



EU - Armenia
Comprehensive and Enhanced
Partnership Agreement (CEPA)
ROADMAP

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Yerevan

This is a joint Action Plan or a Roadmap for the **Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** signed between the European Union and the Republic of Armenia, prepared by a group of civil society actors with extensive experience in democratic reform monitoring, critique, and policy development. The submission covers the following areas of the CEPA: *a) independence of judiciary, b) impartiality and effectiveness of prosecution and law enforcement bodies, c) access to justice, d) right to be free from torture, e) right to life, f) freedom of assembly and association, g) right to free vote, h) right to fair trial, i) freedom of expression, j) migration, asylum and border management, k) illicit drugs, l) health and safety at work, m) fight against corruption, n) transparent and accountable governance, o) public procurement, p) statistics, q) media freedom, r) human rights, non-discrimination and fundamental freedoms, s) education, t) taxation, u) air quality, water quality and waste management.*

The submission is prepared following broad consultations with all of the organizations and is based on the collective experience of monitoring of such previous policies as European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Action Plan (2005-2017), Association Agreement Roadmap (2012-2013) and in-depth knowledge of the area problems gained in first-hand monitoring by democratic and human rights institutions in Armenia.

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Analytical Center on Globalization and Regional Cooperation
Center for Rights Development
Helsinki Citizens' Assembly - Vanadzor
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Institute of Public Policy
Journalists' Club "Asparez"
National Center of Public Policy Research NGO
Protection of Rights without Borders NGO
Real World Real People NGO
Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center
Union of Informed Citizens NGO
Women's Resource Center Armenia
Artak Kyurumyan, Public Finance Management Expert
Davit Khachatryan, Ph.D., Expert

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Independence of judiciary

ARTICLE 4: Domestic reform

The Parties shall cooperate in the following areas:

(c) making further progress on judicial and legal reform, so as to secure the independence, quality and efficiency of the judiciary

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
The Justice Council exercises its decision-making power arbitrarily. It controls the conduct of judges and punishes or rewards them.	Prescribe in the Judicial Code the right of a judge to appeal the decisions of the Supreme Judicial Council on terminating the powers of a judge or disciplining the judge.	The Judicial Code prescribes the right of a judge to appeal the decisions of the Supreme Judicial Council on terminating the powers of a judge or disciplining the judge.	The appeal mechanism is prescribed for a judicial instance (for example, in a plenary of a chamber of the Cassation Court, similar to Italy). The legislation corresponds to the opinion issued by the CoE Venice Commission.	TBD
Under the Judicial Code (Paragraph 2(5) of Article 32), presidents of first instance and appellate courts may, when detecting a <i>prima facie</i> violation of the code of conduct by a judge, report it. This provision contains a serious threat of abuse and of limiting the judge's independence.	Remove from the Judicial Code (Paragraph 2(5) of Article 32) the power of presidents of first instance and appellate courts to file a report to the Disciplinary Matters Committee of the General Assembly when detecting a <i>prima facie</i> violation of the code of conduct by a judge.	The amendment to the Judicial Code has helped to strengthen the independence of judges.	Paragraph 2(5) of Article 32 is removed from the Code (it accorded power to the presidents of first instance and appellate courts to file a report to the Disciplinary Matters Committee of the General Assembly when detecting a <i>prima facie</i> violation of the code of conduct by a judge).	
The independence of a judge is undermined by the possibility of imposing personal responsibility on a judge for the acts rendered in the capacity of a court.	Remove from the Judicial Code (Paragraph 1 of Article 51) the provision that allows imposing personal responsibility on a judge for the acts rendered in the capacity of a court.	In the respective provision, the words “or features of a disciplinary violation” should be replaced with the words “or features of a violation of the code of conduct.”	The respective draft legislation is adopted by the National Assembly with the mentioned changes.	

Impartiality and effectiveness of prosecution and law enforcement bodies

ARTICLE 4: Domestic reform

The Parties shall cooperate in the following areas:

(c) making further progress on judicial and legal reform, so as to secure the independence, quality and efficiency of the judiciary, the prosecution and law enforcement; (d) strengthening the administrative capacity and guaranteeing the impartiality and effectiveness of law-enforcement bodies.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
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<p>The new legislative amendments have limited the independence of the Police and the National Security Service, placing them in complete dependency upon the Prime Minister.</p>	<p>Under draft laws on the Police and the National Security Service, reorganize them as ministries—securing parliamentary and civil oversight of their activities.</p>	<p>Police and National Security Service have ministry status within the Government, and are accountable to the parliamentary.</p>	<p>The relevant draft legislation is adopted by the National Assembly in accordance with Venice Commission document CDL-AD (2007)016. The National Assembly regularly scrutinizes reports filed by the Police and the National Security Service. Civil observer groups carry out unhindered observation in places of deprivation of liberty, which are under these authorities.</p>	
<p>The selection of the Head of the Investigative Committee and the Head of the Special Investigative Service limits their independence and lacks public accountability.</p>	<p>Ensure election of the Head of the Investigative Committee and the Head of the Special Investigative Service by qualified majority of the National Assembly, as well as the appointment of their deputies after consultations on the candidacies in the lead committees of the National Assembly. Unify the tax, customs, and national security investigative authorities within the Investigative Committee as respective subdivisions of the latter.</p>	<p>The independence of the investigative authorities is safeguarded through appropriate legislative amendments.</p>	<p>The relevant draft legislation is adopted by the RoA National Assembly.</p>	
<p>The process of nominating and electing the Prosecutor General does not have objective criteria that would safeguard the independence of the General Prosecution Office in practice.</p>	<p>Require apolitical professional expert assessment in of the process of nominating and electing the Prosecutor General in the National Assembly.</p>	<p>The Law on the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly and other laws on the Prosecution Office are revised, and there is expert participation in the process of appointing the Prosecutor General.</p>	<p>The legislation on the Prosecution Office and the election procedure of the Prosecutor General are in conformity with Recommendation Rec(2000)19 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and Venice Commission document CDL-AD (2010)040 (§34).</p>	

The lack of judicial and prosecutorial oversight of operational and search activities facilitates the violations of fundamental human rights in the course of such activities.	Ensure judicial and prosecutorial oversight of operational and search activities, as well as their legal evaluation and proper notification of the subject(s) of these activities.	The legislation prescribes judicial and prosecutorial oversight of operational and search activities, and a requirement to properly notify affected persons about activities being carried out in respect of them. The legislation prescribes the liability of officials carrying out operational and search activities in case of violations.	The law on operational and search activities corresponds to the standards of the European Court of Human Rights, especially in terms of the presumption of innocence.	
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Access to justice

ARTICLE 12: Rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms

1. In their cooperation in the area of freedom, security and justice, the Parties shall attach particular importance to the consolidation of the rule of law, including the independence of the judiciary, access to justice, the right to a fair trial as provided for by the European Convention on Human Rights, and procedural safeguards in criminal matters and victims' rights.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
The failure to grant non-governmental organizations the right to apply to court in the matters of defending public interests, limits the access to justice for persons.	In the Judicial Code, safeguard the right of non-governmental organizations to apply to court in the matters of defending public interests.	According to the decision SDO-906 of the Constitutional Court dated 7 September 2010, a new paragraph is added to the Judicial Code and related legal acts, which provides the right of a non-governmental organization to apply to court in the matters of defending public interests, if the protection of a such right stems from the charter of a non-governmental organization.	The respective amendment to the Judicial Code is adopted by the National Assembly.	

Right to be free from torture

ARTICLE 4: Domestic reform

The Parties shall cooperate in the following areas:

(b) ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
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The definition of torture in the Criminal Code (Article 309.1) and other articles of the Code do not include criminal liability for other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment.	Criminalize cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment in accordance with the principles of the UN Convention against Torture.	The Criminal Code proscribes the crime of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment.	The Criminal Code is amended to proscribe, as a specific crime, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment.	
During interrogations, police officers continue to use torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment in order to extract testimony.	Ensure video and audio recording of all interrogations in police stations in order to prevent and identify cases of torture and ill-treatment.	Video and audio recordings of interrogations are provided to the defense counsel, observer groups and citizens for the purpose of preventing and identifying torture and ill-treatment.	The legislation is amended to require video and audio recording of all interrogations carried out in police stations.	
Public observer groups observing penitentiary institutions under the Ministry of Justice and Police Places for Holding Arrested Persons are often obstructed in terms of unhindered visits to places of deprivation of liberty. Other closed and semi-closed institutions are not subject to regular public monitoring, which poses a risk of human rights abuse.	Ensure unhindered access of civil observer groups to all closed and semi-closed institutions for the purpose of unhindered monitoring.	The human rights situation in closed and semi-closed institutions is under the oversight of civil observer groups. State authorities cooperate with observer groups in addressing the discovered violations and protecting rights.	The legislation is amended as necessary; civil observer groups are created and have unhindered access to closed and semi-closed institutions.	
In the cases investigated by the Special Investigative Service, operational and search activities are performed by the Police, which may create conflicts of interest and undermine the impartiality of such investigations.	Grant the Special Investigative Service the power to perform operational and search activities.	The Special Investigative Service, it has the power to perform operational and search activities.	The Law on the Special Investigative Service and the Law on Operational and Search Activities are amended accordingly.	
LGBTI persons and representatives of other vulnerable groups held in the places of deprivation of liberty are constantly subjected to discriminatory and disrespectful treatment.	Ensure non-discriminatory and respectful treatment of LGBTI persons and representatives of other vulnerable groups held in the places of deprivation of liberty.	LGBTI persons and representatives of other vulnerable groups held in the places of deprivation of liberty are protected against discriminatory treatment.	LGBTI persons and representatives of other vulnerable groups held in places of deprivation of liberty are not, against their will, engaged in the cleaning of penitentiary institutions, are not subjected to discriminatory treatment and stigma, and enjoy all the services of the penitentiary institutions on an equal footing with other persons.	

