

## Reading in the reality and development of Algerian-European relations.

قراءة في واقع وتطور العلاقات الجزائرية-الأوروبية.

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### Abstract

This study aims to examine the nuances of Algerian-European relations, with a particular focus on the establishment of a free trade zone between the two entities. It explores the manifestation of numerous collaborative projects within this framework. The European-Algerian Partnership project offers a mix of opportunities and challenges. The existing trade-focused relations between the European Union and Algeria have been deemed insufficient, necessitating a strengthening of ties. This has led to efforts towards a new cooperative paradigm, namely, the establishment of comprehensive partnership agreements across various sectors. Since its formation, the European Union has actively sought to forge economic ties with external regions. To this end, it has entered into several cooperation agreements with various Mediterranean states under the umbrella of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. This analysis seeks to provide a deeper understanding of these evolving dynamics and their broader implications.

**Keywords:** European-Algerian Relations; Coopération; Euro-Algerian Partnership; Economic Relations.

### ملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة لتسليط الضوء على واقع العلاقات الجزائرية-الأوروبية، المركزة أساسا على انشاء منطقة للتبادل الحر بين الطرفين وما نلمسه على صعيد هذه العلاقات هو تجسد العديد من المشاريع بن ضفتي المتوسط بشكل متفاوت بين دوله وكياناته وفواعله المختلفة. لقد ساهمت عدة عوامل على تفعيل دعائم الشراكة والتي تمتد عبر الاقتصاد، التاريخ والجغرافيا، فمشروع الشراكة الأوروبية-الجزائرية يطرح جملة من الفرص والتحديات. إذ أن علاقات التعاون بين الاتحاد الأوروبي والجزائر لم تعد تلك المرتكزة على الجانب التجاري كافية، فكان لابد من تقوية هذه العلاقات لإيجاد صيغة جديدة للتعاون تتمثل في ابرام اتفاقيات للشراكة الشاملة بين الطرفين في شتى المجالات وهذا ما يعرف بالشراكة الأورو جزائرية. وقد سعى الاتحاد الأوروبي منذ نشأته إلى إقامة علاقات اقتصادية مع محيطه الخارجي، ولهذا فقد أبرم عدة اتفاقيات تعاون مع مختلف الدول المتوسطية، قبل ان يقوم بإطلاق مشروع شراكة يمس عدة جوانب اقتصادية واجتماعية وثقافية وسياسية في إطار ما اصطلح على تسميته بالشراكة الأورومتوسطية.

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كلمات مفتاحية: علاقات أوروبية-جزائرية؛ تعاون؛ شراكة أورو جزائرية؛ علاقات اقتصادية.

## 1. Introduction

Algeria's relations with the European Union are not a product of today. They date back to the post-colonial period. The historical course of Algerian-European relations has gone through several stages. These relations have witnessed several developments, events and results. Perhaps this relationship is characterized by the great interest of the European Union in Algeria. This is due to its qualifications and privileges. Algerian-European relations have witnessed a distinct interest of researchers and specialists in their respective fields, given their paramount importance in the history of Algeria and the Ottoman State on the one hand, and in relations between the two sides of the Mediterranean on the other, both in terms of the nature of those relations and in terms of the volume of trade between the parties. - Available in many sources and references- in different languages, which followed the development of the aforementioned relationships.

Algeria's European relations have been governed by several factors that have influenced their nature and persistence, which can be summarized as follows:

- Algeria's association with the Ottoman Empire: since Algeria became a subsidiary of the Ottoman Empire, European States have been reluctant to approach it through various endeavours; political, diplomatic and economic. The attempts ended in a conflict between those States over who had previously won a contract of peace and friendship with Algeria, and inter-relations increased during the 17th and 18th centuries. It should be noted that the curve of relations has changed with the changing status of the Algerian fleet in the western Mediterranean, which has been evident since the beginning of the nineteenth century.
- European renaissance and change of power balance in the Mediterranean region: the European renaissance accompanied by the industrial revolution era in Europe had an important role to play in gradually changing the power balance in the Mediterranean region "The military development in the modern shipbuilding industry has had a significant impact on the separation of the conflict between the two banks of the West Mediterranean, especially since the European countries have come to decide their destiny for Algeria together and act in unity, This is reflected in the decisions of the Vienna and X. Lashbell conferences.
- The United States of America's accession to the Western Europe and its entry into conflict

Through the foregoing we raise the following problem: What is the nature of Algerian-European relations?

