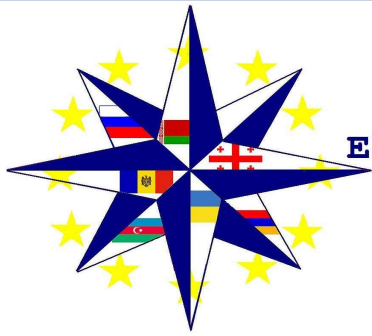


SPECIAL EDITION



Letter from the editor

Anniversaries usually bring long and pompous speeches, uplifting atmosphere, or even fireworks. People celebrate, exchange their experience and observations. They look forward to facing new challenges and possible successes. Keeping in mind the second anniversary of the Eastern Partnership (EaP), our group decided to publish a special edition of the newsletter. Nevertheless, we are far from florid words and ever-ending praises. Two years of the EaP urge us to confront the promising plans with modest results, the

expectations with the achievements. This issue is a unique collection of short, but exhausting analyses of the progress of the EaP. We take a look at every participating country. We stay critical. We appreciate successes, however, we point at numerous failures which should be overcome. Finally, we consider the EaP from the perspective of Poland, the country which is the main initiator of the programme and the next leader of the Council of the European Union. Finally we conclude

with the perspective of the EU in general. This way we provide our readers with a special summary of the last two years. We are looking forward to your comments, questions, and critique. You can write us or leave your post on our Facebook page: [facebook page](#).

Enjoy reading!

Katarzyna Wróbel

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The Eastern Partnership and Armenia: An Overview and Acknowledgments

“Armenia has to forget about the EU Eastern Partnership (EaP) project”, said editor-in-chief of journal Russia in Global Affairs Fyodor Lukyanov at the [Caucasus-2010 international conference](#) held at the Congress Hotel in Yerevan on 17th May 2011. “At a time when the European Union is divided into countries pursuing their own interests (this opens up new possibilities, but it’s too early to speak of this), the Eastern Partnership promises Armenia and other countries neither money nor other benefits. Europe at this time doesn’t need the Eastern Partnership, when they have a blazing ‘southern partnership’ and from where comes an endless stream of migrants,” said the expert.

Whether this statement is the official position of Moscow, or the expert’s conclusions were based on two years of profound expertise and studies on the EU’s relations on the EaP countries, one thing from Armenian perspective is definite, and that is the need for an alternative to Russia in Armenia’s foreign policy.

This is the main reason why Armenia started to integrate dynamically into the European structures. The inclusion of Armenia into the Eastern Partnership aims to encourage closer cooperation with Europe.

By launching the Eastern Partnership, the European Commission put forward more concrete ideas of enhancing its relationship with Armenia, as well as with Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. This policy intended to imply new association agreements including deep and comprehensive free trade agreements with those countries willing and able to start deeper engagement and gradual integration in the EU economy.

The EU-Armenian partnership is based on respect for democracy, principles of international law, human rights, and principles of the market economy. These elements are outlined in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.

Armenia is moving forward in its will of deeper cooperation with the

EU. In July 2010, the EU and Armenia launched negotiations on the future EU-Armenia Association Agreement which will be the successor agreement of the PCA. The Association Agreement will significantly deepen Armenia’s political association and economic integration with the EU. The EU and Armenia also aim to establish a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), when the relevant conditions are met.

Assistance provided by the European Neighborhood Policy Instrument (ENPI) in Armenia have contributed to strengthening the reform process in the vocational and educational training sector. Armenia has achieved satisfactory macro-economic performance in recent years and has continued to cooperate with the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other International Financial Institutions (IFI). Some progress has also been made in the area of poverty reduction though more efforts remain essential.

The main challenges for the Armenian government for the next years are to strengthen democratic structures and improve respecting of human rights, the rule of law and fundamental freedoms.

The EU has also a strong interest in developing politically stable and economically prosperous Southern Caucasus. The conflict with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) remains the major obstacle for development and contributes to the overall regional instability. Within the Eastern Partnership, Armenia has already expressed its readiness to establish a constructive dialogue with its neighbors without further preconditions. During the seminar titled “EU’s Role in the South Caucasus: From Cooperation to Partnership through Reforms: Challenges and Opportunities”, Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia [Karine Kazinian stressed](#) that Armenia gives a high assessment to the programme, specifically from the point of view of promoting cooperation, dialogue, and a trustful atmosphere.

Apart from values, the Joint Declaration of Prague EU Summit says the region is of “strategic importance”

and the EU has an “interest in developing an increasingly close relationship with its Eastern partners”.

The actions of the Armenian government prove the positive result of the cooperation established over the past years. They show Armenia’s readiness to work towards development of the Armenia-EU Association Agreement and to create a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement. “The Association Agreement currently being negotiated, with a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area at its heart and an impressive degree of alignment with EU laws, norms and standards, reflects an unprecedented level of ambition in the European Union’s relations with its Eastern European partners”, said Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighborhood policy Stefan Fuele in his [interview](#) with Mediamax in May 2011.

