



## BULLETIN

Web Newsletter 3



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#### **Health Care area**

With the support of World Bank in 1996, the Government of Armenia introduced the Basic Benefits Package (BBP) for targeting its limited resources toward priority health care areas and to serving the most vulnerable groups of population.

[More information](#)

#### **Global Call to Action Against Poverty**

On August 8, 2003, the Government of Armenia adopted Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper aimed at overcoming poverty in Armenia. Poverty alleviation has also constantly been in the focus of UN institutions in the last decades. Millennium Development Goals adopted in 2000 dwell upon this issue in detail.

[More information](#)

#### **Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper**

The Government elaborated Armenia's development strategy until 2015 in Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2002. It aimed at reducing poverty (including extremely poverty, income inequality and human poverty) via social area investments. Since the initial goals and target indicators of PRSP have been significantly surpassed, the Government is updating it, with release expected in 2007. However, it is not ready yet.

[More information](#)

## **EU – Armenia: ENP and ENPI**

The conference on 3 September 2007 gathers representatives from different countries aimed at sharing opinions and lessons regarding European Neighbourhood Policy so far as well as consider and discuss opportunities for strengthening it. Armenia also participates at this conference in the person of H.E. Vartan Oskanian - RoA Minister of Foreign Affairs.

[More information](#)

## HEALTH CARE AREA

With the support of World Bank in 1996, the Government of Armenia introduced the Basic Benefits Package (BBP) for targeting its limited resources toward priority health care areas and to serving the most vulnerable groups of population.

The Basic Benefits Package outlines the government-funded services that the population is entitled to receive. It is tied to the national budget, revised annually and is approved by a Governmental Decree. Each year, methodological guidelines for each component of the Basic Benefits Package are issued via Ministry of Health (MoH) decree.

The State Health Agency (SHA) is a semi-autonomous branch of the MoH and manages the financial reimbursement of Basic Benefits Package services to contracted health facilities. To overcome and avoid some unnecessary abuses in the BBP such as, unnecessary referrals, additional and unnecessary lab tests, etc., the GoA has adjusted the payment structure over time.

### *BBP: Effectiveness...*

However, despite above-listed activities and seriousness of the program it must not be ruled out the likelihood of ineffectiveness and shortcomings. For instance, some authors mentioned that even among Basic Benefits Package beneficiaries the level of outpatient health care utilization remains low. This occurs because the program mainly provides discounted fees for doctor visits, but fees do not constitute the main financial constraint for users. As was found out other non-fee expenditures, such as prescription medicines, represent a more significant financial constraint and are not subsidized by the Basic Benefits Package. As a result, outpatient health care remains expensive even with mentioned beneficiaries.

### *National Strategy 2007-2015*

National Strategy, **Program and Actions Timeframe on Reproductive Health Improvement 2007 – 2015** was approved and ratified by the Government decree N29 on 26 July 2007.

In 2007, the Government of Armenia (GoA), considering the worsening demographic situation in the country and aiming to improve reproductive health situation, included in its activities

plan and timeline the development and adoption of new Reproductive and Sexual Health National Strategy and Implementation Framework for the period of 2007-2015<sup>1</sup>.

Reproductive Health (RH) is regarded as one of the most important areas of human development and it determines not only the health of particular groups of people, but also well-being, prosperity and overall development of population.

This program is foreseen and developed as a comprehensive document covering all relevant Reproductive and Sexual Health fields, which are interrelated among each other: maternal and perinatal health, Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV/AIDS, family planning and contraception, infertility and reproductive tract cancer.

#### *FACTS...*

In terms of reproductive health indicators, Armenia is still much below the average European levels. The maternal, perinatal, and infant mortality rates exceed that of the developed countries. The population's access to family planning (FP) services is limited. The incidence of sexually transmitted infections has reached alarming levels.

#### *WHY...*

With the intensification of the emigration process, low fertility rate and an increasing infertility level as a background, the birth rate has severely decreased. Abortion still used often as a family planning method, often being accompanied by high risks that worsen the reproductive health even more. The incidence of cervical and breast cancer is continuously increasing, turning into a huge medical and social problem. Teenagers' right to education and reproductive health services is not fully provided. The sexual problems of men and the elderly are disregarded. The consequences of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and trafficking of human beings are not fully estimated.

#### *OBJECTIVES*

The ultimate goal of this program is to improve the reproductive and sexual health status of the population of Armenia and to provide Armenian citizens the opportunity to exert their reproductive and sexual rights. In the frame of this program, the RSH sphere is divided into priority fields.