Right to life

ARTICLE 4: Domestic reform

The Parties shall cooperate in the following areas:

(b) ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
Effective investigation into the cases of death of 10 persons on March 1, 2008 within a reasonable period has not been ensured to date.	1. Ensure effective investigation of the cases of death of 10 persons on March 1, 2008 within a reasonable period in order to identify the police and security senior command responsibility. 2. Ensure the full compensation of the successors of victims of March.	1. The case is effectively investigated, and fair trial is ensured. 2. Full compensation of the successors of victims of March 1, 2008 is ensured.	1. As a result of investigations into the death of 10 persons on March 1, 2008, responsible public officials are charged, the indictments are sent to court, and publicity of the criminal case is ensured. 2. Full compensation is received by the successors of the victims of March 1.	
The state fails to ensure a comprehensive, complete and impartial investigation within a reasonable period of the cases of non-combat death of servicemen.	Ensure a comprehensive, complete, and impartial investigation within a reasonable period of the cases of non-combat death of servicemen.	The right to a fair trial is safeguarded in the cases of non-combat death of servicemen.	Comprehensive, complete, and impartial investigation conducted within a reasonable period leads to charging the accused and determining liability of the supreme command in accordance with the EHCR standards on the right to a fair trial.	

Freedom of assembly and association

ARTICLE 4: Domestic reform

The Parties shall cooperate in the following areas:

(b) ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
To date, the State has failed to ensure a prompt, effective, and comprehensive investigation of the violence exerted on journalists and other participants of the peaceful demonstrations in June 2015 and July 2016.	Ensure a prompt, effective, and comprehensive investigation of the violence exerted on journalists and other participants of the peaceful demonstrations in June 2015 and July 2016.	The cases of violence exerted on journalists and other participants of the peaceful demonstrations in June 2015 and July 2016 are investigated fairly.	Criminal cases are initiated with respect to the violence exerted on journalists and other participants of the peaceful demonstrations in June 2015 and July 2016. Police officers and the command responsible for their actions are held liable.	
The right to liberty and security of the person is violated because the time of arrest is counted from the time of completing the arrest protocol.	In accordance with the international standards, ensure that the time of arrest is counted from the moment the person is <i>de facto</i> deprived of liberty.	As a result of counting the time of arrest from the moment the person is <i>de facto</i> deprived of liberty, persons are better protected against unlawful deprivation of liberty.	The Criminal Procedure Code is amended to count the time of arrest in line with the standards of Article 5 of the ECHR.	2018

Right to free vote

ARTICLE 4: Domestic reform

The Parties shall cooperate in the following areas:

(b) ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
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The criminalization of false reports concerning proxy voting or attaching to the application a statement with a false signature restrains observers from freely reporting violations of the voting rights.	Eliminate the criminal liability for false reports concerning proxy voting or attaching to the application a statement with a false signature.	As a result of amending the Criminal Code, observers and other persons participating in the elections are not discouraged from reporting to the police their findings of electoral violations.	Article 154.8 of the Criminal Code is repealed.	
The legislation fails to effectively prevent the abuse of position and of administrative resources during election campaigns.	Implement the OSCE/ODIHR recommendations on prohibiting election campaigning in abuse of position and of administrative resources.	The legislation contains a prohibition of election campaigning in abuse of position and of administrative resources, and the prohibition is applied effectively in practice.	The Criminal Code, Administrative Offences Code, and other laws contain provisions that prohibit election campaigning in abuse of position and of administrative resources.	2018

Right to fair trial

ARTICLE 12: Rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms

1. In their cooperation in the area of freedom, security and justice, the Parties shall attach particular importance to the consolidation of the rule of law, including the independence of the judiciary, access to justice, **the right to a fair trial** as provided for by the European Convention on Human Rights, and procedural safeguards in criminal matters and victims' rights.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
In the course of their professional activities, attorneys are subjected to groundless searches and restrictions, which violate their clients' right of access to justice.	Adopt legislation which prohibits officials from searching the lawyers performing their professional duties, unless they are based on clearly formulated grounds and are necessary in a democratic society to secure a legitimate aim, and do not prejudice the defendants' right to a fair trial, and, in particular, the attorney-client privilege.	As a result of the adopted legislative amendments, the professional activities of advocates are protected from groundless searches and interferences.	The new legislation defines the exceptional grounds for examining advocates, which are balanced against the safeguards of the right to a fair trial	
The judge's power to impose a penalty on an attorney violates the right to a fair trial and restricts the independence of attorneys.	Amend the procedure codes to eliminate the power of the judge to impose a penalty on an attorney.	As a result of entry into force of the adopted legislative amendments, judges no longer may restrict the independence of attorneys.	The legislation is amended and is consistent with the standards of Article 6 of the ECHR, i.e. the ECtHR judgment in the Kyprianou v. Cyprus case.	
The fact that all attorneys are unified within one chamber is not helping to strengthen the independence of the community of attorneys.	Safeguard the freedom of association for attorneys by eliminating the legislative requirement that all attorneys must be members of one chamber of attorneys.	The possibility to unify in two or more chambers contributes to the independence of the community of attorneys and the improvement of the quality of their services.	The Law on Advocacy and related laws are amended as necessary.	

The Public Defender's Office fails to safeguard adequate quality of free legal aid.	Ensure adequate quality of free legal aid provided by the Public Defender's Office.	The quality of free legal aid has improved as a result of competition between various advocates.	The free legal aid services provided by the Public Defender's Office are regulated by the Law on Public Procurements.	
The free legal aid provided by the Public Defender's Office does not give a full access to justice, as it does not include representation in the Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights.	Expand the mandate of the Public Defender's Office, allowing the Public Defenders to represent cases also before the Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights.	The effectiveness of the free legal aid services provided by the Public Defender's Office has improved.	The legislation is amended as necessary.	
The criminal procedure legislation fails to secure the equality of arms adequately, because the person whose rights are violated cannot apply to an independent expert and use such expert's opinion as an evidence in court.	Amend the Criminal Procedure Code to ensure that persons whose rights are violated may apply to an independent expert and use such expert's opinion as an evidence in court.	Chapter 35 of the Criminal Procedure Code is amended to ensure the equality of arms in accordance with the case-law of European Court of Human Rights (Article 6).	As a result of the legislative amendments, persons whose rights are violated have the right to apply to an expert independently and to use the expert opinion as an evidence in court.	
The minimum age (18 years) for life imprisonment in the Criminal Code does not facilitate the development of restorative justice.	Amend the Criminal Code to provide that persons who were under the age of 21 at the time of committing the crime may not be sentenced to life imprisonment.	The Criminal Code is amended and supplemented appropriately.	As a result of the legislative amendments, the life imprisonment is not applied for persons under the age of 21.	

Freedom of expression

ARTICLE 4: Domestic reform

The Parties shall cooperate in the following areas:

(b) ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
To date, the state has failed to ensure prompt, effective, and comprehensive investigation of the violence exerted on journalists covering the peaceful demonstrations in June 2015 and July 2016.	Ensure prompt, effective, and comprehensive investigation of the violence exerted on journalists covering the peaceful demonstrations in June 2015 and July 2016.	The cases of violence exerted on journalists covering the demonstrations and otherwise obstructing their professional activities covering the peaceful demonstrations in June 2015 and July 2016 are investigated fairly.	Criminal cases are initiated with respect to the violence exerted on journalists covering the peaceful demonstrations. Police officers and the command responsible for their actions are held liable.	

New amendments to the Criminal Code on criminalization of the justification of terrorism lack legal certainty, posing a threat of restricting the freedom of speech and expression under the pretext of combatting terrorism.	Preclude the persecution of dissidence under the pretext of combatting terrorism in the Criminal Code.	The Criminal Code is amended appropriately.	The Criminal Code article on terrorism is in line with the freedom of speech standards set by the ECtHR and precludes restriction of the freedom of speech under the pretext of terrorism or support to terrorism.	
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Migration, asylum and border management

ARTICLE 14: Cooperation on migration, asylum and border management

ARTICLE 15: Movement of persons and readmission

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
The absence of criteria for decision-making on barring entry into the territory of Armenia of foreign citizens and stateless persons results in arbitrary administration and violates human rights.	Establish criteria, reasons and procedures for the decision-making on barring the entry of the foreign citizens and stateless persons into the territory of Armenia in line with human rights standards.	The established legal definitions and appeal procedures are predictable and clear. The adopted decisions are reasoned and not confidential for the concerned person.	The legal protection and procedures for persons seeking political asylum in Armenia are defined by a specific legislation and are consistent with the standards of the Council of Europe.	
There is a need to monitor and support effective implementation of the Agreement between the EU and Armenia on the readmission of persons residing without authorization.	To monitor the implementation (through data collection, and other necessary tools) of the Agreement between the EU and Armenia on the readmission of persons residing without authorization.	To exercise the availability of a comprehensive study encompassing monitoring of relevant local and international institutions' performance; identifying gaps in legislation and issues related to the rights of readmitted persons.	National monitoring report with recommendations including on: readmission; reintegration; progress in reforming migration policy on the way to visa liberalisation; improved mechanism of readmission and well-informed civil society.	one year
There is a need to improve the visa services to ensure effective implementation of the "Visa Facilitation Agreement".		Publications about the "Visa Facilitation Agreement" through cooperation with media; the work of Visa Centres is improved.	Increased amount of: -- multiple Schengen visas issued to Biometric Passport holders; -- windows opened for visa applicants in summer and winter period by the EU MS consulates > compared to previous years.	one year