Armenia is carrying out political, social, and economic reforms, and has stated its wish to come closer to the EU and walk further along with Europe in order to maintain and strengthen the political will for this purpose. And while there are [opinions](#) that for making the reform process efficient, peculiarities of the country should be taken into consideration, it is important to remember that the Eastern Partnership does not offer a mechanism of problems’ solving, but it gives an opportunity to strengthen a political and economic dialogue beyond the regional and international factors.

Davit Dilanyan



Values versus interests – Azerbaijan in the Eastern Partnership

The cornerstone of EU-Azerbaijani relations since the 1990s has always been energy. The launch of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) in 2004 broadened the spectrum of cooperation between the EU and its partners, but the original focus has never changed in the case of Azerbaijan. Although great attention was paid to energy relations, important but often only declarative priorities of the ENP – support for democratic political development and changes towards market economy – got overshadowed by the pragmatic, interest-based way of cooperation. The ENP did and does not have either the incentives or the instruments to initiate democratic change in the country that [Freedom House](#) classifies as ‘not free’ since 2003. The financial assistance provided through the ENPI is decreasingly used by the rich Azeri government, while the civil sector that could be a motor of democratization is [seriously underfinanced](#).

Has the Eastern Partnership (EaP) altered the situation in the past two years? Is it efficient to diversify the scope of cooperation between the EU and Azerbaijan and to contribute to the country's democratization?

The EaP is not without challenges in Azerbaijan. The real added value, the multilateral dimension is less important for Baku at the moment, as the country [refuses to cooperate with Armenia](#) as long as it occupies Azerbaijani territories. Even

though Minister of Foreign Affairs Elmar Mammadyarov marks the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict as a priority within the EaP, the new framework still does not offer any tools or instruments to contribute to the conflict resolution.

The bilateral dimension, however, does offer new possibilities to develop political and economic relations with the EU. The Association Agreement which will replace the current Partnership and Cooperation Agreement will cover a broader scope of cooperation. However, the exact content of the negotiations launched in July 2010, is not known to the public.

According to Mammadyarov, economy and contacts between people are also key priorities for the country. The possibility of building a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with the EU could be of interest for Azerbaijan, but it needs to join the WTO first to start negotiations. Thus, the biggest incentive of the EaP remains visa liberalisation.

On his visit to Baku in January 2011, [José Manuel Barroso](#) suggested that negotiations might start soon, however the actual liberalisation is a long process and is further down the road. The visit strengthened Azerbaijan's position as a potential supplier and transit country, as the parties signed a [Joint Declaration](#) on the Southern Gas Corridor.

The same meeting brought along a Memorandum of Understanding on a Comprehensive Institution Building Programme which will contribute to

the capacity building and reform of the public administration. This could initiate democratic development; however, it completely depends on the intentions of the government.

The aggressive dissolution of protests, the imprisonment of opposition leaders and activists throughout March and April, on the other hand, do show that the government does not care about European values. If the EU wants to contribute to the improvement of the situation, it will certainly have to do more than just [condemning election violations](#) and [criticizing the government](#). The creation of the EaP Civil Society Forum was a good step towards the involvement of the civil sector in policy making and it can contribute to the empowerment of NGOs and to the transparency of bilateral relations. However, the sector needs proper financial support, especially in Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan is the most apparent case where the EU's interest and transformative ambition clash and the Eastern Partnership has not resolved this conflict at all. Taking up a more normative approach towards Azerbaijan would certainly provoke the resentment of Baku, whereas the Union does not have incentives which could motivate the government to engage in democratic reforms. If it wants to contribute to democratization, its only chance is supporting the civil society. The most important question is whether the EU can find a balance between representing its values and its interests.

Zsuzsanna Végh



European Union (EU) – Belarus relations

Pacification of an anti-presidential demonstration by Belarusian authorities at night after the elections (19th December 2010) and the start of mass repressions against the opposition put the European Union (EU) – Belarus relations in a very difficult position. The situation in the area of human rights, civil liberties and freedom of speech, leaves a lot to be desired and prevents any bilateral dialogue.

During the two years of its presence in the Eastern Partnership (EaP), Belarus considered the EU's programme as an opportunity to raise additional funds and receive aid, while ignoring democratic principles. The inaugural meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly Euronest (3rd May 2011) without legislators from Belarus is a real sign of freezing the EU's actions for Alexander Lukashenka's regime. Kristian Vigenin, Chair of the Euronest, said: "These places [in Euronest] will be waiting for 10 representatives of the Belarusian parliament, elected in a democratic way". It means that there is no real possibility for a constructive dialogue with Belarus until opposition leaders are sentenced to prison and independent activists suffer everyday repression.

