



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **EU and Azerbaijan strengthen cooperation in the framework of the EU Neighbourhood Policy**

**The EU Foreign Affairs Council in Luxembourg (14 April 2014) adopted a decision which will allow the signing and provisional application of a protocol to the EU-Azerbaijan Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) concerning a Framework Agreement between the EU and Azerbaijan on general principles for the participation of Azerbaijan in Union programmes.**

The negotiated text also foresees that the Parties shall provisionally apply the provisions of this Protocol from the date of its signature. The signing of a Protocol is scheduled to take place in the near future. The Protocol paves the way for closer EU-Azerbaijan co-operation under a number of specific EU policies and programmes, such as Horizon 2020, COSME or Customs. Additional possibilities for involvement will also be offered in the areas of fight against crime and terrorism, civil protection, as well as in the fields of media, culture and youth exchanges.

#### **Background**

As part of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the gradual opening-up of certain Union programmes and agencies to the participation of ENP partner countries represents one of many measures to promote reform, modernisation and transition in the European Union's neighbourhood. The Commission outlined this policy aspect more extensively in its Communication of December 2006 "on the general approach to enable European Neighbourhood Policy partner countries to participate in Community agencies and Community programmes"<sup>[1]</sup>.

Based upon this Communication and those conclusions, the Council, on 18 June 2007, issued directives to the Commission to negotiate Framework Agreements with Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia and Ukraine, on the general principles for their participation in Community programmes<sup>[2]</sup>.

ENP partners may participate solely in EU programmes which are open to non-EU member countries. The main programmes concerned are: Horizon 2020, Creative Europe, COSME, Life Programme, Customs 2020, Fiscalis 2020, Hercule III, Copernicus, Erasmus + and many others. More info:

[http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/eu-programmes/index_en.htm)

[1] COM (2006) 724 final of 4 December 2006;

[2] Council Decision (restricted) authorising the Commission to negotiate Protocols [...], Doc 10412/07;