Illicit drugs

ARTICLE 17: Illicit drugs

The minimum standard of illicit drug use and possession stated in the current regulation contradicts the international human rights standards.	Increase the minimum standard of illicit drug use and possession up to the quantity necessary for overcoming the withdrawal.	The Criminal Code and related legal acts are amended as necessary.	The annex to the Criminal Code provides the revised minimum standard of illicit drug use and possession in a quantity required for overcoming the withdrawal.	
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Health and safety at work

CHAPTER 15, ARTICLE 84 The Parties shall strengthen their dialogue and cooperation on promoting the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Decent Work Agenda, employment policy.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
The right of workers to protect their rights out of court is violated because of the absence of an independent labor inspectorate.	Create an independent and effectively-empowered State Labor Inspectorate in line with the standards of ILO Convention 81.	An independent and effectively-empowered State Labor Inspectorate is in place.	The protection of a person's labor rights is safeguarded by effective mechanisms.	
The persons' right to social security is violated because of the elimination of the unemployment benefits system.	Reinstate the unemployment benefits provided to unemployed persons.	The unemployment benefits are enshrined in legislation and reinstated in practice.	Persons that have unemployed status are financially secure and protected.	
The amendments drafted by the Government to the Labor Code contain grave violations of labor rights.	Discontinue the circulation of the draft amendments to the Labor Code.	The legislative initiative that enables worker exploitation is discontinued.	The protection of a person's labor rights is safeguarded by effective mechanisms.	

Fight against corruption

Article 1. (e) Objectives

The aims of this Agreement are:

e) to enhance cooperation in the area of freedom, security and justice with the aim of reinforcing the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Article 4. (c) Domestic reform

The Parties shall cooperate in the following areas:

c) making further progress on judicial and legal reform, so as to secure the independence, quality and efficiency of the judiciary, the prosecution and law enforcement.

Article 12 (Part 2). Rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms

2. The Parties shall cooperate fully with regard to the effective functioning of institutions in the areas of law enforcement, the fight against corruption and the administration of justice.

Article 16 (Part 2). Fight against organised crime and corruption

2. The Parties shall enhance bilateral, regional and international cooperation among lawenforcement bodies, including the possible development of cooperation between European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) and the relevant authorities of the Republic of Armenia. The Parties are committed to implementing effectively the relevant international standards, in particular those enshrined in the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime of 2000 and the three Protocols thereto. The Parties shall cooperate in preventing and fighting corruption in line with the UN Convention Against Corruption of 2003, the recommendations of the Group of States against corruption (GRECO) and the OECD, transparency with regard to asset declaration, the protection of whistle-blowers, and the disclosure of information on final beneficiaries of legal entities.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
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<p>The absence of a specialized law-enforcement body investigating corruption offences is a major obstacle to the fight against corruption in practice.</p> <p>The anti-corruption law-enforcement bodies are the investigative authorities and the Prosecution Office. They both lack the function of search and pre-trial investigation as well as adequate specialization to investigate corruption offences.</p>	<p>Create a unified specialized law-enforcement body to investigate corruption offences.</p>	<p>There are sufficient legal and institutional grounds for unfolding an effective fight against corruption.</p>	<p>The legislation reserves the power to investigate corruption offences to one unified specialized law-enforcement body, and proper investigations are conducted.</p>	<p>First half of 2020</p>
<p>The recognition and definition of corruption offences at the level of legislation is a fundamental step towards fighting corruption. Currently, the list of corruption offences and misdemeanors is approved by Order 3 of Prosecutor General (19 January 2017) and contains around 70 crimes. However, an important step in the direction of really fighting corruption is the recognition and definition of corruption offences at the level of legislation.</p>	<p>Define the scope of corruption offences in the criminal legislation.</p>	<p>According to the scope of corruption offences defined by law, the specialized law-enforcement body investigating corruption offences conducts effective investigations.</p>	<p>The scope of corruption offences is defined by law.</p>	<p>First half of 2020</p>
<p>The civil legislation, including the Law on the State Registration of Legal Entities and the State Recording of Separated Subdivisions of Legal Entities and Institutions and Sole Entrepreneurs, do not define the term “beneficial owner.” Besides, there is no legislative requirement to provide information on beneficial owners during the registration of a legal entity. There is no universal platform for disclosing information on companies and their managers and owners.</p>	<p>Create a legislative basis for defining and disclosing the beneficial owners of legal entities.</p>	<p>Information on the natural persons that are the beneficial owners of legal entities is collected and made public.</p>	<p>The legislation on beneficial ownership of legal entities is adopted and is applied in practice.</p>	<p>First quarter of 2020</p>

	Expand the list of property subject to declaration by senior officials, and incorporate actual gratuitous property in it (based on Ukrainian example). In particular, officials should declare the movable and immovable property for their gratuitous use, as well as luxury items. In addition, the declaration should also indicate who the property was provided by for gratuitous use, on what conditions and time period.	Officers are deprived of the opportunity to evade the declaration and criminal prosecution by registering the property they acquired as a result of illicit enrichment.	Adoption of relevant legislative amendments.	six months
	Increase the degree of publicity of declarations submitted by senior officials. In particular, in the published version of the declaration, provide description of the movable and immovable property, as well as the sources of incomes. Moreover, in the case of real estate, publish also its location.	NGOs and journalists are able to check authenticity of declarations and disclose undeclared property. Officials, by promoting disclosure (and responsibility) of public not declared property, make more conscientious declarations.	Adoption of relevant legislative amendments.	six months
	Lower the threshold of any type of property subject to declaration by high-ranking officials from eight million to one million drams.	Any property (luxury goods, appliances, etc.) worth about three times more than the average monthly net wage of officials is subject to declaration. Acquisition of such property involves the risk of illegal enrichment, and bringing it to the declaration helps to identify illegal enrichment.	Adoption of relevant legislative amendments.	six months

Transparent and accountable governance

Article 1. (c). Objectives

The aims of this Agreement are:

c) to contribute to the strengthening of democracy and of political, economic and institutional stability in the Republic of Armenia.

Article 4. (a, e) Domestic reform

The Parties shall cooperate in the following areas:

a) developing, consolidating and increasing the stability and effectiveness of democratic institutions and the rule of law; e) further pursuing public-administration reform and developing an accountable, efficient, transparent and professional civil service.				
Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
<p>The Government has introduced non-transparent mechanisms of law-making, which are not consistent with the accountable and open governance principles enshrined in the Government Program for 2017-2022. These changes limit public participation in law-making enhancing the existing lack of trust in the activities of the Government. The problem-posing mechanisms are as follows:</p> <p>The amendments to the Law on Legal Acts introduced in 2008 a requirement to conduct public discussions of draft laws. The Law on the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly allows urgent and rushed adoption of laws without holding parliamentary hearings. In practice, they are often adopted in two readings within 24 hours, breaching the legal requirement to hold public discussions and disregarding civil society opinions on the draft.</p> <p>The amendments to the Law on Legal Acts (Article 27.1) made in 2017 define that the drafting body shall organize regulatory impact assessment (RIA) of the draft only if instructed by the Government or the Prime Minister. Because of this provision, the Law essentially does not require any RIA, including anti-corruption assessment of draft legislation.</p> <p>The Law on the Structure and Activities of the Government adopted by the</p>	<p>Define a mandatory requirement to perform regulatory impact assessment for all draft legislation.</p> <p>Define clear criteria for the cases when legal acts may be adopted under an urgent adoption procedure.</p> <p>Make public discussions an integral part of the law-making process.</p> <p>Require to return the draft legal act if the requirements on regulatory impact assessment and public discussions have not been fulfilled.</p> <p>Prescribe a requirement to publish the Government's session agenda and materials related to the issues included in the agenda.</p> <p>Make sure that the Government sessions are open and public.</p>	<p>The Government conducts transparent and accountable governance.</p>	<p>The legislation on public administration includes requirements on transparency, publicity and participatory governance, which are applied in practice.</p>	<p>Fourth quarter of 2018</p>

<p>National Assembly on March 23, 2018 fails to ensure publicity of the law-making process, by holding Government sessions behind closed doors and not authorizing the Government members or staff to disclose any information on the matters discussed, unless approved by the Prime Minister. This provision aggravates the lack of transparency in law making, given that the sessions are not preceded by public discussions and revisions of draft legal acts of public importance before presenting the draft to a Government session.</p>				
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Public procurement

ARTICLE 269: Relation to the WTO Government Procurement Agreement

The Parties affirm their mutual rights and obligations under the Revised Agreement on Government Procurement of 20121 ("WTO Government Procurement Agreement"). Those rights and obligations established by the WTO Government Procurement Agreement, including the specifications of each Party set out in their respective Annexes to Appendix I, are made part of this Agreement and are subject to bilateral dispute settlement as provided for in Chapter 13.