The beginning of Belarusian contribution under the

EaP's programme was unusually good. As it was outlined in the strategy paper "[ENPI - Belarus National Strategy for 2007-2013](#)", Belarusian authorities increased the number of the EU projects in priority sectors of the development of small and medium enterprises, as well as of environment and border infrastructure. After years of limited access to the EU funds, Belarus started the implementation of development projects signed by the European Commission. In 2010, the financial help delivered to Belarus in the frame of the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI) reached a total sum of [10 million EUR](#).

However, it is worth mentioning, that the fact of using EU funds was not showed in the Belarusian media, so the negative image of the EU among the society remained the same. Regardless of the ideological front of media propaganda, at the administrative level Belarus truly complied with the objectives of the ENPI. An additional advantage for the Belarusian side was the ability of using the EaP programme to build relations with its neighbours, particularly with Ukraine and Lithuania. Good examples of wise using the EU funds were logistical infrastructure projects with neighbouring countries which strengthened the position of Minsk as an important partner in the whole region (e.g. highway Kiev – Minsk – Vilnius – Klaipeda or infrastructure at the Lithuanian, Polish and Ukrainian [borders](#)).

In spite of the whole financial help received from the EU, the Lukashenka regime continues maximising authoritarian atmosphere in the country. As a result, after the presidential elections in 19.12.2010, the structures of opposition are nearly destroyed and the authorities plan [to close the last two independent newspapers](#) "Nasha Niva" and "Narodnaya Volya". The repressions within the country have distanced Belarus from the dialogue with the EU. At the same time, Belarus fights against a huge economic crisis, and the strategy of receiving credits from Russia appears not to be working any longer. Even Moscow has officially begun calling for economic reforms in Belarus. This extremely difficult situation can lead Minsk to the revision of its internal policy.

The application to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a loan, made by a Belarusian government on 1st June 2011, might be an important sign in this [case](#). Bearing in mind the year 2007 when Belarus started partial liberalisation after the era of repressions, in order to successfully receive the new financial resources from the EU, initiating a new strategy towards Europe is possible. The question is: would Europe have any policy plan towards Belarus?

Łukasz Grajewski

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2011—a Decisive Year for the EaP in Georgia?

Having been launched in May 2009, the EU's *Eastern Partnership* (EaP) recently turned two years old. This article reviews Georgia's role within the EaP framework and outlines first results since the initiative's establishment. It builds on [previous analyses by the author on the EaP implementation in Georgia](#). Negotiations on an *Association Agreement* (AA) officially began in July 2010. According to Georgia's Deputy Minister, these negotiations are advancing without delay and [preliminary agreement has been reached on 8 out of 26 negotiating chapters](#). To prepare Georgia better for AA negotiations, the EU has further initiated a *Comprehensive Institution Building* program aiming to strengthen key government institutions and [disbursing €31 million from 2011 to 2013](#). Overall, Georgia will receive up to €180 million from 2011 to 2013 in light of its *National Indicative Budget* which is a part of the EU's neighborhood financing instrument. Additionally, as an integral part of the neighborhood policy framework the first Georgia-EU visa facilitation agreement entered into force in March 2011. Hence, Georgia is the third EaP country after Ukraine and Moldova to conclude negotiations on this issue. [The agreement contains a visa fee reduction for Georgian citizens from €60 to €35 as well as several procedural simplifications and a reduction of required visa application documents](#).

Finally, EU-Georgia negotiations on a *Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement* (DCFTA) have not yet begun. The DCFTA shall be passed as an integral part of the AA and represents one of the main incentives of the EaP. In general, a DCFTA ["envisages a deep convergence of the regulatory framework with that of the EU which, in turn, would lead to the removal of non-tariff barriers and a large scale liberalization of the trade in services"](#). However, in

the case of Georgia the EU has set [particularly demanding preconditions for simply launching DCFTA negotiations](#) despite the country's extraordinary reform will in the past years. As remaining requirements for beginning negotiations, the EU demands Georgian decision-makers to further harmonize domestic legislation with EU law (*acquis communautaire*) in specific areas (for instance competition law).

Taking into account the outlined progress of the EaP, overall results of the neighborhood initiative in Georgia are mixed. On the one hand, a number of problems related to the ENP have been solved within the EaP framework. More attractive and credible incentives lead to an increased likelihood of approximation in some areas. Further economic integration of Georgia into the EU seems beneficial for both sides even without the carrot of a membership perspective. Besides, the enthusiastic pro-European mood among Georgian elites allow for further socialization of EU norms and values in the coming years.

On the other hand, the EaP faces many problems in Georgia. Firstly, with its 2011 – 2013 indicative budget of €180 million for the South Caucasus republic the new policy initiative is significantly underfinanced. Besides, the EaP has not yet induced extended democratic and socio-economic reform processes due to a lacking strategic vision specifying long-term rewards for Georgia. Additionally, the government's extremely neo-liberal approach is becoming a growing obstacle for further approximation in light of the EaP. At the same time, the excessively demanding and unspecified EU conditionality linked to a DCFTA is counterproductive and seems rather to reduce Georgian reform will. Finally, Georgian elites perceive missing security and conflict resolution dimensions within EU neighborhood policies as a major flaw.

