



ENP Country Progress Report 2014 – Armenia

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 Armenia underlines key main developments and reform efforts in 2014 and makes recommendations for the year to come.

The EU and Armenia have reconfirmed their commitment to further develop and strengthen their cooperation in areas of mutual interest within the Eastern Partnership framework. The EU and Armenia have recently successfully completed their joint scoping exercise for a future legal agreement compatible with Armenia's new international obligations after the country became a member of the Eurasian Economic Union. This will enable both sides to launch soon negotiations on a new EU-Armenia overarching agreement once the respective negotiating mandates have been approved.

In 2014 Armenia advanced on several bilateral agreements: The EU-Armenia Visa-Facilitation and Readmission Agreements entered into force in January 2014 and since March 2014, Armenia can participate in EU programs and agencies.

Armenia continued its democratic transition process, in particular with regard to constitutional reform. Certain human rights issues, fundamental freedoms and rule of law issues remained to be dealt with. Armenia developed legislation in several areas that is in line with EU rules and standards or international requirements. Such legislation often remained to be adopted and implemented. Related reforms were developed but not put in practice. The lack of trust in the judicial system persisted. The fight against corruption remained a key issue. Progress was noted with regard to the right of free legal aid.

Armenia continued to implement sound macroeconomic policies, such as with regard to poverty reduction and social cohesion. Economic activity continued to decelerate in 2014. Reforms in the tax administration continued. More efforts to diversify the economy are recommendable.

The European Commission received Armenia's stress test on the Medzamor nuclear power plant. The test will be reviewed in 2015. This procedure is in line with EU nuclear safety requirements.

2014 marked the 20th anniversary of the 1994 ceasefire agreement in relation to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict against the background of a continued stalemate. The security situation on the ground remained a matter of serious concern amid unprecedented incidents and casualties since 1994, as well as rise in confrontational rhetoric and a continued arms race.

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

- initiating the amendment of the electoral legislation in accordance with OSCE/ODIHR recommendations in due time before the parliamentary elections in 2017;
- adopting and implementing comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation;
- investigating the cases of attacks and intimidation of human rights defenders and ensuring effective law enforcement, including in cases relating to the deaths that occurred during the clashes of March 2008 and the allegations of ill-treatment in police custody and violation of due process;

- Intensifying the reform of the judiciary and law enforcement and implementing the related reform agenda; continuing public administration reform, intensifying the prevention of and the fight against corruption;
- stepping up efforts towards a comprehensive peace settlement in accordance with the commitments undertaken within the Minsk Group; refraining from actions and statements that could heighten tension and undermine the peace process;
- progressing in regulatory approximation with international trade-related laws and standards in order to achieve the objective of diversifying Armenian exports with commodities of higher value added;

Please find the whole list of recommendations in the Country Progress Report here:

http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/documents/progress-reports/index_en.htm

For further information:

I. Financial cooperation:

In 2014, EU funding through the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) amounted to €34 million to support small businesses and private sector development, and protection of human rights.

A total of up to €170 million will be available for Armenia in the years 2014-2017 to support reforms in key areas, such as private sector development, public reform administration and justice.

Complementary support for the modernisation of public institutions and for civil society can be provided outside the priority sectors. Total figures are indicative: final allocations will depend on the country's needs and commitment to reforms.

In addition to ENI, in 2014 Armenia benefitted from other EU support, including humanitarian assistance (€10 million) and the thematic programme for Civil Society and Local Authorities (€3.1 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:

www.ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/armenia/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 Armenia with the full list of recommendations

http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/pdf/2015/armenia-enp-report-2015_en.pdf

1. ENP Action Plan

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