

## Azerbaijan: no deal without respect of EU values, say MEPs

- The future deal should be ambitious and comprehensive
- And contribute to fight corruption, money laundering and tax evasion
- Progress to be made as regards respect of fundamental freedoms

### **The deepening of EU-Azerbaijan relations should be conditional on respecting EU values and rights, said Foreign Affairs MEPs on Wednesday.**

In their recommendation on the negotiations on the EU-Azerbaijan Comprehensive Agreement, passed by 56 votes to 2, with 7 abstentions, Foreign Affairs MEPs call on the EU Council, Commission and External Action Service to:

- ensure that the deepening of EU-Azerbaijan relations is conditional on upholding and respecting democracy, rule of law, good governance, human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- remind the Azerbaijani authorities that no comprehensive agreement will be ratified with a country that does not respect fundamental EU values and rights;
- guarantee that the future deal with Azerbaijan is ambitious, comprehensive, and will deliver benefits to both sides;
- put in place specific provisions to support Azerbaijan in fighting economic crime including corruption, money laundering and tax evasion and back investigations into laundering schemes notably the “Laundromat” affair;
- ensure, before the conclusion of the negotiations, that Azerbaijan takes significant steps as regards the release of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience;
- further support free and pluralistic media in Azerbaijan with editorial independence from dominant political and oligarchic groups and in line with EU standards;

### **Peaceful solution to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict**

The EU participation in peacefully solving the Nagorno Karabakh conflict should be enhanced, MEPs say underlining that new deals between the EU and each of the parties to this conflict must be made conditional on meaningful commitments to and substantial progress towards the peaceful resolution of the conflict.

## Quote

Parliament's rapporteur [Norica NICOLAI](#) (ALDE, RO) said: "We face today the reality of seeing the EU borders more and more insecure, therefore a good dialogue and cooperation within the Eastern Partnership including Azerbaijan becomes essential. An honest and trustful relationship between the representatives of EU and Azerbaijan will bring economic benefits to both sides and can assure the consolidation of the democracy in this area."

## Next steps

The full house is expected to vote on the final text at its July 2018 plenary session in Strasbourg.

## Background

EU-Azerbaijan relations are currently regulated by the 1999 Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. The EU is Azerbaijan's first trading partner and its biggest export and import market representing 48.6% of Azerbaijan's total trade and constituting the largest source of foreign direct investment.

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## Further information

[EP Foreign Affairs Committee](#)

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[Procedure file](#)

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