CHAPTER 13

The Principle of Good Neighbourliness and the European Neighbourhood Policy

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1 Introduction

Unprecedented geopolitical and security changes culminating in deep political crisis in Ukraine in 2014 have brought new challenges to the EU’s external policy towards the East. It appeared that the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the Eastern Partnership (EaP) have failed to prevent escalating civil conflict in Ukraine and withdrawal of some of the EU’s eastern neighbours from the course of European integration. The ENP was born in 2004 with the ambitious objective of avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and the EU’s neighbourhood and to strengthen prosperity, stability and security beyond the EU borders in line with the good neighbourliness principle. However, these objectives remain distant to this day. In the meantime, the EU’s neighbourhood is an area of active and hidden civil conflicts, intricate border disputes and escalating security threats. Does this mean that the good neighbourliness principle has failed to play its role?

The first part of the chapter is devoted to a study of the scope and content of the ENP and the EaP and the role of the good neighbourliness principle within these policies. The second part of the chapter analyses the impact of the good neighbourliness principle on the ‘post-Crimea’ and ‘post-Donbass’ EU neighbourhood.

2 European Neighbourhood Policy and the Good Neighbourliness Principle

The first draft of the ENP was outlined in the European Commission’s Communication ‘On Wider Europe’ in March 2003, followed by a Strategy
Paper on the ENP in May 2004. Since then, the European Commission has made three proposals (in December 2006, in May 2011 and in May 2012) on how the ENP could be further strengthened and improved. Today, the ENP framework formally embraces sixteen of the EU’s closest geographical and ‘political’ neighbours – Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine.

Gradually, the ENP was further enriched and supplemented with regional and multilateral cooperation initiatives: the Eastern Partnership (launched in May 2009), the Union for the Mediterranean (the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, formerly known as the Barcelona Process, re-launched in Paris in July 2008), the Black Sea Synergy (launched in February 2008) and the Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean (launched in March 2011).

The ENP embodies the philosophy of the EU external action towards its neighbourhood – to create “a ring of friends” surrounding the Union and its closest European neighbours, from Morocco to Russia and the Black Sea ‘sharing everything with the Union not institutions’. In a nutshell, the ENP offered the neighbouring countries a ‘privileged relationship’ with the EU based on a mutual commitment to common European values (democracy and human rights, rule of law, good governance, market economy principles and sustainable development). The ultimate objectives of the ENP are political

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4 After the adoption of the Treaty of Lisbon the common European values are enshrined in Article 2 TEU: