

EU/Euratom/Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement

2017/0238(NLE) - 25/09/2017

PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the European Union, the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, Armenia, on the other.

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: relations between the European Union and Armenia are currently based on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Armenia, of the other part, which entered into force on 1 July 1999 for an initial ten-year period and which has been automatically renewed.

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. The European Parliament has been kept promptly and fully informed throughout the negotiations.

The Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Armenia, of the other part was signed on 24 November 2017, subject to its conclusion at a later date.

The Council must adopt a decision concluding the Agreement after approval by the European Parliament.

CONTENT: **the Joint Proposal of the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy** is the legal instrument required for the **conclusion of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement** between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Armenia, of the other part.

The Agreement aims to strengthen political dialogue by creating an institutional framework and organising cooperation procedures between Armenia and the EU in a **wide range of areas**. It paves the way for a more effective bilateral relationship with Armenia and is an important step towards increased political and economic involvement of the European Union in the South Caucasus.

The Agreement:

- includes the EU's standard political clauses on human rights, the international criminal courts, weapons of mass destruction, small arms and light weapons, and counterterrorism. It also contains provisions on cooperation in areas such as transport, energy, health, the environment, climate change, taxation, education and culture, employment and social affairs, banking and insurance, industrial policy, agriculture and rural development, tourism, research and innovation, and mining;
- covers legal cooperation, the rule of law, combating money laundering and terrorist financing, and fighting organised crime and corruption;

- foresees that Armenia shall take steps to develop a well-functioning market economy and to gradually approximate its economic and financial regulations and policies to those of the European Union, as well as supporting Armenia in ensuring sound macroeconomic policies;
- contains a substantive trade title with important commitments in several trade policy areas. These will improve conditions for bilateral EU-Armenia trade, while taking full account of Armenia's obligations as a member of the Eurasian Economic Union. They will ensure a better regulatory environment for economic operators in areas such as trade in services and goods, setting up and running companies, capital movements, government procurement and intellectual property rights, sustainable development, and competition;
- creates a Subcommittee on Geographical Indications to be approved by the Commission on behalf of the European Union. Where interested parties cannot reach agreement following objections relating to a geographical indication, the Commission shall adopt such a position on the basis of the procedure laid down in Article 57 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs.

Although the Agreement is designed to bring Armenian law gradually closer to the EU acquis, it does not go as far as to establish an association between the EU and Armenia.