ARTICLE 270: Additional Scope of Application

ARTICLE 271 Additional Disciplines Electronic publication of procurement notices, Requirements for review procedures, Standstill period, Ineffectiveness, Non-discrimination of established companies.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark
<p>In current electronic publication of procurement notices, there are cases of public information lacking the requisite quality and of contract notices published without specifying the amount or providing information on whether the notice was posted in the past or amended. This approach to electronic publication of procurement notices and the lack of their automatic processing capability contradict the commitments of the Government under the Open Government Partnership.</p>	<p>Quarterly summaries of information on procurement notices are always compiled and published on the official website of procurements and the websites of public administration bodies. Based on this data, websites present quarterly information, which is summarized in the annual procurement reports.</p>	<p>The publicity of procurement notices and the quality of information and statistics will be improved.</p>	<p>The Government adopts the approaches of the publication of procurement notices and their automatic processing.</p>
<p>There is not structured approach set for the requirements of review procedures. While a number of whistleblowing systems are free of charge, a fee of 30,000 AMD is established for the requirements on appeal procedures, which as a result, may obstruct the lodging of complaints.</p>	<p>Facilitate the access to the review system for all stakeholders and increase the attractiveness of the system for whistleblowers. Consider removing the required fee of 30,000 AMD for a complaint.</p>	<p>The review system will become more attractive, helping to reinforce trust in the system.</p>	<p>This approach will positively influence the attractiveness of the system, resulting in a potentially higher number of complaints.</p>

<p>There are not adequate procedures set for the conflicts of interest. Though currently there are declarations on conflicts of interest lodged, there is no entity that checks their validity and compliance. As a result, the public is not aware of the outcomes of such checks.</p>	<p>Prepare a register of members who declared interests to enable the checking of the validity of declarations on the absence of conflicts of interest. Require quarterly reports on the checked declarations and the shortcomings or inconsistencies found therein.</p>	<p>There is a specific authority to validate the information presented in the declarations of the conflicts of interest, to improve the credibility of the information presented in declarations and to monitor the problems related to the implementation of activities in this area.</p>	<p>Availability of reliable statistical information on the number of registered participants and the exact number of the members with the information on the conflicts of interest.</p>
<p>The reporting of standstill periods is delayed and ineffective. The information on tenders declared ineffective is published annually, which delays statistical comparisons, whereas it should be published on a quarterly basis, at least on the websites of public administration bodies.</p>	<p>Standstill information (10 or 15 days) and related shortcomings is summarized and published on the website on a quarterly basis.</p>	<p>Improved publicity of procurement information and possibilities to make statistical comparisons.</p>	<p>This measure will improve access to statistics. The availability of such statistics can be seen as an evaluation benchmark, which can subsequently be used for investigative journalism and monitoring of their trends and structure.</p>
<p>At present, information on tenders declared ineffective is published annually. However, for statistical comparisons, it is preferable for the information to be published on a quarterly basis, at least on the websites of public administration bodies.</p>	<p>Information on tenders declared ineffective must be published on a quarterly basis, at least on the websites of public administration bodies.</p>	<p>Improved publicity of procurement information and possibilities to make statistical comparisons.</p>	<p>It is possible to make comparisons and to understand how accessible these statistics are.</p>
<p>There is an information gap for the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU): information on blacklisted domestic suppliers is translated into Russian and is available to other member states of the EEU. Equality of rights means that the official website of procurements should similarly contain information on suppliers blacklisted in Belarus, the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. The list of blacklisted domestic suppliers is available in Russian for EEU member states, but Armenian clients do not have information on companies blacklisted elsewhere in the EEU.</p>	<p>Ensure equal conditions in terms of information for EEU procurements, and improve the accessibility of the website for non-residents.</p>	<p>Information on suppliers that violate the laws of EEU countries is published on the official website of procurements, which will enable to prevent the participation of unfair suppliers in tenders conducted in Armenia.</p>	<p>The existence of information on the official website of procurements about bidders disbarred in Belarus, the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.</p>

Statistics

Article 30

The Parties shall develop and strengthen their cooperation on statistical issues, thereby contributing to the long-term objective of providing timely, internationally comparable and reliable statistical data. It is expected that a sustainable, efficient and professionally independent national statistical system shall produce information relevant for citizens, businesses and decision-makers in the European Union and in the Republic of Armenia, enabling them to take informed decisions on that basis. The national statistical system shall respect the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and take into account the EU *acquis* in the field of statistics, including the European Statistics Code of Practice, in order to align national statistical production with European norms and standards.

Article 31

Cooperation in the area of statistics shall aim at:

- (a) further strengthening the capacity of the national statistical system, including legal basis, the production of good-quality data and metadata, dissemination policy and user-friendliness, and taking into account users in the public and private sectors, the academic community and society at large;
- (b) the progressive alignment of the statistical system of the Republic of Armenia with norms and practice applied in the European Statistical System;
- (c) the fine-tuning of data provision to the European Union, taking into account the application of relevant international and European methodologies, including classifications;
- (d) enhancing the professional and management capacity of the national statistical staff to facilitate the application of statistical standards of the European Union and to contribute to the development of the statistical system of the Republic of Armenia;
- (e) exchanging experience with regard to the development of statistical know-how; and
- (f) promoting quality assurance and management in all statistical production processes and dissemination.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark
The current National Statistical Service (NSS) data does not allow monitoring the price trends for common goods and services. There is no frequency (annual or biannual) at which one could measure the Government's effectiveness in reducing the shadow economy generally or in specific sectors. The situation with statistics decreases public trust and confidence in the NSS data.	Improve the indicativeness and adequacy of certain statistical data. Improve the quality of statistical assessments of specific socioeconomic phenomena and achieve their utmost alignment to the needs of information users.	The statistical data reflects adequately the most significant features of the evaluated phenomena. It is accessible to the public and easy to understand. It is not questionable and confusing for the academic community and stands as a stable information source for effective decision making.	The system of indicators regularly compiled and published by the NSS is enriched with the following indicators: - Specific information on goods and services accounting for a larger share (greater than 1) in the CPI basket, and the price index calculated on their basis. - An annual assessment of the shadow economic activity in Armenia, namely, the ratio of the shadow economic activity to the GDP and the volumes of shadow economic activity by the types of economic activity.

Media freedom

ARTICLE 99

1. The Parties shall develop a regular dialogue with regard to audiovisual and media policies and cooperate to reinforce independence and professionalism of the media as well as links with media in the European Union in compliance with European standards, including those of the Council of Europe and the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions of 2005.
2. Cooperation could cover, inter alia, the issue of the training of journalists and other media professionals, as well as support to the media.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark
Media ownership is not transparent. There is no law requiring disclosure of information on media owners.	Prescribe in the Law on Television and the Radio the publicity of media owners and the ownership share according to the Council of Europe resolutions.	Television and radio companies disclose publicly the information on the shares of their owners annually.	The Law on Television and the Radio defines the transparency of media ownership in line with Council of Europe resolutions 1636 (2008) and 2065 (2015).
The Law on Television and the Radio establishes a monopoly for the public broadcasting digital network in countrywide coverage by requiring the private multiplexor to implement the multiplex through its own electronic communication network with the coverage area not smaller than the public broadcasting digital network coverage area.	Amend the Law on Television and the Radio to eliminate the centralization and monopolization prescribed by the law against the private multiplexor, and disregard the requirement to have obligation to have countrywide coverage.	The Law on Television and the Radio no longer contains the obligation of the private multiplexor to have countrywide coverage.	Two or more private multiplexor companies perform digital broadcasting in the country.
From 1 January 2016, regional television companies that received a license in 2010 operate in the digital broadcasting system, and the others—in the analogue system, which fundamentally contradicts the idea of the digital transition and the international norms. Analogue television stations are in an unfavorable competitive environment in terms of signal quality, protection, audience reach, and attractiveness for advertisers. Analogue regional television companies are not closed down by virtue of law, but they operate in unequal conditions, which may lead to gradual termination of their operations.	Amend the Law on Television and the Radio to clarify the status of regional television companies that did not receive a digital broadcasting license in 2010, and create equal conditions for all regional television companies by making a transition to a simplified licensing procedure and permitting the activities of small and private multiplexes.	The Law on Television and the Radio prescribes a simplified system of broadcast licensing. The Law on Television and the Radio permits the activities of small and private multiplexes on the territory of Armenia.	All regional television companies have received a digital broadcasting license under a simplified procedure and perform digital broadcasting through small and private multiplexes.
Article 1087.1 of the Civil Code prescribes the maximum amount for the compensation for moral damage due to insult (2 million AMD) and libel (1 million AMD).	In 1087.1 of the Civil Code, amend the maximum amounts of compensation of moral damage for insult and libel, by reducing them 10-fold.	In Article 1087.1 of the Civil Code, the maximum amounts of compensation of moral damage for insult and libel are changed, namely they are reduced 10-fold.	Annual or biannual statistical data is published on cases and monetary amounts of compensation in court cases of defamation and/or insults against mass media and citizens,

			including a comparison with the statistics of earlier years.
There are no mechanisms of public oversight over the selection and appointment of the National Commission for Television and the Radio (NCTR) members to ensure the independence and accountability of the commission as the sector regulatory body. The activities of its regulatory body lack legal transparency and safeguards of fair competition in the broadcast sphere.	Amend the Law on Television and the Radio to ensure the legal independence of the broadcast regulatory body by reforming their selection and appointment procedure. Define mechanisms of public oversight over the selection and appointment of the NCTR members.	The Law on Television and the Radio has revised the NCTR formation procedure by safeguarding its independence and accountability as the sector regulatory body.	The broadcast regulatory body ensures free competition in the sector.
The Law on Television and the Radio hinders liberalization of the broadcast sector, the development of competition, and diversity of the television air by non-transparent tenders and complex requirements of licencing procedure.	Amend the Law on Television and the Radio to make a transition to a simple licensing procedure, ensuring the transparency and fairness of the tenders.	The Law on Television and the Radio provides for the simple licensing procedure.	The simplified procedure makes digital broadcasting possible and affordable for entities wishing to broadcast.
The lack of law-enforcement and effective investigation of the enact on the recorded cases of physical violence against journalists and the obstruction of their professional activities. About 100 cases have been recorded during last 10 years. The perpetrators are neither discovered not held liable. The criminal cases are either not initiated or discontinued due to the absence of crime elements.	Carry out a comprehensive and impartial investigation of all cases of physical violence against journalists and the obstruction of their professional activities. Publish a report on the findings of each investigation. Hold liable all perpetrators.	The reported cases of encroachments and crimes against journalists are identified, and the perpetrators are held liable.	Annual reports on the investigation of abuses and crimes against journalists are published following the requirements of the International declaration on the protection of journalists.

