



ENP Country Progress Report 2014 – Israel

Brussels, 25 March 2015

The 2015 ENP package "Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2014" consists of a joint Communication and a set of country specific and regional reports. The report on Israel underlines key developments and reform efforts in 2014 and makes recommendations for the year to come.

The political and security situation in 2014, with its armed conflicts and hostilities, was a challenge for the Middle East. Israel launched *Operation Protective Edge* in July 2014, following indiscriminate rocket fire from the **Gaza** Strip. The renewed hostilities in Gaza resulted in 72 deaths on the Israeli side (6 civilians) and over 2 100 on the Palestinian side (of whom 70% were civilian according to the United Nations). It is against this particular background that the ENP report 2014 on Israel has been established.

The implementation of common values, particularly the respect for human rights in the occupied territories and in relation to minorities, continued to pose a challenge.

The State of Israel is based on the values of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law, where fundamental rights are enshrined in 'basic laws' and it has a functioning market economy. This, however, needs to be seen in the unique context of the occupation of Palestinian territories.

On a bilateral level, the relations of the EU with Israel remained the most developed in the region, involving a significant level of trade and economic and scientific cooperation. The 2015 report notes several positive developments: for example, that cooperation and dialogue with Israel was significantly more active than in 2013; that it had continued to implement effective measures to curb money laundering and to combat trafficking in human beings.

The EU recognises that Israel has the right to defend itself. The devastating effect of the hostilities in Gaza in 2014 on the civilian population underlined the significant challenges attached to Israel's responsibilities in the occupied territories.

On the basis of the Country Progress Report, several actions are recommended to Israel for the year to come, amongst others:

- making every effort to ensure an early resumption of the Middle East Peace Process;
- ensuring respect for the principles of international law and human rights in the occupied territories;
- ensuring respect of international law and human rights in the treatment of irregular migrants and asylum-seekers;
- continuing and increasing its efforts to ensure the equality of all Israeli citizens;
- ratifying the protocol on the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts, components and ammunition to the 2003 UN Convention on Transnational Organised Crime.

For further information:

I. EU financial support:

In 2014, EU cooperation with Israel continued with the identification of programmes to be supported through twinings under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). The EU also supported Israeli civil society through the Partnership for Peace programme.

In addition to the ENI, Israel also benefitted in 2014 from other EU support such as European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (€1.2 million)

Further information on financial cooperation can be found in Section IV of the **Statistical Annex** and on the Website of DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations:

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/israel/index_en.htm

II. Further sources of information:

1. Joint Communication on the implementation of the ENP in 2014

http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/2015/joint-communication_en.pdf

1. Progress report for Israel with the full list of recommendations
http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/2015/israel-enp-report-2015_en.pdf

1. ENP Action Plan

http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/pdf/action_plans/israel_enp_ap_final_en.pdf

1. The European Neighbourhood Policy in general:

a.) EEAS

http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/index_en.htm

b.) European Commission

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/overview/index_en.htm

1. Website of Ms Federica Mogherini, HR/VP

http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/mogherini_en

1. Website of Mr Johannes Hahn, Member of the European Commission for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations

http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/hahn_en

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