Nevertheless, throughout this year the EU and Georgia face a window of opportunity to improve current EaP shortcomings. Firstly, in the second half of 2011, [Poland will prioritize the EaP during its EU presidency](#). Secondly, under the guidance of Stefan Füle, EU Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy, [the ENP will be revised in summer 2011](#). Füle has already announced that the EU will implement a new *"more for more"* approach for the neighborhood policies implying the development of ["a framework with clear benchmarks in which our expectations of partners as regards reform are spelt out more clearly, as are the 'rewards' that our partners will obtain if those expectations are met"](#). At the same time, the revision aims at clarifying questions about EU accession perspectives for EaP partners in the long-term.

All these factors will definitely create a new political momentum for the EaP and increase chances of stronger commitment both from the EU and Georgia. At the same time, the EU can already take concrete measures to enhance the EaP's implementation in Georgia within the next months. First and foremost, the European Commission should acknowledge ongoing Georgian reform commitment and allow DCFTA-negotiations to begin without further delay. Besides, the development of a concrete long-term roadmap specifying benchmarks for conditions and rewards would ensure an ongoing Georgian commitment towards Europe. The EU is not the only big player in the region and should avoid losing its significance for Georgian decision-makers. Georgia could easily turn to other powers that aim to increase their influence in the South Caucasus. However, this would most likely disable further democratization of the country.

David Rinnert



Moldova and the Eastern Partnership: Much Has Been Achieved, More Is Still to Be Done

The launch of the Eastern Partnership on 9th May 2009 almost coincided in Moldova with the “[Twitter Revolution](#)” on 7th April, when the communist leader Vladimir Voronin was removed from power and a majority coalition with a clear pro-European stance was formed as a result of the snap parliamentary elections held in 29th July. Two years after, Moldova is seen as the [success story](#) within the Eastern Partnership countries following the strong political engagement of the governmental coalition, the Alliance for European Integration, to boost the EU-Moldova dialogue.

Much has been achieved...

For the last two years, Moldova has become a credible partner for the EU, constantly promoting closer bilateral relations and engaging in a deep reform process which has met the open support of its European counterpart. It is under the Eastern Partnership's bilateral dimension, that the talks on the Association Agreement were initiated on 12th January 2010 with the purpose of setting a more ambitious framework of cooperation aiming at enhancing the political as well as the sectoral dialogue. The agreement also envisages the creation of a free trade area to improve the access of Moldovan goods on the EU market. At this stage, the launching of the negotiations on a [Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement](#) are in a preparatory phase with the European Commission waiting for the official mandate to start the talks.

It was also in on 15th June 2010 that a [Visa Dialogue](#) was launched, a topic with a tremendous social impact having as its ultimate goal visa free travel for in the EU the Moldovan citizens. This year, the Visa Dialogue gained consistency with the [Action Plan for Visa Liberalization](#) presented by the European Commission on

24th January a document which presented more clearly what was the EU expecting from Moldova in this respect.

Moreover, as a result of the developing EU – Moldova relations, Moldova became a member of the [Energy Community](#), which is going to facilitate investments and make lower prices for the population possible.

An important step was also made with regards to solving the Transnistria conflict, it has gained more visibility on the EU – Russia strategic agenda and there are high hopes that the [official talks](#) in the 5+2 will be resumed by the end of the year.

More is still to be done.



It is without any doubt that the last two years have seen an unprecedented stepping up of the EU-Moldova relations and it is also easy to understand why Moldova is seen as the Eastern Partnership's success story. However, with unstable and immature political actors who have not till this moment been able to reach compromise and elect Moldova's president, there are many concerns that the country might soon follow the Ukrainian pattern triggering the emergence of a mutual fatigue in the bilateral dialogue. It is also perfectly understandable that there was a need for strategic planning, agenda setting measures, but at this moment Moldova should turn plans into actions and start implementing reforms in order to achieve concrete results. At this

stage, preserving its credibility towards its European counterparts as well as towards its own citizens is of paramount importance. Moldova has to prove that it can be the success story all the way till reaching its European integration goal, and that it deserves to be considered so (a success story) based on its own achievements and on the political elite's ability to compromise and ensure political stability.

As for the Eastern Partnership itself, it needs visible results in the region: in terms of democracy promotion, the EU has failed to prevent the negative evolutions on the ground. The Eastern Partnership countries, with the exception of Moldova, are [less democratic](#) now than they were five years ago. Apart from this, the Eastern Partnership needs to reevaluate its goals: soon the political association and the economic integration of these countries set as main objectives for this initiative will be complete and the EaP will be running the risk of turning into a purposeless framework. In the long run, there is no visible future for the EaP unless it clearly reflects the right to apply for EU membership of each and every country in the region that wishes to do so while complying with the European criteria, based on the provision included in the Lisbon Treaty, under [article 49](#).