Human rights, non-discrimination and fundamental freedoms

ARTICLE 4: Domestic reform

The Parties shall cooperate in the following areas: (b) ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

ARTICLE 12: (3) Respect for human rights, non-discrimination and fundamental freedoms shall guide all cooperation on freedom, security and justice.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
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<p>Armenia lacks a comprehensive and effective anti-discrimination legislation. Victims of discrimination are deprived of effective legal protection as the existing legal framework does not provide definition of discrimination, and the domestic procedural laws set barriers for effective prosecution of discrimination cases. There are no effective mechanisms for the prevention of discrimination and promotion of equality, as the legislation does not define the positive obligations of the State and local authorities in this regard.</p>	<p>Adopt comprehensive and effective anti-discrimination legislation.</p>	<p>The law provides effective mechanisms for the protection and access to justice and effective remedies for the victims of discrimination. The law prescribes the legal standing of NGOs ensuring the procedural right to file <i>actio popularis</i> claims in discrimination cases; The law defines the functions and positive obligations of the government, local authorities, and employers in the prevention of discrimination and promotion of equality. An independent and effective national equality body is established. The independence of equality body is guaranteed both at the institutional and operational level. The equality body is vested with the support and litigation competences which guarantee its effectiveness.</p>	<p>European Union Council Directive 2000/43; ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 2: CRI(2018)06</p>	
<p>The current law on Freedom of Religion implies restrictions regarding the registration and practice of religious organizations, instead giving privileges to the Armenian Apostolic Church (ACC). The ACC has exclusive access to hospitals, orphanages, boarding schools, military units, and penitentiaries. The draft laws proposed by the government between 2011 and 2018 did not indicate clearly that the ACC was also covered by the draft, thus, threatening to further exacerbate the discrimination of other religious organizations vis-à-vis the AAC.</p>	<p>Review the 2017 Draft Law on Religious Organizations.</p>	<p>Armenian Apostolic Church and other religious organizations are equally subject to the law. Mandatory registration and undue burdens on the registration of religious organizations are lifted; discriminatory limitations and unreasonable requirements regarding the membership and funding of religious organizations are eliminated. Limitations on the manifestation of freedom of religion or belief are in line with ECHR.</p>	<p>Venice Commission CDL-AD(2011)028; Venice Commission CDL-REF(2018)006.</p>	

<p>The AAC holds a monopoly of access to education by law, which jeopardizes the secular nature of educational institutions. The content and instruction of the course “History of AAC” mandatory in public schools does not convey information and knowledge in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner and amounts to indoctrination. The ACC has an exclusive access to Armed forces. There is mass baptizing of conscripts and daily morning prayers, claimed to be voluntary, which violates the freedom of religion of conscripts.</p>	<p>Align the teaching practice of religious course “History of the Armenian Church” with OSCE Toledo Principles.</p>	<p>“History of Armenian Apostolic Church” is either removed from the public schools’ curriculum or made optional and in line with OSCE Toledo Principles. Mandatory religious practices are abolished in the Armed forces.</p>	<p>OSCE/ODIHR Toledo Guiding Principles on Teaching about Religions and Beliefs in Public Schools, 2017</p>	
<p>The final changes in the law on domestic violence before its adoption signal a shift from rights protection to preservation of family unit. The law, which is now entitled “On the prevention of domestic violence, protection of victims and restoration of harmony in the family” declares “strengthening of traditional values” and “restoration of harmony in family” as guiding principles for the law. As a result, the law does not criminalize domestic violence and focuses heavily on reconciliation of the perpetrator and the victim, which is against the international human rights standards.</p>	<p>Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.</p>	<p>National legislation and policies in the areas of prevention of domestic violence, protection of victims and prosecution of perpetrators are aligned with the Council of Europe Convention.</p>	<p>GREVIO periodic country monitoring report</p>	

<p>The government fails to enforce the Law on Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, as there are not clearly defined responsible duty-bearers and functional implementation mechanisms.</p>	<p>Develop effective mechanisms for the enforcement of the law on equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women.</p>	<p>The list of prohibited forms of gender-based discrimination defined in the Law is expanded and harmonized with the international standards.</p> <p>The Law differentiates gender-based discrimination manifested in different sectors (employment, education, science, consumer protection, social security, health care, and so on).</p> <p>The relevant legislation provides for criminal, administrative, and pecuniary liability for violating the Law, i.e. for engaging in gender-based discrimination.</p> <p>The procedure codes are amended to safeguard the right to judicial protection in cases of gender-based discrimination, and special procedural rules are prescribed for such cases (for instance, on the distribution of the burden of proof) in view of their particular nature.</p> <p>The Human Rights Defender is granted additional powers in the matters of gender-based discrimination, in particular, he or she has the power to examine complaints of persons subjected to gender-based discrimination and to render binding decisions.</p> <p>The sub-legislative acts necessitated by the Law and needed for its enforcement are adopted.</p> <p>The powers of the Council adjunct to the Prime Minister for the Matters of Equality between Women and Men are enhanced in line with the international standards.</p> <p>A comprehensive approach to gender mainstreaming is adopted, and the relevant legal framework is put in place in line with the international standards.</p> <p>9. The Law defines the body conducting gender impact expert examinations, and all aspects related to the performance of such expert examinations are regulated.</p>	<p>CEDAW concluding observations on the periodic reports of Armenia</p>	
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<p>Following the government amendments, the Law on Human Reproductive Health and Rights now imposes a three-day waiting period and a mandatory counseling on women seeking abortion. This amendment sets obstacles to women’s access to lawful reproductive health services, undermining women’s decision-making capacity, increasing abortion stigma and jeopardizing women’s health and well-being. The amendments apply penalties for the doctors performing sex-selective abortion. The approach fails to address the root causes of son preference on the grounds of stereotyping, gender discrimination and son preference, such as harmful gender stereotypes and norms, instead limiting women’s reproductive rights and freedom.</p>	<p>Repeal and refrain from enacting laws and policies that create barriers for women’s access to sexual and reproductive health services. Adopt rights-based policies addressing the root causes of sex-selective abortion.</p>	<p>Barriers for women in access to sexual and reproductive health services are removed, including biased counseling and mandatory waiting periods.</p>	<p>Amendments to the Human Reproductive Health and Rights Law are in line with General Comment 22 of the ICESCR, 2016.</p>	
<p>The legislative framework of Armenia does not include any legal recognition of the LGBTI people as sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI). It does not provide a definition and liability for “hate speech” and the Criminal Code does not consider SOGI grounds as aggravating circumstance for serious crimes. This shortfall in legislation limits the legal recourse for many crimes committed against LGBTI people.</p>	<p>Review the existing legislation regarding hate speech and hate crime.</p>	<p>The anti-discrimination legislation recognizes SOGI as a ground for discrimination. Definition of hate speech and liability for hate speech are provided in the legislation. Any crime committed on the basis of sexual orientation and / or gender identity of a person is considered as a circumstance aggravating the crime and punishment.</p>	<p>OSCE/ODIHR Standards on hate crime laws, 2009</p>	
<p>Problem statement</p>	<p>Action</p>	<p>Expected result</p>	<p>Benchmark</p>	<p>Timeframe</p>
<p>Armenia has not ratified the the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. As a result, persons and groups cannot present complaints to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities regarding the violations of the State Party of the provisions of the Convention.</p>	<p>Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.</p>	<p>Individuals or groups who claim to be victims of a violation by that State Party of the provisions of the Convention can file complaints to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.</p>	<p>In cases of the violations of the rights of persons with disabilities, the RA citizens can apply to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.</p>	

<p>Under the current legislation, persons with mental health problems can be recognized legally incapable and there are no effective mechanisms for restating person’s legal capacity. This provision deprives persons with mental health problems of the possibility to exercise their rights fully and properly and to make decisions about their life independently. The court trials of cases challenging the person’s legal incapability appoint a guardian without consulting the person and, thus, failing to ensure the “equality of arms.”</p>	<p>Amend the Civil Procedure and Civil Codes to abolish absolute deprivation of legal capacity foreseeing different measures and safeguards based on the gravity of person’s condition.</p>	<p>Persons with mental health problems exercise their rights fully and properly and make decisions about their life independently. Effective mechanisms for restating person’s legal capacity are in place, and court trials of cases challenging the person’s legal incapability ensure the “equality of arms.”</p>	<p>Amendments in the Civil Procedure and Civil Codes are in line with Articles 12, 27, 29 of CRPD.</p>	
<p>Only 2.7% of the total health care spending is allocated to mental health and the 88% of it is distributed for institutionalized psychiatric treatment.</p>	<p>Allocate state financial support to community-based services prescribed under the Mental Health Strategy for 2014-2019.</p>	<p>Sufficient state funding is ensured for deinstitutionalization of the mental health services and establishment of community based services according to the Mental Health Strategy and Action Plan for 2014-2019.</p>	<p>The community-based services for the persons with mental health issues receives a sufficient funding to provide accessible services to all the beneficiaries in their communities under the Mental Health Concept and Action Plan for 2013-2016 and the Mental Health Strategy for 2014-2019.</p>	
<p>Many patients undergo compulsory treatment in psychiatric hospitals, and there are not direct mechanisms for an affected individual to challenge the legality of the compulsory hospitalization. A court decision on their release might be sought only by the hospitals. This violates the persons’ right to liberty and security, as well as the right to independent living.</p>	<p>Introduce legislative provisions requiring the participation of a lawyer from the very beginning of the process of admitting a person to a psychiatric medical institution.</p>	<p>There are legislative amendments ensuring access to free legal aid for persons with mental health issues.</p>	<p>Amendments are made in the law on Psychiatric care and relevant laws in line with Article 13 of CRPD.</p>	

<p>Persons in psychiatric institutions are subjected to ill-treatment: physical and psychological violence, labor exploitation, excessive use of restraints, with no proper and qualified health care services. Cases of deaths in psychiatric institutions are not investigated fully and effectively.</p>	<p>Ensure independent civilian oversight over the institutions that provide government supported care and treatment services for persons with mental health problems.</p>	<p>There is a monitoring group established by the decree of the Ministry of Health, which has access to institutions providing care and treatment services to people with mental disabilities.</p>	<p>The law on Psychiatric Care, as well as the Ministerial Decree provide the civic monitoring board with unhindered access to all the government supported care and treatment services. The civic monitoring board publishes regular monitoring reports and recommendations on human rights conditions in these institutions.</p>	
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Education

ARTICLE 14. Cooperation on migration, asylum and border management.

