

Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement with Armenia

In 2013, the European Union and Armenia were due to sign an association agreement, including a deep and comprehensive free trade agreement (DCFTA). Under Russian pressure, Armenia decided not to sign the agreement, preferring to join the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union. Nevertheless, the EU and Armenia continued their negotiations with the aim of reaching a new comprehensive and enhanced partnership agreement (CEPA). The CEPA was signed on 14 November 2017. During its July plenary session, the European Parliament is expected to vote on giving its consent to the draft Council decision to conclude the agreement.

Background

On 29 September 2015, the Council [adopted](#) decisions authorising the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to negotiate a framework agreement between the EU and Armenia. Both parties signed this agreement on 24 November 2017. The agreement is the first of its kind signed with a member of the Eurasian Economic Union, demonstrating that it is possible for a third country to cooperate with both Russia and the EU. The Armenian Parliament [ratified](#) the agreement unanimously on 11 April 2018, triggering its provisional application as of 1 June 2018.

Content of the agreement

The conclusion of this [agreement](#) is a sign of the European Union's new flexible approach under the [reformed](#) European Neighbourhood Policy. It includes standard EU political clauses on human rights, the International Criminal Court, weapons of mass destruction, small arms and light weapons, and counter-terrorism. In addition, it provides for cooperation in a large number of fields, such as the environment, industrial policy, climate change, transport, taxation, energy, education and culture, banking and insurance, research and innovation, mining and tourism.

Armenia committed to take steps on economic modernisation and gradual approximation with the EU *acquis*. Furthermore, the agreement contains a substantial trade section, to improve and enlarge trade between the EU and Armenia, while respecting Armenia's obligations under the Eurasian Economic Union. The EU also insisted on including a number of provisions protecting Geographical Indications (GIs).

The agreement also contains provisions on legal cooperation, including the rule of law, cooperation against organised crime, money laundering and counter-terrorism.

European Parliament position

On 16 May 2018, Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) [recommended](#) giving consent to the conclusion of the agreement. The [AFET](#) committee recalled that this partnership is a first step in the relationship, and insisted that violence based on gender and sexual orientation continues to remain of serious concern in Armenia. It also called on the European Commission to make financial assistance conditional on the continuation of reforms in Armenia, and reiterated its request to the Commission to transmit to Parliament a detailed written report on the implementation of international agreements every six months. The recommendation will now be considered in plenary in July.

Consent procedure: [2017/0238\(NLE\)](#); Committee responsible: AFET; Rapporteur: László Tőkés (EPP, Hungary)