In the end it is difficult to tell what the evolutions in the Eastern Neighborhood would have been if the EaP had not been launched two years ago. Instead, it is easy to note that the EaP granted visibility to the EU's Eastern dimension and thanks to its multi-lateral track has so far created a beneficial informal competition among the countries in the region that has been very well reflected in Moldova's progress.

Maria Chican

[Paneuropa Foundation](#)

Photo source:
http://wto.in.ua/files/content/news_thumbs/moldova_eu.jpg



The current stage of energy security issue in the EU-Ukraine relations under the Eastern Partnership program

The current stage of energy security issue in the EU-Ukraine relations under the Eastern Partnership program

Taking into account importance of Ukraine for the EU as the key oil and gas transit route from the East, energy security has been included into the Eastern Partnership programme. It reflects in the [Memorandum](#) from 1st December 2005 between Ukraine and the European Union concerning cooperation in the energy sector and the [Brussels Declaration](#) dated on 23rd March 2009.

The EU is highly interested in spreading own energy legislation principles on the energy market of Ukraine in order to overcome the negative aspects of the national energy sector (corruption, inadequate technologies, and low energy efficiency) and to involve the state gradually into the common European energy market. The European Energy Community has already been applied in relations between the EU and Ukraine and Moldova as the second important tool of the EU energy policy.

In the programme of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) it was agreed to work on energy security within the thematic Platform 3 "Energy security" and the flagship initiatives "Regional energy markets and energy efficiency" and "Diversification of energy supply: the Southern Energy Corridor". A common approach to act under the European energy regulations was approved by the EU and the Partner States with a possibility for third countries to participate in concrete

projects on a case-by-case basis.

Nevertheless, the adopted [Work Programme](#) has provided any appropriate background neither for improving situation on the energy market of Ukraine nor for its relations with the EU, being rather a set of recommendations than a commonly agreed action sequence.

The EU and Ukraine have different approaches and priorities. While the EU sees energy efficiency and a regulatory approximation as the key points, Ukraine is interested in receiving support for development of energy transportation infrastructure.

The EU launched with Russia the "Memorandum on an Early Warning Mechanism in the Energy Sector within the Framework of the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue" on 16th November 2009, leaving transit countries (Ukraine, Belarus, Slovakia, Poland) outside and therefore challenging relations in securing energy supplies.

Instead of that a pan-European approach through multi-lateral mechanisms for early warning and joint actions on the trilateral basis (supplying countries – transit countries – consuming countries) should be introduced. An initiative, which could be called the Energy Transparency Regime (ERT), covering the whole technological chain – from production to consumption – and sectoral forms for all energy flows – gas (ETR-gas), oil (ETR-oil), and electricity (ETR-electricity) should be introduced as an objective [monitoring method](#).

Under the 2nd core objec-

tive the EU aimed to develop gas and electricity interconnections and a relevant contractual framework among the EU Member States to support each other in case of problems with energy supplies via traditional directions. However, these initiatives do not apply to Ukraine through the Eastern Partnership, even taking into account Brussels Declaration. Still, the progress in implementation of the 2nd core objective would bring an important contribution to overcoming a non-transparent, politically marked approaches within energy relations which are still usual of Ukraine. It is necessary to start negotiations on the mostly vulnerable sphere – supply of gas. The main objective could be creating a unified gas supply system of the EU according to the European standards and involving Ukraine as an owner of the underground gas storage facilities.

The 3rd and the 4th core objectives are long-term ones and bring a little impact on strengthening of European energy security in a common sense. Since the beginning they have not received any practical support from the Ukrainian government.

As a short conclusion one statement should be sufficient. The Eastern Partnership has not used its potential for strengthening energy security of the EU and Ukraine within the first two years.

Andriy Chubyk

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"The Great Popular Movement"

A question of honour? For ages of its history Poland did not possess a real professional army. It was the Polish (along with Lithuanian) noble class, gathered spontaneously in significant times in a way of so called "popular movement" (pl. *pospolite ruszenie*), which was responsible for country's protection and called upon by the monarch in the time of peril. What one can observe in today's politics of Poland, being on-the-verge-of-its-first-Presidency-in-the-EU-Council, is presence of this unique feeling of the "popular movement". Staying at the top of the EU's management is regarded as a very ambitious challenge not only by the Polish government and (overloaded?) diplomatic service around the world, but also by the Polish society, thrilled with enthusiasm about the forthcoming event. The challenge, often referred to as a question of honour.

What meaning of Presidency? Driving a Presidency cannot mean dealing with national interests, but advocating priorities at the European level. Council Presidency after 'Lisbon Treaty' is then rather a technical task. Its agenda is closely related to Union's everyday activities – consequences of years-long policies. To finally overcome financial crisis and construct its new 2014-2020 financial perspective are contemporary EU's goals. Therefore it is so essential not to overestimate the Polish leadership in the Union, particularly when referring to the Eastern Partnership (EaP).