2. Cooperation will be based on a specific needs-assessment conducted through mutual consultation between the Parties and will be implemented in accordance with their relevant legislation in force. It will, in particular, focus on: (c) the admission rules and rights and status of persons admitted, fair treatment and integration of lawfully residing non-nationals, education and training and measures against racism and xenophobia.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
The education system failed to include the children of Syrian Armenian families who immigrated to Armenia between 2014 and 2015 following the armed hostilities in Syria. Schools were not equipped in terms of either human resources or methodology to address the needs of full inclusion of children in need of special conditions of education regarding the knowledge of Armenian language.	Under the strategic program of transition to overall inclusiveness of public education sector, develop and implement a strategy for integration and full inclusion of Syrian Armenian and other immigrant children in public education; put in place appropriate teaching methodology, and ensure the availability of equipment and trained teachers.	<p>The Law on Public Education defines the need for conditions to ensure that Syrian Armenian children and/or children of other ethnic origin are included fully in public education, as a need for special conditions of education, and the state budget allocates annual funds to properly address this need.</p> <p>A rapid response mechanism is created within the Ministry of Education and Science, providing immediate support to immigrant children who do not have a command of the Armenian language.</p>	The educational needs of all Syrian Armenian children living in the Armenia permanently or temporarily are assessed on September 1, 2019. At least 80 percent of the children attend school regularly and receive appropriate support, including support in overcoming the language barrier.	1 year

<p>Studies and political analysis by various organizations and individuals during the period of 2011-2016 show that public education textbooks contain gender, religious and ethnic bias, and teachers maintain direct and indirect discriminatory practices in classrooms.</p> <p>Besides, a number of policy documents adopted and/or elaborated by the Government prioritize the so-called “national values” and “military-patriotic” and “moral-psychological” rearing, under which such strategic documents actually preach xenophobia, carry out propaganda against so-called “foreign values,” and create an atmosphere of fear among children.</p> <p>There is a risk that above mentioned developments lead to negative attitudes and discrimination towards migrant children and their inclusion in education.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess the content of public education textbooks in order to identify risks of racism and xenophobia. Based on the assessment results, republish all textbooks containing such risks. 2. Revise the teacher training methodology and curricula to include methodological modules for organising an educational process shaping a value system that is humanitarian, human-centered, humanistic, non-discriminatory and anchored in respect for other nations, races, and ethnic groups. Every year, at least 30% of the teaching staff under this module is trained. 3. Prescribe in the 2030 Education Development Strategy Program the strategic priorities of education based on respect for human rights, universal values, non-racism, non-xenophobia, non-discrimination, and gender equality. Discontinue the circulation of the draft Government Decree on Approving the Strategy on Military-Patriotic Rearing of the Learners. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No racist and xenophobic content in education textbooks is ensured. 2. The teacher training program contains an appropriate educational module that teaches non-discrimination, tolerance, and practices that overcome racism and xenophobia in the behavior and attitudes of the teachers. 3. The teaching process and the attitudes/conduct of teachers are free from manifestations of racism and xenophobia. <p>3.1. The relevant legal acts of the Government have prescribed in the education sector policy documents the strategic priorities of education based on respect for human rights, universal values, non-racism, non-xenophobia, non-discrimination, and gender equality.</p>	<p>Reviews of public education textbooks do not reveal topics and texts of content that instills racism and xenophobia.</p> <p>All teachers are trained by 2020.</p> <p>Monitoring in public education institutions has not revealed racism and xenophobia in the student-student, teacher-student, teacher-teacher, and other relationships, as well as in the teaching process.</p> <p>Fewer events are organized, which contain racism, xenophobia, and discrimination based on gender, religion, or ethnic or other origin, and teachers less frequently engage in such practices.</p>	<p>2 years</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>1 year</p>
<p>ARTICLE 78 The Parties shall promote cooperation in all areas of civil scientific research, technological development and innovation on the basis of mutual benefit and subject to appropriate and effective protection of intellectual property rights.</p>				

<p>1. Up to date, the state has not presented a program or vision for the science sector identifying the priority areas for the development of science.</p> <p>2. The State Committee for Science or other organizations/foundations finance a number of scientific projects without clearly-stated criteria and principles for financing scientific research. The cooperation should encourage the development and presentation of such criteria, which would also help to avoid corruption risks.</p> <p>3. In the context of developing scientific research, academic integrity and its violations are linked directly with the quality of scientific research; hence, discovering and monitoring them would help to improve and strengthen the performance and quality of scientific research.</p>	<p>1. Develop and adopt a vision for the demand for science; present a clear list of priority areas for development of science.</p> <p>2. Present clear criteria for financing cooperative research, and make it open and transparent with a view to improving the targeting, accountability, and effectiveness of the financing.</p> <p>3. In the context of developing scientific research, develop effective mechanisms for ensuring academic integrity and the quality of scientific research; carry out monitoring of integrity breaches.</p>	<p>There is a list of priority areas in science, approved by the state, and a list of criteria used to determine them.</p> <p>There is open and transparent selection of the financed scientific research projects.</p> <p>Mechanisms ensuring academic integrity and quality of scientific research as well as monitoring practice of integrity breaches are established.</p>	<p>The priority areas are defined based on state needs, as reflected in State Education Development Program 2030 once adopted (2018).</p> <p>Open and transparent selection of financed scientific research projects.</p> <p>The developments are applied in accordance with findings of research conducted by OSFA in 2013 and 2015, on higher education reforms and academic integrity and fighting corruption in Armenia, and World Bank report on addressing governance at the center of higher education reforms in Armenia (2013).</p>	TBD
(c) initiatives to increase research capacity and the participation of research entities from the Republic of Armenia in the research framework programme of the European Union;				
<p>Initiatives based on state and/or international cooperation and the related program announcements are either often published very close to the deadline, making it impossible for potential participants to apply for the competition, or simply conducted behind closed doors, resulting in the same participants being repeatedly chosen for various initiatives</p>	<p>1. To develop a plan of mechanisms and initiatives and their transparency and accountability are safeguarded.</p> <p>2. To provide equal accessibility of programs and initiatives for all entities in the sector.</p>	<p>Program announcements are published openly and transparently (and in a timely manner).</p> <p>Announcements are evenly spread among different entities in the sector.</p>	<p>The procedures are verified according to a checklist identifying periods between announcement dates and application deadlines.</p> <p>The procedures are verified according to a checklist identifying the receipt of program announcements to all HEIs' departments.</p>	TBD Annual
(e) training activities and mobility programmes for scientists, researchers and other research staff engaged in research and innovation activities on both sides				

<p>Free academic mobility of different scientific sectors (scientists, researchers and teachers) is carried out and coordinated under the internal regulations of universities or scientific research centers, and this mobility and academic freedoms are often limited and encroached upon; hence, the relevant regulations of universities and research centers need to be reviewed to preclude the inclusion of such provisions therein.</p>	<p>To ensure free academic mobility of different scientific sectors (scientists, researchers and other research staff).</p>	<p>A significant increase is achieved in the participation of specialists and scientific researchers (including new ones) in programs. Cases of hindering academic mobility are identified, the regulation/-s is revised, and the cases are favorably resolved.</p>	<p>The procedures are applied in accordance with European Higher Education Criteria.</p>	<p>TBD</p>
<p>ARTICLE 93. The Parties shall collaborate in the field of education and training to intensify cooperation and policy dialogue with a view to approximating the education and training systems in the Republic of Armenia with policies and practices of the European Union. The Parties shall cooperate to promote lifelong learning and encourage cooperation and transparency at all levels of education and training, with a special focus on vocational and higher education.</p>				

