



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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New funding to support economic development, civil society and institution building in Armenia

The European Union has adopted a package of €41 million to support civil society, regional development and agriculture in Armenia. This assistance is being provided in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

"The EU and Armenia are committed to continuing cooperation in all areas of mutual interest based on common values. Our assistance for agriculture and rural development, balanced regional development, a more efficient civil service and reinforced civil society will provide significant impetus for reforms in Armenia and bring concrete benefits to people," said Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle.

On agriculture and rural development, new EU initiatives will improve the agricultural institutions, encourage the development of farmers' associations and improve access to more affordable food for Armenian citizens. The support is intended to contribute to better conditions in rural areas of Armenia.

In the area of regional development, the programme will support specific projects (e.g. public-private partnerships, employment creation, training of the labour force) to step up the economic development of Armenia's regions.

The announced support will also reinforce civil society, as a very important partner for the EU, in promoting bilateral cooperation and monitoring reforms, enhance the ability of civil servants in priority areas including the EU Visa Facilitation and Re-admission Agreements, and facilitate Armenia's participation in EU programmes and cooperation with EU agencies.

Background

This programme is part of the Eastern Partnership initiative, which represents the Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy and aims to bring Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine closer to the European Union.

The Programme is financed from the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) and consists of three parts:

- Support to Agriculture and Rural Development, to contribute to efficient and sustainable agriculture and development of rural areas in Armenia, in line with the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD) approach. (€25 million)

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- Support to Regional Development in Armenia to ensure progress towards the more balanced social and economic development between regions of Armenia. (€10 million)
- Support for EU-Armenia Agreements to assist key Armenian institutions to implement the Visa Facilitation/Readmission Agreements and the ENP Action Plan, to reinforce Armenia's civil society role to monitor the implementation of the Armenian reform agenda, to strengthen the ability of civil servants, as well as to promote Armenia's participation in EU programmes and cooperation with EU agencies. (€6 million)

For more information

Website of the Commissioner Stefan Füle:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/fule/index_en.htm

Eastern Partnership:

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/easternpartnership>

Delegation of the European Union to Armenia:

http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/armenia/index_en.htm