate compared to the "General budget of the EU for the financial year 2006", published by the Commission in the same year (COM 2006, SEC 50) which gives following data in million Euro: multilateral relations (97,3), EIDHR (111,63), Asia (649), Policy strategy (20,6)

Data from: European Union Financial Reports 2001-2005(see Whitman/Juncos 2009b);

Annex II: Total EC external assistance to Georgia 1992-2006

From European Commission (2006): European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument - Georgia; Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013. Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/enpi_csp_georgia_en.pdf.

Total EC grants to Georgia 1992-2006 (in addition to the figures below, Georgia benefits from grants under the TACIS Regional Programme – Traceca, Inogate, Natural Resources)

	1992 1993	1994 1995	1996 1997	1998 1999	2000 2001	2002 2003	2004	2005	2006	1992 2006
TACIS (*)	13	10	16	16	15	14	25	0	20	129
ECHO	12	45	16	13	4	4.2	4	2	2	102.2
Food Aid (from DG AGRI funds)	-	41	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	63
Exceptional humanitarian assistance	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	6
Food Security Programme	-	-	34	12	13	-	12	10	10	91
Rehabilitation in conflict zones	-	-	8	4	5	-	2	2	2	23
Macro-financial assistance	-	-	-	19	6	-	7	-	33	65
Aid to mitigate the effects of the Russian financial crisis	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	4
CFSP and RRM (**)	-	-	-	-	2	2	5	-	-	9
European Initiative for Democracy & Human Rights	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	2	8
Other (DC, PVD-NGO,)	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	2	5
TOTAL	31	96	96	68	45	22.2	59	17	71	505.2

* 2-year allocations

** The CFSP budget of the EC is also used to finance the activities of the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the rule of law mission in Georgia - EUJUST Themis

Annex III: Zusammenfassung in Deutsch

Die Europäische Nachbarschaftspolitik (ENP) wurde 2003/04 von der Europäischen Union (EU) ins Leben gerufen, mit der generellen Zielsetzung neue Trennlinien zwischen der erweiterten Union und ihren Nachbarn zu vermeiden und durch die Schaffung von Stabilität und Wohlstand in den Nachbarländern Sicherheit für die Europäische Union zu gewährleisten. Innerhalb des politischen Systems der EU sollte diese neue Nachbarschaftspolitik die verschiedenen Politikbereiche der drei Säulen in einem Beziehungsrahmen vereinen: die Außenbeziehungen der Europäischen Gemeinschaft (v.a. Außenwirtschaftsbeziehungen), die Gemeinsame Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik (GASP) und die Zusammenarbeit im Bereich Justiz und Inneres. Dieser gemeinsame ENP Rahmen sollte die viel kritisierte Auf- und Zerspaltung von EU Außenpolitik überkommen, um somit eine kohärenter EU-Politik gegenüber den und für die Nachbarn zu erreichen.

Die wissenschaftliche Auseinandersetzung mit den EU Nachbarschaftsbeziehungen fokussierte bisher hauptsächlich an EU-externen Aspekten, wie z.B. der Zielsetzung im Vergleich mit anderen Akteuren, den Effekten und Auswirkungen in Drittstaaten, oder den eingesetzten Instrumenten. Im Gegensatz dazu legt die vorliegende Dissertation ein besonderes Augenmerk auf den EU-internen Aspekt der Europäischen Nachbarschaftspolitik: die ENP folgt EU-intern der Idee, einen kohärenten und einheitlichen Rahmen für alle EU Aktivitäten gegenüber den Nachbarländern aufzubauen. Hierbei behandelt diese Dissertation vor allem die Frage, in wie weit mit dem Aufbau und der Entwicklung der Europäischen Nachbarschaftspolitik eine Veränderung in den Interaktionen, Routinen und Aufgabenbereichen der involvierten EU-Akteure zu beobachten ist, wobei vor allem der Zeitraum von 2002 bis 2007 zur Analyse herangezogen wird. Zusätzlich werden dabei die Motivationen verschiedener Akteure beleuchtet, um abzuklären, warum eine Veränderung der Tätigkeitsbereiche und Politikgestaltung einzelner Akteure in erster Linie angestrebt oder dieser zumindest zugestimmt wurde. Diese Forschungsarbeit trägt hiermit zu einem besseren Verständnis von der Außenpolitikformulierung auf EU Ebene bei, und bezieht sich dabei besonders auf die langjährige Debatte über die (fehlende) Kohärenz in der EU Außenpolitik.