#### ❖ Safe Motherhood

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<sup>1</sup>This document appears as an implementation instrument for national strategy on reproductive health of Armenia population, developed and adopted by MoH in 2003. It is adjusted to recent developments of Armenian reality in health and health care and to request to meet minimum needs for reproductive health of Armenian people, available at [http://www.moh.am/Armenia%20National%20Strategy%202023.08.07\\_Eng.doc](http://www.moh.am/Armenia%20National%20Strategy%202023.08.07_Eng.doc)

- ❖ Contraception
- ❖ Infertility
- ❖ Safe Abortion
- ❖ Reproductive Tract Cancer
- ❖ STIs/HIV
- ❖ Adolescents' RSH
- ❖ Sexual Health of Aging People
- ❖ RSH of Men
- ❖ Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse
- ❖ Trafficking of Women

### *MAIN PRINCIPLES*

The present strategy is based on the following basic principles:

- ❖ Health is a fundamental human right. Anyone has the right to the highest standard of physical and mental health, including reproductive and sexual health;
- ❖ Ensure gender equality in access to sexual and reproductive health services;
- ❖ Adjust the legal and normative framework on reproductive and sexual health to the standards set by the international bodies and institutions;
- ❖ Integrate the reproductive health services in the primary health care sector, in order to make them as accessible to the population as possible;
- ❖ Develop reproductive health services in compliance with the demand of the contemporary science;
- ❖ Respect the ethical values and cultural traditions of the population, in accordance with the universal human rights;
- ❖ Promote and support the initiatives of individuals, communities, non-governmental and public organizations in protecting and maintaining the highest standards of reproductive and sexual health;
- ❖ Coordinate the present strategy with all national programs and strategies in progress.

This Program includes a set of long-term measures that will help substantially improve the reproductive and sexual health in Armenia. The need for such a document was defined by several official documents but also by strong feeling of professional and lay community. It has been developed in agreement with the existent national concepts, strategies, and programs on

public health and in accordance with World Health Organization Strategy for Promotion of Sexual a Reproductive Health and Rights.

## GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION AGAINST POVERTY

On August 8, 2003, the Government of Armenia adopted Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper<sup>2</sup> aimed at overcoming poverty in Armenia. Poverty alleviation has also constantly been in the focus of UN institutions in the last decades. Millennium Development Goals adopted in 2000 dwell upon this issue in detail.

The PRSP of Armenia is explicitly linked to the MDGs. It contains all goals and targets and is fully consistent with the time horizon of MDGs. Nevertheless, poverty issues still exist and it seems that current programs cannot deal with them.

In 2007, members and supporters of Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) took part in a global month of action in September and October. On the 16th and 17th October **43.716.440 million people** – from 127 countries - around the world Stood Up Against Poverty in 24 hours and in doing so set a new Guinness World Record and sent out a powerful message to national and global political leaders.

On 17 October 2007, some 3800 people all around Armenia gathered in Yerevan to participate in a march and a public concert to Stand Up and Speak Out Against Poverty and Inequality. The event was preceded by a news conference to announce the event, articles in the local press and participation of GCAP national coalition members in a few TV talk shows. The press conference took place at the UN country representative office in Yerevan. The event was video recorded.

### *A little history...*

The Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) is a global alliance of trade unions, community groups, faith groups and campaigners working together across more than 110 national platforms. GCAP is calling for action from the world's leaders to meet their promises to end poverty and inequality. In particular, GCAP demands solutions that address the issues of public accountability, just governance, fulfillment of human rights, trade justice, aid, debt cancellation, gender equality and climate change.

GCAP believes rich donor governments and international institutions must urgently provide the major increase in the quantity and quality of resources necessary for the eradication of poverty, promote social justice, the achievement of the *United Nations Millennium Development Goals*, gender equality and guarantee the rights of children and youth. These resources must also support sustainable development, workers' rights, migrants' rights and the interests of marginalized groups including indigenous peoples. Resources must work to rebuild, not

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<sup>2</sup> Available at [www.cspda.org](http://www.cspda.org)

undermine governments and the public sector, enabling them to deliver on the rights of their citizens.

## **Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper**

The Government elaborated Armenia's development strategy until 2015 in Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2002. It aimed at reducing poverty (including extremely poverty, income inequality and human poverty) via social area investments. Since the initial goals and target indicators of PRSP have been significantly surpassed, the Government is updating it, with release expected in 2007. However, it is not ready yet.

### *PRSP: Working Group Meeting*

PRSP Working Group meeting was held on 14 September 2007 that was dedicated to coordination of implemented works so far. The issues were concerning the timetable of revised version of PRSP preparation process and activities following the development of the paper, timetable of activities aimed at enhancement of PRSP monitoring and evaluation system, consideration of further steps targeting social partnership enhancement and other issues, in particular, publication of works done by the negotiations groups so far.

PRSP secretary presents first timetable of revised draft PRSP version that could be changed in case of need. In addition, a set of questions concerning materials and discussion topic at the Marz level and presenting PSRS in the National Assembly with the purpose of strengthening it by giving an appropriate legislative status (it should be discussed with the PRSP Steering Committee) were raised by the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises NGO Group.

The secretary of PRSP presented monitoring and evaluation system timetable mentioning that these activities would be implemented simultaneously with the elaboration of revised PRSP.

Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises NGO group representative presented the further steps that should be implemented in the further development of social partnership and introduced the Terms of Reference on improvement of public participation. The head of the PRSP Working Group proposed to fix the deadline of fulfillment of the terms of reference. As a result, it was proposed to establish a working group, composed of government officials, NGO sector representatives (may not necessarily be the ones involved in the PRSP Working Group or Steering Committee) and freelance experts. It was also proposed to exclude the items, which had been already included in the timetable of the activities of the revised PRSP.

