Fundamentals of the relationship

The EU relations with Armenia are regulated by the EU-Armenia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement signed in 1996 and ratified in 1999, which allows for wide-ranging cooperation in the areas of political dialogue, trade, investment, economy, law-making and culture.

EU – Armenia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement since 1996

The inclusion of Armenia as one of the countries of the Southern Caucasus in the European Neighbourhood Policy (2004) and the Eastern Partnership (2009) has demonstrated the EU’s willingness to move its cooperation with Armenia beyond the terms of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. During the 2013 Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius, the EU and Armenia agreed on the need to update the EU-Armenia Action Plan and build upon the existing framework for cooperation. The EU is Armenia’s main trading partner, accounting for around 30% of Armenia’s total trade. In 2014, the EU-Armenia bilateral trade amounted to €992 million.

The EU and Armenia continue their political and trade dialogue and cooperation across a broad variety of areas. In this context, the EU signed with Armenia a Visa-Facilitation and Readmission Agreement which entered into force in January 2014. Armenia’s closer cooperation with the EU will take account of Armenia’s other international commitments.

Commissioner Hahn visiting and EU funded vocational educational and training College in Yerevan
Support for reforms and development

The EU is strongly committed to support Armenia in the advancement of political and social reforms, in implementing the Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements and in improving the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The EU financial assistance of €140-170 million in grants, for the period of 2014-2017 is primarily focused on private sector development and reforms of public administration and judiciary.

EU Financial cooperation: between 140-170 million € for 2014-2017

The EU support to those sectors is not new. For instance, in 2012-2013 the EU funded a project aiming to enhance and promote human rights protection in the country, improve efficiency of election administration and transparency of electoral processes and empower civil society actors to effectively monitor election process. Another EU project, implemented between 2009 and 2012, has provided “Support for Access to Justice in Armenia”, aiming to facilitate access to justice for socially vulnerable groups of the population and improve the training and education of judges and court personnel. Last year Armenia’s National Assembly adopted an amendment to the current Customs Code, in line with the recommendations of an ongoing EU twinning project.

Working together to protect the environment

In the area of environment protection, an EU-funded regional climate change project was implemented in 2014, providing support for the development of a national adaptation and mitigation strategy. Additionally, an EU environment twinning project helped the Ministry of Nature Protection prepare a new policy and legislation on integrated pollution prevention and control.

Strengthening of institutions

The EU also helps Armenia to improve management in the area of migration, strengthen customs control procedures and enforcement and build the capacity of local institutions. Projects such as “Quality control on expenditure verification reports in Armenia”, “Introduction of e-Governance systems at State Revenues Committee of the Republic of Armenia” and “Support the State Migration Service for strengthening of migration management in Armenia” are only a few examples of EU's assistance in these areas.

Closer contacts between the people

Since March 2014 Armenia can also participate in EU programmes and agencies. Last year Armenia participated in the Tempus programme with 29 projects out of which 8 were coordinated by an Armenian higher education institution. 246 students and staff were selected in 2014 for mobility within partnerships supported by Erasmus Mundus and five students were selected for a joint Master’s degree. Armenia also participated in the eTwinning plus action with 23 schools. Young people and youth organisations benefited from Erasmus+, with 1443 participating in mobility projects and 123 in the action for young people and decision-makers.