A year of the Eastern Partnership? 2011 has been supposed to be "the year of Eastern Partners". Two Central-European Presidencies: of Hungary and Poland were challenged to give a new impetus to the programme. Nonetheless, in order to fit into French

plans of sudden organization of the G8/G20 summit at the same time, the Hungarians announced on 17th February the postponing the 2nd EaP Summit. It appeared that Poland has been left alone with the initiative. Deep under the enthusiasm, coming from a privilege to organise the Summit, a dominant emotion must have been but disappointment. This would not be an issue provided that Warsaw possessed a potential to force a programme on the EU scene on its own, but Poland, even though it constitutes Union's sixth biggest economy, still lacks political power and an ability to built coalition like in case of the EaP – just compare recent cold relations with Lithuania. However, the positive examples of the Visegrad Group (PL-CZ-HU-SK) or the re-instituted Weimar Triangle (PL-DE-FR) show that Warsaw has a potential to play a trustful role of a regional leader. A state of play with biggest Polish non-EU neighbour, Russia, is not without significance either (see Table 1).



EaP – disappointments only? While seeking security and stability of its Eastern border Poland titles Ukraine a 'strategic partner' and perceives its accession to the EU as a long-term priority. Therefore, the Orange Revolution's withdrawal from democratic reforms has been regarded in Warsaw as a personal failure. Another disap-

pointment came from Minsk. Closure of a new pragmatic chapter in Polish/EU-Belarusian dialogue after some oppositionists' sentences happened as unpredictably as its opening just 1.5 year earlier on the 1st EaP Summit in Prague. "The idea of the programme loses its attractiveness", Belarusian MFA's spokesman A. Savinych stated recently. As a result, Belarusian deputies were not invited to the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly Euronest, but still "they are welcome" – after free elections.

Table 1 Poland and Russia closer?

Polish main opposition party accuses D. Tusk's government and MFA R. Sikorski of betrayal of Eastern Partners in favour of Moscow. The warming of relations in 2010 following the Smoleńsk catastrophe, even apart from differentiation in opinions of its suspected causes, remains the fact: despite the crisis, trade relations between the two countries were 40% higher than in 2009; the agreement on small cross-border traffic with Kaliningrad has been negotiated and awaits Commission's approval; after so many years of remaining forbidden, sailing in Pilawska Strait is finally open; first youth exchanges, financed by both governments, are going to be organized in summer 2011. Finally, Poland wants to negotiate new EU-Russia cooperation frames and even evolve "Partnership for Modernisation", a programme previously treated by Warsaw with doubtful trust.

continuation on next page

Photo link: <http://polskijuzniema.salon24.pl/198828,pospolite-ruszenie-vs-regularna-armia-wyborcy-2010>



"The Great Popular Movement" (continuation)

Can Poland channel the challenge? The most significant test for the EaP and the Polish role in it will be the 2nd EaP meeting on 29–30 September – and it is not a question “what” will be said or done there but rather “who” will eventually show up. On the 1st Summit the Union’s representation was rather weak. Is Poland able this time to attract more the EU leaders? Additionally, Warsaw prepares some others, not necessarily that much symbolic but perhaps even more concrete activities. It seems e.g. that the Polish government has finally recognized the public role of social component and has noticed its actual functioning, in contrary to other EaP sectors (see Table 2).

Table 2 Civil Society Organisations and EaP: a few contests directed to the 3rd sector have been opened; a portal <http://prezydencja.ngo.pl/> for civil society (CS) representatives was set up; various conferences on EaP were organized on either students’, think-tanks’ or ministerial level, just to mention consultancies with NGOs or an international meeting “Go East!”, both organized in October in Warsaw; all think tanks, regarding themselves as “top” ones are dealing with EaP issues, publishing policy papers, analyzes, like the last one of the governmental [Centre of Eastern Studies OSW](#) which is even coordinating a portal “EaP Community” easternpartnership.org. Again, in July Warsaw will host a conference on the “Eastern Dimension of Mobility”. Last but not least, on 28-30 November Poznań will invite 300 CS representatives from EaP and EU to

Despite the high importance of the 3rd sector, Poland must act carefully, in order not to allow non-governmental actors to take

control over the EaP and thus lead to degradation of the programme among member states. Despite the fact that CSOs involvement is crucial, it is inter-governmental level which particularly in the case of EaP has executive powers.

In other sectors, Warsaw would like to eventually sign, after more than three years of negotiations, the Association Agreement with Ukraine. Moldova is expected to start talks on free trade agreement. Also, having opened first initiatives, it is time for the first general review of the programme. The list of Polish initiatives (see Table 3) shows that Poland is truly willing to engage Eastern Partners at different levels.