### **2. Roots of Algerian-European relations:**

The topic of Algeria's European relations has taken an important place on the agenda of both parties. This has been elaborated through many steps and major negotiations since the early 1970s. The European Union has taken great interest in the issue of partnership with the Mediterranean countries in general and Algeria in particular, in enjoying a new and broad market and a distinct location centred on the countries of the Maghreb. Algeria's European relations have always been excellent, given the fact that there are factors that have helped to do so, most notably the geographical factor between Algeria and Europe or historical factors, since Algeria is a former French colony. In addition to the economic factor, the European Union is Algeria's first economic partner.

During the sixteenth century, Algeria's European relations with only two parties were limited: France and Spain, the other European parties have not yet appeared on the Mediterranean Square, so there has been no direct contact between them and Algeria.

The historical course of Algerian-European relations has gone through several stages. These relations have witnessed several developments, events and results. They have been negative on the one hand and their response on the other. This relationship is perhaps characterized by Algeria's great interest in the European Union. This is due to its qualifications, privileges and geostrategic location.

It is well known that Europe's history was a century of labour and a difficult birth century, resulting in the establishment of the nation State in some of them, and the beginning of the advent of that State in others. On the other hand, it marked the beginning of a sub-transformation in the structure of the European communities and in the restructuring of their cultures and intellectual structures and the formulations of their economic activities. It is therefore the century of major transformations in European history.

Since the decade of the eighteenth century, Algeria seems to have taken the principle of direct contracting as the basis for peaceful relations with any European State, as demonstrated by its position on the adoption of a consul for France in Algeria. This position was explicitly confirmed in 1604. This year, France concluded a new treaty with the Ottoman Empire whereby it obtained extensive privileges for its nationals in the Ottoman territories. France sent the same envoy who negotiated with the Ottomans, François Savary de Brèves, to make arrangements with Algerian officials for the implementation of the treaty with the Ottomans in Algeria. (bouriche, 2008)

In the 18th century, peaceful relations between Algeria and France, England and the Netherlands were calm and stable. Algeria also expanded peace treaties with other European parties during this century, at the end of

which it was in a state of peace with all European countries with interests on average. (Braude, 2017, pp. 191-192)

At the outset, Algeria concluded a cooperation agreement in 1976, having been linked to the European Economic Community established under the Treaty of Rome by virtue of its relations with the French colonizer, after which Algeria emerged in an effort aimed primarily at economic openness to the world and contributing to the achievement of development, thereby accepting the option of partnership in 2002. (saghour, 2010, p. 25)

We conclude through the agreements concluded between Algeria and the European countries during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. to affirm the Contracting Parties' intention to establish firm peace and friendship between them, which is reflected in the freedom of trade between the two municipalities and the facilities that each party enjoys when accessing the second party's ports and to secure their maritime navigation from vessels, goods and persons, to make arrangements for the exchange or disassociation of prisoners from both sides and to determine the amount of customs duties for goods originating in or exporting from the port of Algeria preferential transactions", a fixed fee applicable to all, there are no preferential transactions in this area. On the other hand, these contracts confirm an important and significant principle in this period, namely the obligation of the parties not to assist each other's enemies or to provide them with facilities in any way. (Braudel, 2015, p. 198)

The roots of Algerian-European relations can be traced back to the long and complex history of Algeria as a former French colony. Here are some key points that highlight the foundations and developments of these relations: (Daniela & Joanna, 2015)

- French Colonial Period: Algeria was colonized by France in 1830 and remained under French control for over a century. During this period, Algeria was integrated into the French colonial empire, with significant economic, political, and cultural ties between France and Algeria. The French influence had a profound impact on Algerian society and institutions.
- Algerian War of Independence: The struggle for independence from French rule began in 1954 and lasted for eight years until 1962. The conflict was marked by a brutal war, characterized by guerrilla warfare and widespread violence. The war had a significant impact on the relationship between Algeria and France, leading to a rupture in their ties.
- Post-Independence Relations: After gaining independence, Algeria sought to assert its sovereignty and develop its own political and economic path. The country pursued a policy of non-alignment during

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the Cold War and developed close ties with other countries that shared its anti-colonial and anti-imperialist stance.