<p>Armenia has participated in the international TIMSS international contest since 2003, paying an annual membership fee from the state budget. However, there are transparency and accountability issues with respect to conducting the contest and publishing the results: Armenia’s 2007 participation data was disqualified by the organizers, because the contest was held in schools with violations and falsification of results. Armenia’s participation results for the 2015 contest have been published with two year delay (the complete analysis of results for all the other countries was published in November 2016). No official source has explained the reason for the failure to publish the results. The 2010-2015 Education Development Program Law stipulates Armenia’s participation in the PISA and PIRLS contests. However, the Government failed to implement this provision of the Law, and the officials that violated the law were never held liable.</p>	<p>1. Safeguard Armenia’s participation in the TIMSS, PISA, and PIRLS contests, and develop the education sector development strategy and policies on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the results of such contests; ensure the transparency, integrity, and accountability of the contest organization, implementation, and results publication processes.</p>	<p>2.1. The Republic of Armenia participated in the TIMSS 2019, PISA 2021, and PIRLS 2021 contests. The participation results are published and analyzed.</p>	<p>2. The results of the TIMSS 2019, PISA 2021, PIRLS 2021 contests are published in summary international reports and accessible to all international and local stakeholder organizations and individuals.</p>	<p>2018-2021</p>
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<p>Education sector financing is declining from year to year. In parallel, the state budget and various loan programs of international financial institutions every year provide greater financing to all kinds of alternative programs in the education sector, although the effectiveness and appropriateness of such alternative programs in terms of securing everyone's access to quality education and improving education quality for all have not been properly studied and justified.</p>	<p>Develop decision-making process which will ensure financing of programs that will secure mandatory 12-year free education of equal quality and accessibility for all learners.</p>	<p>A competitive procedure is developed and implemented for providing grant and other program support and financing to various foundations, non-governmental organizations, and other structures from the state budget from the education resources, as well as for educational programs from the reserve fund (except for the mandatory annual financing of general public schools, secondary vocational education institutions, universities, and science).</p> <p>Criteria and procedures are put in place for assessing the effectiveness of program priorities financed from the state budget for education, as well as from the reserve fund.</p> <p>A participatory, transparent, and accountable system is developed and implemented for decision-making on the financing of such programs.</p>	<p>The targeting, efficiency, and effectiveness of state budget funding for the education system are improved to the benefit of strengthened equity in education, safeguarding each child's right to adequate and quality education, and achieving universal inclusion based on equity and inclusion standards of OECD, UNESCO and UNICEF and SDG country indicators .</p>	<p>2018</p>
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<p>From year to year, the education system is used increasingly more as an extensive administrative resource for pre-electoral and post-electoral abuse, parent intimidation, parent manipulation through the children's grades, preaching a specific narrative, and the like. This is confirmed by media publications and reports of independent monitoring missions.</p>	<p>Preclude the groundless interference and control of the executive power, as well as political party involvement and engagement in the management of educational institutions, namely schools and universities, as well as in their performance of functions prescribed by the legislation.</p>	<p>The legislation on education prohibits persons holding political office, representatives of political parties, other senior officials, and more than one representatives of the executive power being represented in the governing bodies of educational institutions.</p> <p>The law prescribes conflicts of interest in the governance of educational institutions and the limitations thereof.</p>	<p>The legislation prohibits membership in the governing boards of educational institutions of persons holding political office, party officials, and other senior officials. The legislation defines all cases of conflicts of interest and proper mechanisms for responding to them in accordance to best international practice and standards of TI's COI definition.</p>	<p>2018</p>
<p>The 2015-2018 Anti-Corruption Strategy declared education as a priority sector in view of the results of numerous studies, assessments, and surveys on corruption risks in the sector. The Action Plan under the Strategy, which was meant to ensure the implementation of effective steps to neutralize the assessed corruption risks in practice, as adopted by the Government only in January 2018, essentially leaving only 11 months, rather than three years, for implementation.</p>	<p>Ensure the sound, effective, and transparent implementation of the Education Anti-Corruption Action Plan, as well as the transparency and accountability of its achievements and failures. Under the new (2019-2022) Anti-Corruption Strategy, again recognize education as a priority sector and continue effective actions to address the assessed corruption and integrity risks in the sector.</p>	<p>The corruption risks set out in the Education Anti-Corruption Action Plan are eliminated or mitigated.</p> <p>Under the new (2019-2022) Anti-Corruption Strategy, education is again recognized as a priority sector. The new strategy action plan contains activities to address the risks not completed in the past, and defines actions for eliminating the newly-discovered and assessed corruption risks.</p>	<p>6. The new (2019-2022) Anti-Corruption Strategy recognizes education as a priority sector. An anti-corruption action plan is developed, which comprehensively addresses steps and actions for all the existing and assessed risks in accordance to OECD Anti-Corruption Network recommendations and standards.</p>	<p>2018-2019</p>

<p>1. EU Member States on average spend 4.9% of their GDP on education. European countries that have improved education quality in a relatively short time period, annually spend on education from 5.2% (Lithuania) to 6.1% (Finland). Among European countries, the highest spending on education can be found in Ireland, Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovakia (3.3%-3.8% of their GDP). Armenia plans to reduce the education spending-to-GDP ratio from 2.1% in 2018 to 1.99% in 2019 and 1.85% in 2020.</p> <p>2. Stream and sub-stream education is presently accessible only for students of high schools that operate as standalone institutions. High schools that operate as standalone institutions are mostly located in urban areas, while rural children of the same age mostly attend 12-year secondary schools. These schools issue to their graduates the same graduation certificate, but the quality of their education services is far below that of high schools that operate as standalone institutions.</p>	<p>1. Increase state financing for education; initiate a system to monitor efficient use of financial resources in the education sector.</p> <p>2. At the level of public high schools, safeguard universal accessibility and affordability of quality stream and sub-stream education for children attending all the secondary schools and standalone high schools in the country, including by means of developing and implementing a differentiated financing scheme. Ensure quality access to general education in the villages by harmonizing the state curricula for mainstream schools and high school, and providing opportunities for choosing in-depth study of a subject in mainstream schools as well.</p>	<p>1.1 Education spending is increased and reaches at least 4% of GDP in 2019, 4.5% in 2020, and 5% in 2021.</p> <p>1.2. State financing for education undergoes a rapid growth. Educational institutions implement performance-based financing mechanisms. Systems for evaluating effectiveness of educational institutions and more generally the education sector are put in place.</p> <p>2. At the level of public high schools, quality stream and sub-stream education is accessible for children attending all the secondary schools and standalone high schools in the country. The public education high school level financing scheme is developed through participatory and effective discussions with stakeholders and implemented in all state public education institutions that offer high-school level public education programs. The number of HEI applicants from the mainstream schools situated in the rural areas is increased. The knowledge and competency gap between the urban and rural areas has shrunk.</p>	<p>Education financing increase of 5%.</p> <p>Every year, the state budget financing for education increases at a pace that is at least 50% higher than the annual increase in total state budget expenditures. The ratio of the education state budget to GDP is at least 3.5%. State budget education spending is at least 10% of the state budget expenditures. At least 50% of the academic institutions have put in place a performance-based system for assessing state budget financing efficiency, which is built upon an assessment of the institution's outcomes relative to the spending.</p>	<p>2019-2021</p> <p>2 years</p>
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<p>3. Recent study by UNICEF Armenia reveals that every second child is subject to multiple deprivation. According to this research children from rural areas are most likely to be deprived in two to four dimensions. While, only 19.6% of urban children at age 3-5 are deprived in early childhood education, the percentage of rural children deprived in ECE is almost 30%. Another research conducted by the Save the children Armenia reports -average 28% enrollment rate at ECD of children at age 0-5, enrolment rate in urban areas is about 35.6%, while in rural it is only 16%. Enrolment in ECD can enhance children's cognitive skills, literacy and social skills, necessary for success, as well as can advance school achievements in elementary grades. Given the situation with poverty and multi-dimensional deprivation of children from rural communities and/or families with low social-economic status, access to pre-school settings for these children is even more urgent and critical in Armenian reality.</p>	<p>3. Develop and set a policy for early childhood development, confirming that it ensures equity access to ECD services in all regions of the country. Ensure participatory policy development process by organizing public hearings and collecting suggestions and recommendations from all interested parties.</p>	<p>All communities of Armenia provide ECD services which include the following provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare to support parental employment, • Parent education and training, and parental work/life balance, • early education to enhance children's socio-emotional development, positive attitude and dispositions, • language and literacy, basic mathematical skills, physical development, preparedness for school, citizenship, • special needs, safeguarding of vulnerable children; support for children where home language is different to the national language, and reductions in inequality 	<p>All communities provide ECD services, and in addition to the provision of the service in a typical kindergarten there are alternative models and settings, such as home based, community administrative institutions based, school based.</p>	<p>TBD</p>
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<p>4. In contrast to secondary education, where concepts and legal provisions for inclusive education are in use, there are not clear legal framework, mechanisms and tools to ensure the inclusiveness of higher education. There is not a systematic approach to provide higher education for students with special needs.</p>	<p>4. Enhance the social dimension of higher education, improve gender balance especially in the 3rd cycle and widen opportunities for access and completion for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The action is within the framework of inclusive education provision.</p>	<p>The country has normative legal framework that addressed the social dimension of higher education. The Law on higher education has a special provision for the people with special educational needs. HEIs have resources (state allocated or local) for ensuring the provision of higher education to all the groups of the society (e.g. Brail alphabet, funds for covering the tuition fees for the people form disadvantaged groups, etc.)</p>	<p>Increased number of higher education graduates (BA level for the 1st year at least) especially from the rural areas, disadvantaged groups, and people with special educational needs.</p>	<p>TBD</p>
<p>5. Armenia's system for training public servants is remarkably ineffective. The training courses are neither prepared on the basis of the public servants' professional development needs, nor they are based on the needs for effective performance of public service functions. Public servants do not demonstrate sufficient motivation to attend training courses for new knowledge, abilities, and skills. Moreover, the trainers do not necessary possess practical skills or theoretical knowledge. The training budgets are not sufficient for engaging the best specialists in specific sectors.</p>	<p>5. Align the systems for training civil (public) servants with the needs of the public administration body, the functions of the public servants, and their career advancement needs.</p>	<p>The systems for training civil (public) servants are consistent with the needs of the public administration body and the functions of the public servant. The training programs are developed by the leading educational institutions, involving specialists with extensive theoretical knowledge and practical experience. The training program development is preceded by an assessment of the qualification improvement needs of public servants, based on the results of which the training program knowledge, skill, and ability outcomes are defined.</p>	<p>The training system for public servants contains the following subsystems: training needs identification survey methodology, training curriculum and course program development procedure based on the training needs, competitive procedure for selecting trainers, including the methodology for a key component such as assessment of the conformity of the theoretical knowledge and practical skills of the trainers.</p>	<p>1 year</p>

