

## **Contribution to the ENP review: "Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy"**

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Following the call by High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security/ Vice-President of the Commission Federica Mogherini and Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn, European Friends of Armenia (EuFoA), a non-government organization, is pleased to deliver its contributions along the principles on which the policy is based and implemented in Armenia specifically, and which are in EuFoA's mandate of activities.

Based on the Commission's four priority areas:

- differentiation
- focus
- flexibility
- ownership and visibility

For the review of the ENP, EuFoA proposes the following suggestions for your consideration:

- To focus on high impact and high visibility projects both for the EU and Armenia rather than having a vast number of smaller interventions with a modest outcome for the counterparts and poor visibility. The EU is the first international donor in the world, but the resources it is spending do not bring the expected outcome. Consolidating projects and investing in their visibility should be considered.
- In view of strong propaganda from "neighbours of neighbours", the EU should focus its resources on promoting itself – not as an alternative, but rather through the strength of its appeal as an organisation based on democracy, respect for human rights, stability and peace. These are values that make the EU attractive in the eyes of simple citizens. For this same reason, the EU should stimulate a debate focused primarily on these EU core values. The past approaches dedicated to marginal EU issues only create unnecessary controversies and disapproval of the EU, which is seen as an organization that is aloof and detached from everyday concerns of average citizens.

- To favour transparency in the European Union local grants allocation, preventing any grounds to malicious readings in terms of arbitrary distribution or conflict of interest in their allocation, which can undermine the image of the EU in the Republic of Armenia.
- To encourage the EU to use both its “soft power” appeal and also its diplomatic track to put an end to closed border policies and incentivise peaceful cooperation both between ENP countries and the EU, but also within the ENP countries. EuFoA regrets that the policy of closed borders is still practiced in the ENP area, as this is contrary to the very principles and objective of the European Neighbourhood Policy.
- To support the creation or the upgrade of state bodies fostering interaction between CSOs and national institutions following the example of the EU member states’ economic and social committees involved in the entire legislative process.
- To simplify language of EU public communications, focusing on communicating on desired OUTCOMES rather than abstract CONCEPTS: instead of talking about “rule of law”, “human rights” etc, the EU would gain more understanding and approval if it talked about what it wants to achieve with these concepts, namely: accountability, transparency, equal treatment for all etc.