Table 3 EaP meetings during Polish Presidency: In [defence policy](#) Warsaw wishes to enhance involvement of Eastern Partners in operations led by the EU. Among hundreds of meetings going to be organised throughout Poland there will be: a ministerial conference on education, higher education and science in Warsaw in July, a ministerial conference about statistic system in October in Cracow, a conference with chiefs of duty service and ministries of economy and infrastructure. There will be even panel discussions of experts of veterinary, food safety and quality, health protection, human trafficking prevention and environmental issues. Last but not least, at the end of the Presidency an event with the EU and EaP MFAs is

Finally, one cannot forget that [the EaP is an instrument to an end, not an end in itself](#). Long-term policy of comprehensive involvement and evolutionary integration is much more fruitful than political high-level occasional disputes. Warm-welcomed proposals of “Group of friends of the EaP” and

“Business Council” still remain to be implemented. Poland does not have to prove its involvement into dialogue with Eastern Partners (see Table 4). **But there is still a place for improvement. Is there also a will?**

Table 4 Polish MEPs and Eastern Partners. It is not possible to dismiss Polish involvement: 13 out of 60 Members of the European Parliament delegated to the Euronest are Poles, two of them being its vice-chairmen; it is also one of them (Jacek Saryusz-Wolski) who in 2006 actually proposed setting up of such a body. Another Pole, Marek Siwiec, is a reporter of EP Resolution on Review of European Neighbourhood Policy (Eastern dimension) a document which is going to be issued by the Commission in the following days. Another Polish MEPs are chairmen of Union-Ukrainian and Union-Belarusian Delegations of the EP.

Anita Sęk



The EU's Eastern Partnership after two Years

Two years have passed since the Prague Summit on May 2009, which officially launched the Eastern Partnership (EaP). This initiative has been quite distinctive with dual-track approach to the European Union's (EU) eastern neighbours through bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Expectations have varied among the EU member states regarding the rapprochement with countries left behind from the so-called 2004-2007 'big bang' enlargement (see [article by Andreas Marchetti, pp. 10-12](#)). The rationale for a single neighbourhood policy makes sense when ownership is shared and, unsurprisingly, the EaP has had more focus through kin EU Member States, e.g. Poland and the Nordic and Baltic States. On the partners' side, the expectations varied from fervent will to get closer to Europe (Moldova, Georgia), to indifference or ambiguity about closer relations with the EU (Azerbaijan, Belarus). The lack of consensus and equal level of motivation and impetus perhaps explains the troubled success of the EaP. In practice and concept, the EaP experiences problems of inconsistency and limited cohesion at the decision-making and implementation level. After [ENP's ambiguous 'one-size-fits-all' approach](#), the EaP's '[all-fit-in-different-size](#)' re-making is trying to alter the EU's partnership as a sole model-generator with neighbouring countries. But to what extent has the EU integration with six post-soviet countries been achieved on the background of the EaP implementation? Has the EaP policy been strengthened inside the EU as an institution and within partner countries? Or what shortcomings impede its further implementation in fact?

In the multilateral realm, several structures envisaged in the EaP proposal were established. The EaP summit takes place every two years (the next one is expected to be held [in Warsaw in September 2011](#)), and the meeting of EU and EaP Foreign Affairs Ministers takes place annually. Probably the most important landmark was the creation of the [EaP Civil Society Forum](#) (see YEaP's [3rd](#) and [7th](#) Newsletters), that is, consolidating it as the place for partners' civil societies to share experience and gain support from the EU side. The increasing interest of the participants, often bigger than their governments, is the seed of true success of the EaP in partner countries. Its third meeting will take place in November 2011 in Poznan (Poland), under the auspice of the Polish Presidency of the EU Council. After long discussions and difficult diplomatic balances, the [Euronest Parliamentary Assembly was finally inaugurated](#) on 3rd May 2011. The issue of Belarus' participation delayed its set-up, especially after the crackdown following the presidential elections in December 2010. Additionally, the EU's Committee of the Regions is still working on the set-up of an EaP assembly of local and regional powers. But most of the EaP work remains rather anonymous. Many steering and expert group meetings gathering the EU and EaP experts take place every month, both at [multilateral](#) and [bilateral](#) level. The EaP institutional development is even going beyond the EU borders. On 6th May 2011, [the Council of Europe and the EU launched a series of projects](#) to enable the EaP countries to improve their standards in four areas: public administration and electoral process; reform of the legal system; fight

against cybercrime; and the fight against corruption.