- **Economic Relations:** France has historically been a major economic partner for Algeria. Despite the strained political relations at times, economic cooperation between the two countries has continued. Algeria has been an important supplier of oil and gas to France, while France has been a significant investor in Algeria's economy, particularly in sectors such as energy, infrastructure, and telecommunications.
- **Migration and Cultural Exchanges:** Algerian migration to Europe, particularly to France, has been a significant aspect of Algerian-European relations. Algerians migrated to France during the colonial period, and the flow of migrants continued after independence. The Algerian diaspora in Europe, especially in France, has played a crucial role in maintaining cultural connections between the two regions.
- **Political Relations:** The political relations between Algeria and European countries, including France, have had their ups and downs. Algeria has often pursued an independent foreign policy, advocating for Third World solidarity and supporting liberation movements in Africa and other parts of the world. However, there have also been periods of diplomatic cooperation and partnership on various issues, such as counterterrorism and migration management.

It is important to note that Algerian-European relations encompass more than just Algeria's relationship with France. Algeria has diplomatic ties and engages in various forms of cooperation with other European countries as well, including trade, investment, and political dialogue.

### **3. Evolution of European-Algerian relations:**

The evolution of European-Algerian relations has seen various phases and developments since Algeria's independence in 1962. Here's a broad overview of the key stages:

**Post-Independence Period (1960s-1970s):** After gaining independence, Algeria focused on consolidating its sovereignty and asserting its position as a newly independent nation. It pursued a policy of non-alignment, seeking support from both Western and Eastern bloc countries. During this period, Algeria maintained relatively strained relations with its former colonizer, France, due to the legacy of the Algerian War of Independence.

**Heightened Tensions with France (1980s-1990s):** The 1980s and 1990s witnessed significant tensions between Algeria and France. This was primarily due to the Algerian government's concerns about perceived French interference in its internal affairs, particularly regarding the conflict with

Islamist militant groups during the Algerian Civil War (1991-2002). The strained relations resulted in limited political dialogue and sporadic cooperation during this period. (Mestek, 2021, pp. 2-5)

**Economic Cooperation and Energy Partnerships:** Despite political challenges, economic relations between Algeria and European countries, especially France and other energy-dependent nations, expanded significantly. Algeria's vast reserves of oil and natural gas became crucial for European energy security. Energy partnerships, trade agreements, and investments in the energy sector played a prominent role in shaping bilateral relations. (Vicente, 2020, pp. 3-4)

**Security Cooperation and Counterterrorism Efforts:** The threat of terrorism, particularly emanating from Islamist extremist groups, led to increased cooperation between Algeria and European countries in the realm of security and counterterrorism. European nations collaborated with Algeria in intelligence sharing, law enforcement, and efforts to combat transnational terrorism, recognizing Algeria's experience in dealing with these challenges domestically.

**Migration and Socio-Cultural Dynamics:** Migration has been a significant aspect of European-Algerian relations, particularly with France. Algerian immigrants, primarily seeking economic opportunities, have formed diaspora communities in Europe. The integration and social dynamics surrounding Algerian migrants have influenced relations, occasionally leading to debates and tensions related to identity, cultural assimilation, and immigration policies.

**Political Engagement and Diplomacy:** Over time, political dialogue and diplomatic engagement between Algeria and European countries have shown signs of improvement. High-level visits, exchange of delegations, and efforts to strengthen bilateral ties have taken place. These interactions aim to foster political understanding, address shared challenges, and explore cooperation in various fields such as trade, investment, and education.

**Regional and Multilateral Engagement:** Algeria plays an active role in regional and multilateral forums, such as the African Union (AU), Arab League, and the Mediterranean Union. Its engagement in these platforms has provided opportunities for cooperation, dialogue, and alignment of interests with European countries on regional issues, including migration, security, and economic development.

It's essential to recognize that European-Algerian relations are complex and multifaceted, encompassing political, economic, security, and socio-cultural dimensions. The evolution of these relations has been influenced by

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historical factors, economic interests, security challenges, migration flows, and changing regional dynamics. The nature of the relationship can also vary among individual European countries, depending on historical ties, economic interests, and political considerations.