<p>6. In Armenia's education system, universities provide mostly theoretical knowledge, which poses a problem for the university graduates in the labor market.</p>	<p>6. Strengthen ties of vocational education institutions and especially universities with the potential employers.</p>	<p>The educational institutions' curricula are developed in view of the needs of the employers. The list of professions and the number of scholarships for each profession are determined primarily on the basis of demand for the respective professions in the labor market.</p>	<p>A system is in place for assessing the human resource needs of employers. For the applied professions, most of the curricula and courses are developed on the basis of the assessed needs and demands of employers. A labor market monitoring system is in place for assessing the labor market demand for the various professions, as well as the professional contents and the numbers of professionals. The list of professions and the minimum number of admitted students for the next year are updated based on the current year monitoring results.</p>	<p>2 years</p>
<p>7. The professional competence of those that teach at educational institutions is directly related to the quality of the provided education; therefore, it is important that the best specialists in a sector teach. On the other hand, such specialists do not always find teaching attractive due to the disproportion between low wages and the great responsibility and duties imposed.</p>	<p>7. Improve the professional competence of those who teach at educational institutions, promote the hiring of competent professionals in the education sector, including by means of improving the attractiveness of employment in the education system. Increase the work remuneration of the teaching staff in the education sector with the primary focus on general education.</p>	<p>Educational institutions employ the best specialists in various sectors. Working in an educational institution is dignifying and honorable for young people, as well as the more senior generation. Educational institution staff is motivated in continuously improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.</p>	<p>Education sector wages are on average at least 20% higher than the per capita GDP. Average monthly wages of higher education faculty are 150% of the national monthly per capita GDP. A motivational system is in place for competitive selection and promotion of educational institution staff, which is based on employee potential or performance assessment using a multi-factor formula. Educational institutions have put in place systems encouraging a staff generation change, which ensure that at least 5% of the teaching staff is refreshed annually. Educational institutions maintain gender balance in the faculty.</p>	<p>By 2021</p>

<p>8. The second level of higher education (master’s programs) often implies or is often seen as simply repeating the first level of higher education and accumulating redundant theoretical knowledge. It lowers the appeal and effectiveness of the second level of higher education (master’s programs). This system also fails to deliver to students the required skills that would be applicable in the labor market.</p>	<p>8. Improve the effectiveness of the second level of higher education (master’s programs).</p>	<p>The second level of higher education (master’s programs) is attractive for students. It enables them to qualitatively improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities. The master’s programs are developed with the direct involvement of the potential employers (for the applied professions). For graduates of the second level of higher education (master’s programs), the labor market offers higher wages than for graduates of the first level.</p>	<p>The applied part of the curriculum content at the second level of higher education is developed in view of the needs and demands of the potential employers. Many of the faculty members are representatives of employers. The wages offered by employers to graduates of the second level of higher education are at least 25% higher than those offered to graduates of the first level.</p>	<p>By 2021</p>
<p>(c) promoting convergence and coordinated reforms in higher education in line with the European Union Agenda for Higher Education and the European Higher Education Area (Bologna Process).</p>				

<p>1. The student population in Armenia is not in practice perceived to be the main and primary beneficiary of higher education, and they are only formally consulted. Meanwhile neither in normative legal framework, nor in practice the following principles of student-centered approach are ensured.</p> <p>2. Scientific research is not targeted by any of specific policy reformers in Armenia. The purposes and quality of research is tremendously undermined in the higher education system of the country, and the links between the research and teaching and learning on are not properly established.</p> <p>3. Under the new draft Law on Higher Education, student representation in the university governing boards will be reduced from the current 25% to 10%, which contradicts the principles and criteria of the European Higher Education Area.¹ Even the current percentage has often been discussed and criticized by a number of international organizations, including the World Bank and the Council of Europe, for being too limited.²</p>	<p>1. Apply student-centered approach in the higher education.</p> <p>2. Contribution to scientific research.</p> <p>3. Ensure greater representation of students in the governing boards within the higher education system, especially universities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic staff awareness on benefits of student centered approach for teaching and learning is increased. ▪ Quality enhancement elements at the level of teaching and learning are included in both internal and external quality enhancement processes. ▪ Students are involved in curriculum development. ▪ The links between education and research are strengthened. ▪ Greater representation of students in the university governing boards is ensured. 	<p>Procedures are implemented according to Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).</p>	<p>March, 2018 – March 2019</p> <p>TBD</p>
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¹ <https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/Resources/The%20university%20as%20Res%20Publica.pdf>

² WB and CoE also stressed the importance of students' independent involvement in HEIs governance. <https://rm.coe.int/16803073f5>.

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/301751468218419533/pdf/776690WP0P127300governance000final.pdf>

Taxation

Title II, Article 4 Domestic reform

The Parties shall cooperate in strengthening the administrative capacity and guaranteeing the impartiality and effectiveness of law-enforcement bodies.

Part IV, Chapter 2, Articles 25-26

The Parties shall cooperate to enhance good governance in the area of tax, with a view to the further improvement of economic relations, trade, investment and fair cooperation. The Parties recognise and commit themselves to implement the principles of good governance in the area of tax, i.e. the principles of transparency, exchange of information and fair tax competition, as subscribed to by Member States at European Union level. To that effect, without prejudice to European Union and Member State competences, the Parties shall improve international cooperation in the area of tax, facilitate the collection of tax revenues, and develop measures for the effective implementation of those principles of good governance.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark
The independence of tax investigative bodies from the tax authority is not safeguarded.	1. Adopt legislative safeguards of independence in tax and customs cases by reconsidering whether investigative functions in tax cases should remain under the State Revenue Committee.	Due process is facilitated in tax and customs cases by means of precluding the indirect participation of the tax investigative authority in revenue collection.	According to structural changes, the tax and customs investigative bodies are separated from the State Revenue Committee structure and are integrated in a common investigative authority. (by yearend 2018)
The independence of tax investigative bodies from the tax authority is not safeguarded.	Safeguard due process in the decision making of the Tax and Customs Appeals Commission by means of reconsidering whether a Commission member may participate in the Commission's administrative proceedings, when such member earlier took part in the audit process, and preclude potential pressures on the taxpayer or on other members of the commission during the examination of such appeals.	Due process is facilitated in cases of appealing the audit acts or the actions or inaction of tax and customs officials.	In practice, there are no cases of a member of the Tax and Customs Appeals Commission, who has a direct or indirect interest. taking part in the discussion of the appealed act. (by yearend 2018)

Air quality, water quality and waste management

Title V, Other cooperation areas, Chapter III Environment, Article 46

1. Cooperation shall aim at preserving, protecting, improving and rehabilitating the quality of the environment, protecting human health, utilising natural resources in a sustainable manner and promoting measures at international level to address regional or global environmental problems, including in the areas of: (b) air quality; (c) water quality and resource management, including flood-risk management, water scarcity and droughts; (d) waste management.

Problem statement	Action	Expected result	Benchmark	Timeframe
Air pollution.	Establish daily average permissible concentrations of hazardous substances polluting atmospheric air and	The permitted extent of ambient air pollutants and the list of polluting substances is clarified. As a consequence, the quality of atmospheric air is improved	Adoption of relevant standards.	six months

	monitoring measures according to the EU standards.	and diseases (as a result of contaminated air) are reduced.		
Air pollution.	Define by a legislation the procedure for granting the right for the emission of hazardous substances polluting atmospheric air and bring it into line with EU standards.	The types of production units and conditions are clarified, the pollutants are reduced, new production units are subjected to more ecological liability and atmospheric air is polluted. As a consequence, the quality of atmospheric air is improved and diseases (as a result of contaminated air) are reduced.	Adoption of relevant standards.	one year
The Ministry of Nature Protection is not able to handle the activities of tailing dumps at present. In some cases tailing dumps are overloaded or located in the rivers. The new state body will monitor the operation of tailing dumps to prevent such man-made disasters.	Define criminal liability for the illegal emissions of hazardous substances in rivers and lakes (in particular, tailings of mining industry). In addition, criminal liability should also be imposed for the leakage as a result of improper storage or transportation of tailings.	No tailings are dumped into rivers and no damage done to the health of the population of the flora, fauna, and settlements on the river. Harmful substances in irrigated fruits and vegetables are reduced.	Monitoring standards of the new state body.	six months
	Revise the drainage system of the tailing dump of mining enterprises, in particular, in sliced areas with acidic groundwater (such as Amulsar mine). Establish such criteria for the drainage system to ensure that hazardous substances are prevented from penetrating into groundwater.	Dumping of harmful substances from tailing dumps to groundwater is reduced. Groundwater pollution is significantly reduced.	Adoption of relevant standards.	six months
	Build a household garbage sorting and recycling plant in Yerevan (or near it).	The current landfills occupying more than 55 hectares of Yerevan are closed. Garbage processing enterprises are established. Environmental issues are reduced.	Availability of waste recycling plant.	three years
	Provide tax exemptions to garbage sorting and recycling companies. Particularly, in order to completely remove plastic and paper processing factories.	A radical reduction is achieved regarding the amount of garbage not processed in the country and particularly in large cities. New jobs are created.	Establishment of substantial tax privileges.	one year