Nevertheless, the partnership at a bilateral and multilateral level makes an impression that both sides are reluctant in cooperation, as the EaP does not promise a membership perspective to any of six members upon successful completion of set objectives. Therefore, the cost-benefit calculation of involved actors is blurred. However, it gives a huge incentive stating [its support to political and socio-economic reforms of the partner countries that could facilitate approximation towards the EU](#). More resolute as this statement may be, the EU is still divided on its Eastern front and on its turn, the Eastern partners are also scattered in determination of their foreign policy vector towards the EU. Taking into consideration the Russian factor, the EU lags behind in addressing conflicts and crises that partner countries suffer from. Abkhazia and South Ossetia conflicts in Georgia, the Transnistria conflict in Moldova and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan are linked to Russia's "Near Abroad" policy focus. In other words, the EU's move in security and border management policy towards its Eastern partners has cornered with failure and lacks leverage necessary to confront Russia. The level of the EU engagement also depends on the degree of significance a partner reflects for the EU. For instance, the EU turns a blind eye on numerous human rights abuses in Azerbaijan, as the latter acts the only oil and gas producer among the EaP partners, which is being delivered to the European market through strategic oil and gas pipelines rooting from the Caspian Sea.

continuation on next page



The EU's Eastern Partnership after two Years (continuation)

The EaP Civil Society Forum has also raised the issue of human rights putting Azerbaijan and Belarus in the same row for the call to release civil society activists and political prisoners. On the other side, the EU has agreed on a more flexible visa regulation with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, but the other three partners were put aside from visa facilitation agreements. Another big gap is the trade cooperation. Ukraine is the forerunner by signing the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA), and the negotiation with Armenia, Georgia and Moldova will launch after they fulfil conditions. However, Azerbaijan is out of the DCFTA agenda due to its non-membership to WTO, while Belarus shows no interest at all on such an agreement. The balance is therefore positive but incomplete. Positive, because common bodies are built and developed to entangle the EU standards into the EaP partners and to foster regional cooperation that otherwise may not happen at the initiative of the partners concerned. Incomplete, because the offer does not always fulfil the aspirations of every single partner, and because the relative effectiveness of EaP's has inherited the conditionality shortcomings of the ENP. Moreover, the EaP itself does not seem to

solve the main challenge in the region in terms of democracy, rule of law and democracy, that is, Belarus.

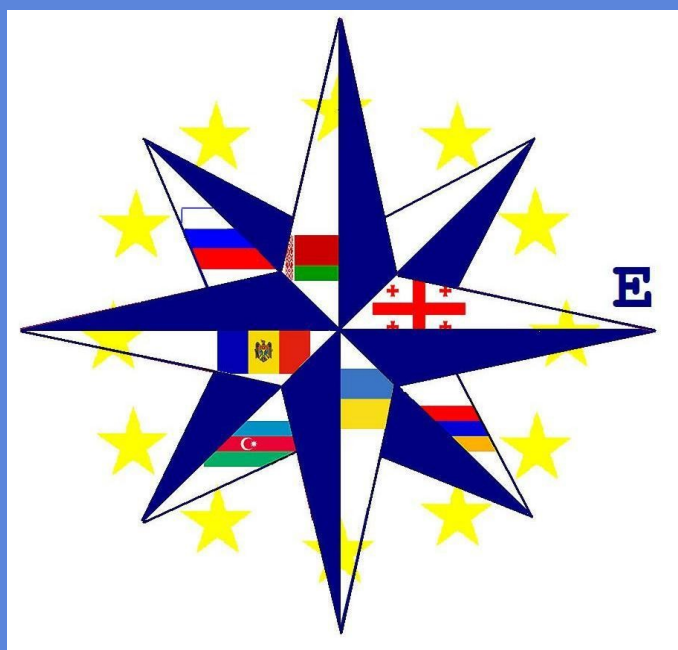
The EaP is often considered as a stake of Eastern EU Member States solely, which would ultimately provoke the ENP's split, given the different real possibilities of integration into the EU standards between Eastern and Southern neighbours. Moreover, the Union for the Mediterranean has drawn more attention with growing urgency on the background of the Arab spring. The so-called Jasmine Revolution currently undergoing in several Arab countries has proven the opposite and in the ongoing ENP review, democratic conditionality will be of utmost importance to offer further EU engagement, regardless of geography. The Communication on "A new response to a changing Neighbourhood", published on 25th May 2011, states that the EU "shall adapt levels of EU support to partners according to progress on political reforms and building deep democracy". 'Deep democracy', according to the EU, entails free and fair elections, freedom of association, expression and assembly and a free press and media, rule of law administered by an independent judiciary and right to a fair trial, fighting against corruption and security and

law enforcement sector reform. All of them are elements that need improvement and development, both in the East and the South of the EU's neighbourhood. With such ambitious proposals, there are reasons to be hopeful, but also be sceptical. In this sense, the EU has to re-think its policy of incentives towards the EaP partners in order to stir a spoon in the basket with carrots, so that the EaP partners will be tempted to put their own spoons into the basket to benefit the EU, all in all resulting in a 'win-win' policy. Poland assuming the chair of the EU Council rotating presidency on 1st July 2011 foretells a semester with great projection for the EaP, hopefully resulting in increased ownership of it by other EU member states. This would increase the global success of the EaP and its goals.

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