Die Ergebnisse dieses Forschungsprojektes zeigen, dass die Europäische Nachbarschaftspolitik nicht nur verschiedene Politikbereiche unter einen einheitlichen Rahmen zusammengebracht hat, sondern dass diese strukturelle Veränderung auch Auswirkungen auf die (informellen) Rollen und Interaktionen der involvierten EU Akteure zur Folge hatte. Die Kommission wurde im Rahmen der Politikformulierung und Implementierung bewusst stärker involviert und als Experte von den Mitgliedstaaten herangezogen, was im Vergleich zu den vorher existierenden Beziehungsgeflechten mit Nachbarstaaten einer Aufwertung der Rolle der Kommission entspricht.

Während zu Beginn der ENP diese Veränderung zu Konflikten zwischen den Akteuren führte, hatte sich eine konsensorientierte Zusammenarbeit nach wenigen Monaten eingespielt. Im Bezug auf die herangezogenen Fallbeispiele über die EU-Beziehungen zu Marokko einerseits und die EU-Beziehungen zu Georgien andererseits war es überraschend zu sehen, dass die Interaktionen der Akteure im Bezug auf Georgien trotz der höheren Anzahl von involvierten Akteuren und der stärkeren Politisierung der Politikinhalte konsensorientierter verlief als im Fall von Marokko. Dabei zeigte sich, dass die involvierten Personen und die gegenseitige Wahrnehmung eine bedeutende Rolle zum Erreichen von konsensorientierter Zusammenarbeit zwischen den EU Akteuren einnimmt.

Die vorliegende Dissertation legt zudem empirisch dar, dass die Motive für diese bewusste Anpassung der Arbeitsweise im Rahmen der ENP in erster Linie auf konkrete Politikinteressen zurückzuführen sind, die eine starke Einsicht dahingehend zeigen, dass eine effektive und erfolgreiche Nachbarschaftspolitik nur durch eine Anpassung der Interaktionen von verschiedenen Akteuren möglich ist.

Schlagwörter

Europäische Union; Europäische Nachbarschaftspolitik; EU Außenpolitik; Bürokratie- und Organisationstheorien; Institutionalismus; Georgien; Marokko;

Annex IV: Curriculum Vitae / Lebenslauf

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10/2007 – 08/2008	Research Fellow am European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) in Maastricht, Niederlande
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10/1999 - 10/2004	Studium der Politikwissenschaft an der Universität Wien (Zweifach Publizistik- und Kommunikationswissenschaften) mit Schwerpunkt Internationale Beziehungen, Konfliktmanagement und Internationales Recht; Titel der Diplomarbeit: "The EU on its way to a 'Common Security and Defence Policy'?" (Beurteilung: Sehr Gut)

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EU Außenpolitik und EU als international Akteur;
EU Governance in Beziehungen mit Drittstaaten and Europäische Nachbarschaftspolitik;
Alternative Lehransätze (Alternative Teaching approaches, e.g. Problem-based Learning);
EU Politikbereich von Justiz und Innerem (Justice and Home Affairs);
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- September 2007 “Dissemination”-Stipendium des Büros für Forschungsservice und Internationale Beziehungen der Universität Wien zur Teilnahme und Präsentation meiner Forschungsarbeit bei der SGIR Konferenz in Turin;
- November 2006 KWA-Stipendium (“Brief Scientific Stays Abroad”) des Büros für Forschungsservice und Internationale Beziehungen der Universität Wien zur Durchführung von Experteninterviews in Brüssel zur Unterstützung der Doktorarbeit;
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Publikationen

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Nicht referierte Publikationen

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