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## PRESS RELEASE

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### EU grants Armenia access to its Agencies and Programmes

Today, the 11 December, the European Parliament gave its consent to the participation of the Republic of Armenia in EU Agencies and Programmes, adopting the report drafted by MEP Tomasz Poreba on this issue, which represents the first tangible cooperation step after the EU-Armenia declaration at the recent Vilnius Summit.

In particular Armenia will have access to the EU world leading programs in the fields of culture, education, environment, and science. Armenian civil servants will be integrated into EU agencies such as aviation security, medicine and environment, and this on all levels.

"Participants of the Vilnius summit discussed the best way to promote and shape the EU-Armenia cooperation, while respecting Armenia complementary foreign policy and its integration into the Customs Union. Granting Armenia access to EU Agencies and Programmes, reserved to date mostly to EU member states, is a very concrete step in the right direction and will allow Armenia to reap financial and administrative benefits vital for the country's modernisation. I think this is a more than encouraging signal from both sides to keep moving forward in concrete terms, with benefits for everyone involved" comments EuFoA Secretary General Dr Michael Kambeck.

The European Parliament report underlines that it was the Republic of Armenia which requested access to the EU Programmes and Agencies, and that the EU with this initiative aims to promote the modernisation in the country.

Along the same lines of the Vilnius declaration, the report clearly states that, *"...it will permit the gradual opening of or reinforced participation in certain Union programmes for Armenia, offering an opportunity to promote further cultural, educational, environmental, technical and scientific links, enhancing people-to-people contacts and sectorial cooperation, in addition to the strengthening of the political and relations through the Eastern Partnership..."*

The Republic of Armenia is in a unique situation to make the most out of this new milestone with the EU, as according to the latest International Renaissance Foundation integration index for EaP countries, Armenia is already in the second best position to benefit of its participation in EU programmes and Agencies.

#### Background note:

The Republic of Armenia may, in particular, be able to join EU programmes, such as LIFE, on environment and climate action, with a 3.29 billion euro budget for the period 2014-2020; HORIZON 2020, on knowledge, innovation and sustainable development, with 70.2 billion euro budget for the same period; or the well-known ERASMUS PLUS, among others, as long as their statutes and objectives permit for such participation, a financial contribution is made, and a memorandum of understanding is signed by both parties.

In addition, Armenian officials will be integrated into the management of those programmes and into EU Agencies, such as the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), the European Environment Agency (EEA), the European Medicines Agency (EMA), etc, thus gaining expertise and skills of world leading agencies in their fields which can then be transferred to their national administration.

EuFoA is happy to provide commentary or background analysis in English, German, French, Italian, Polish, Russian and Armenian. Members of the Europe-Armenia Advisory Council may also be available for comments; for enquiries please contact our secretariat.

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