The European Union's economic policy towards the Arab region follows from the evolution of the European integration and integration process and thus the emergence of the European Union as an international economic force capable of playing an important role in global policies, (Tassy, 2012, p. 21) Cooperation relations between Europe and Arab States have experienced ups and downs as a result of international and regional variables The partnership with the countries of the Southern Bank of the Mediterranean has been strengthened by a number of factors. This includes Algeria, where European-Algerian relations span the economy, history and geography. The European-Algerian partnership project presents a range of opportunities and challenges, especially with the specificity of the Algerian situation. European-Algerian relations have evolved through three stations:

### **3-1. European-Algerian relations from cooperation agreements to partnership agreements:**

European-Algerian relations have evolved over the years, progressing from cooperation agreements to partnership agreements. Let's take a look at the key developments and stages of this relationship.

**Cooperation Agreements:** In the early years following Algeria's independence from France in 1962, cooperation agreements were established between Algeria and various European countries, primarily France. These agreements focused on economic cooperation, development assistance, and trade relations.

**Association Agreement with the European Union:** In 2002, Algeria signed an Association Agreement with the European Union (EU). The agreement aimed to strengthen political, economic, and cultural ties between Algeria and the EU member states. It promoted trade liberalization, investment, and cooperation in various sectors, including energy, agriculture, industry, and transport. (Walsh, 2020)

**The European Neighborhood Policy:** Algeria became a part of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) in 2004. The ENP aimed to create a ring of friends around the EU, fostering closer cooperation with neighboring countries. Under the ENP, Algeria received financial assistance and technical cooperation in areas such as governance, human rights, and social development.



**Upgraded Cooperation to Partnership:** In recent years, there has been a shift from cooperation agreements to partnership agreements between Algeria and European countries. These partnerships reflect a deeper level of engagement and mutual interests. The partnerships encompass a wide range of areas, including political dialogue, security cooperation, economic relations, and cultural exchanges.

**Energy Partnership:** Algeria has played a crucial role in the energy sector, particularly as a major natural gas supplier to Europe. Energy cooperation and partnerships between Algeria and European countries, especially France, Spain, Italy, and Germany, have been a key component of the bilateral relationship. This cooperation includes joint ventures, investment in energy infrastructure, and exploration of renewable energy sources.

**Security and Counterterrorism Cooperation:** Given Algeria's strategic location and its experience in combating terrorism, security cooperation has been a significant aspect of European-Algerian relations. European countries have collaborated with Algeria on intelligence sharing, capacity building, and counterterrorism efforts to address common security challenges. (Mestek, 2021).

**Migration and Border Control:** The management of migration flows has been another area of cooperation between Algeria and European countries. This includes efforts to enhance border control, combat human trafficking, and address the root causes of irregular migration. Algeria has been a transit country for migrants attempting to reach Europe. (Zardo & Loschi, 2022)

In summary, European-Algerian relations have progressed from early cooperation agreements to a comprehensive partnership. The focus has expanded from economic cooperation to include political dialogue, security cooperation, energy partnerships, and addressing common challenges such as migration. These partnerships reflect the shared interests and the evolving nature of the relationship between Algeria and European countries.

### **3-2. European-Algerian Partnership Negotiations:**

The European-Algerian partnership negotiations refer to ongoing discussions and negotiations between the European Union (EU) and Algeria aimed at strengthening cooperation and establishing a comprehensive partnership between the two entities. I can provide you with some general information on the historical relationship between the EU and Algeria and the potential areas of cooperation that could be discussed in these negotiations. (Walsh, 2020)

Algeria, as a neighboring country of the EU, has a significant political, economic, and strategic importance. The EU and Algeria have a long-standing

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relationship based on various agreements, including the EU-Algeria Association Agreement signed in 2002, which aims to promote political dialogue, economic cooperation, and cultural exchanges between the two parties.

The negotiations between the EU and Algeria could cover a wide range of areas, including trade, energy, security, migration, human rights, and regional cooperation. Some of the potential topics that might be addressed include:

Trade and Economic Cooperation: The negotiations could focus on enhancing trade relations, reducing trade barriers, and increasing investment flows between the EU and Algeria. Discussions might also revolve around cooperation in sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, industry, and services.

