

EU/Azerbaijan Framework Agreement: general principles for the participation of Azerbaijan in Union programmes. Protocol to the EC /Azerbaijan Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

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PURPOSE: to conclude a Protocol to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Azerbaijan, of the other part, on a Framework Agreement between the European Union and Azerbaijan on the general principles for the participation of Azerbaijan in Union programmes.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

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](#) "on the general approach to enable European Neighbourhood Policy partner countries to participate in Community agencies and Community programmes". The Council endorsed this approach in conclusions on 5 March 2007.

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. To date, a number of Protocols have already been signed with a number of these countries.

In October 2012, Azerbaijan expressed its interest to participate in the broad range of programmes open to partner countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

The text of the Protocol negotiated with Azerbaijan is attached and is the subject of this proposal.

The Protocol should now be approved on behalf of the Union.

CONTENT: the Commission herewith submits a proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of the Protocol.

This Protocol contains a Framework Agreement on the general principles for the participation of Azerbaijan in Union programmes. It contains standard stipulations that are intended to be applied to all European Neighbourhood Policy partner countries with which such protocols are to be concluded.

The Protocol determines in particular the specific terms and conditions, in particular, the financial contribution and reporting and evaluation procedures, regarding the participation of Azerbaijan in each particular programme in an agreement between the European Commission and the competent authorities of Azerbaijan.

The negotiated text also foresees that the Parties shall provisionally apply the provisions of this Protocol from the date of its signature.

According to Article 218(6)(a) of the TFEU, the European Parliament shall be requested to give its consent to the conclusion of this Protocol.

In parallel, the Commission submits a proposal for a Council Decision on the signature and provisional application of the said Protocol.