Energy Cooperation: Algeria is a major energy producer and exporter, particularly in natural gas. The negotiations could explore opportunities for cooperation in the energy sector, including energy security, renewable energy development, and energy efficiency.

Security and Counterterrorism: Given the geopolitical challenges in the region, discussions could center on cooperation in security matters, counterterrorism efforts, and combating organized crime, including illegal migration and drug trafficking.

Migration and Mobility: Discussions might also touch upon issues related to migration management, border control, and mobility, with a focus on facilitating legal migration channels and preventing irregular migration flows. (Zardo & Loschi, 2022)

Human Rights and Democracy: The negotiations could include dialogue on human rights, democratic reforms, and the rule of law, with the EU encouraging Algeria to make progress in these areas.

It's important to note that the specifics of the negotiations would depend on the priorities and interests of both the EU and Algeria at the time of the negotiations.

### **3-3. EU-Algeria Partnership Agreement:**

The European Union (EU) and Algeria have a partnership agreement known as the EU-Algeria Association Agreement. This agreement was signed in 2002 and came into force in 2005. However, please note that developments may have occurred since then, and it is advisable to refer to the latest official sources or news updates for the most recent information.

The EU-Algeria Association Agreement aims to promote political, economic, and social cooperation between the EU and Algeria. It covers a wide

range of areas including trade, investment, agriculture, energy, migration, human rights, and cultural exchange.

The agreement establishes a framework for dialogue and cooperation through various mechanisms, including regular high-level meetings and joint committees. It also sets out principles of cooperation, such as the promotion of democracy, rule of law, human rights, and sustainable development.

In terms of trade, the agreement provides for the progressive establishment of a free trade area between the EU and Algeria. It includes provisions for the liberalization of trade in goods and services, as well as the facilitation of investment flows. The agreement also addresses issues related to intellectual property rights, competition, and public procurement.

Furthermore, the EU and Algeria collaborate on issues of mutual interest, including migration management, security, counterterrorism, and regional stability. The partnership seeks to enhance cooperation in these areas through dialogue, information exchange, and joint initiatives. (Alhatash, 2021)

It is worth noting that the EU-Algeria Association Agreement is part of the broader Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, also known as the Barcelona Process. This initiative aims to foster political, economic, and social cooperation between the EU and its Mediterranean partners, including Algeria.

#### **4. Results:**

At last we can provide with some results about potential areas of partnership between the European Union (EU) and Algeria based on their historical relationship and common interests.

The EU and Algeria have maintained a significant partnership over the years, particularly in areas such as trade, energy, and migration. Algeria is an important energy supplier for Europe, exporting natural gas and oil, while the EU is one of Algeria's main trading partners.

Here are some potential areas of future partnership:

- **Trade and Economic Cooperation:** The EU and Algeria could continue to enhance their trade relationship by promoting investment, reducing trade barriers, and exploring new sectors for collaboration. This could include diversifying trade beyond the energy sector and expanding cooperation in industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, and services.
- **Energy:** Energy cooperation has been a key aspect of EU-Algeria relations. The two could work together to develop renewable energy projects, improve energy efficiency, and explore opportunities for joint research and development in the energy sector. The EU's experience in renewable energy integration and

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Algeria's vast renewable energy potential could lead to fruitful collaborations.

- Security and Counterterrorism: Algeria has been an important partner for the EU in terms of security and counterterrorism efforts. Given the shared interest in combating terrorism and organized crime, the EU and Algeria could continue to cooperate on intelligence sharing, border security, and capacity-building programs to enhance security in the region.
- Migration and Mobility: Addressing migration challenges in a comprehensive and collaborative manner could be an area of future partnership. This could involve cooperation on migration management, border control, and initiatives to address the root causes of migration. Additionally, promoting legal migration pathways and enhancing people-to-people exchanges could also strengthen ties between the EU and Algeria.
- Education and Research: Strengthening educational and research collaboration between the EU and Algeria could contribute to human capital development and knowledge transfer. Initiatives such as student exchange programs, joint research projects, and academic partnerships could foster greater cooperation in science, technology, and innovation.

It's important to note that the direction and extent of any future partnership between the EU and Algeria will depend on various factors, including geopolitical developments, policy priorities, and the willingness of both parties to deepen their cooperation.

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