Regarding the last point, the offer about publishing works done by the negotiating groups so far was accepted though head of the PRSP Working Group considered it more prudent to read materials in advance and only after that make decision.

## EU – Armenia: ENP AND ENPI

*Brussels, 3 September 2007: European Neighborhood Policy Conference*

The conference on 3 September 2007 gathers representatives from different countries aimed at sharing opinions and lessons learned regarding European Neighbourhood Policy so far as well as considering and discussing opportunities for strengthening it. Armenia also participates at this conference in the person of H.E. Vartan Oskanian - RoA Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Benita Ferrero-Waldner, European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, starts the conference outlining the following main areas perceived as the most essential ones:

- (1) economic integration (this implies free flow of goods, services and capital, opportunities for new possibilities and greater prospects – ‘deep and comprehensive free trade agreements’);
- (2) mobility (freedom to travel to the EU – ‘New System of Mobility Partnerships’ that related to issues of migration regulations);
- (3) energy (idea of integrated energy market-Neighbourhood Energy Agreement as well as renewable energies and energy efficiency ideas were mentioned);
- (4) financial and technical assistance (sharing of know-how and best practices as well as Neighbourhood Infrastructure Facility and the Governance Facility that aims at using the EU’s funds to leverage a larger sum of money from other international financial institutions in order to provide with a higher level of financial support to amortise the costs of transition. It is expected to be established by the end of the year.)<sup>3</sup>. Economic agenda was dominates.

Vartan Oskanian highlights the importance of preparation of Action Plan as well as joining the CFSP. According to him:

“The historical and cultural ties that bind us to Europe and to Europe’s neighbors – all of them – are ours to exploit. ENP highlights the power of culture and education. The Bologna Process<sup>4</sup> is opening new doors for our educators, the European Rights Chair at our State University is opening the minds of our students. And we count on the power of

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<sup>3</sup>Available at

<http://europa.eu:80/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/07/500&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

<sup>4</sup>Armenia entered Bologna Process on 17-18 May 2004 and was signed in Council of Europe Headquarters, Strasbourg. According to it, Armenia recognizing the importance of the reform of educational system, in particular underlining the necessity to continue the current processes of reform in the national context, the following priorities were underlined: (1) drafting and adoption of new legislation for higher education in line with European norms and standards; (1) reform of the higher education sector in light of the requirements of the Bologna process; (1) continue to support exchange of information and experience between Armenia – Azerbaijan - Georgia in the above-mentioned fields in order to facilitate their integration into common European educational space, available at

[http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/national\\_impl/New/041222\\_Armenia.pdf](http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/national_impl/New/041222_Armenia.pdf)

our Diaspora who comfortably represent two cultures and serve as a bridge between Armenia and the countries of Europe and the European neighborhood....We will begin to have a stake in Europe's markets, Europe will have a stake in ours. We are committed to this process and we've formalized our commitment not just through the AP, but also by formally adopting our list of priorities and measures to be taken by a government resolution."<sup>5</sup>

However, this conference ensures economic cooperation but there was nothing about membership opportunity.

### *ENP and ENPI*

The enlargement of the European Union on 1 May 2004 has brought a historical shift for the Union in political, geographic and economic terms, further reinforcing the political and economic interdependence between the EU and Armenia. The European Union and Armenia are determined to make use of this occasion to enhance their relations and to promote stability, security and welfare. The approach is founded on partnership, joint ownership and differentiation.

Building on the achievements of the Barcelona Process<sup>6</sup>, the European Unions seeks to work with each partner individually to achieve the objective of a privileged relationship based on mutual commitment to shared values, principles within the fields of the rule of law, democracy and good governance, respect for human rights, shared commitment to combat terrorist and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), promotion of good neighborly relations and the principles of market economy and sustainable development.

### ENP

European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) was launched by the European Union in order to share the benefits of an enlarged EU with neighboring countries and to increase the stability, security and prosperity of both the EU and its neighbors, which at the same time supporting the reform processes pursued by the partners themselves.

By agreeing on an ENP Action Plan<sup>7</sup> on 14 November 2006, Armenia and the EU have committed to develop deeper economic integration and to strengthen bilateral political

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<sup>5</sup> Available at [http://www.armeniaforeignministry.am/speeches/070903\\_vo-enp\\_brussel.html](http://www.armeniaforeignministry.am/speeches/070903_vo-enp_brussel.html)

<sup>6</sup>The Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Conference or Common Strategy on the Mediterranean Region was held on the 27 and 28 November 1995. It was attended by the then 15 European Union (EU) members and 12 countries of the Mediterranean Basin. The United States requested participant status and was granted observer status. The participants have three goals: shared prosperity, enhanced exchanges and political stability. By some analysts, the process has been declared ineffective, available at [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

<sup>7</sup>The main actions foreseen under the ENP AP are grouped under the 8 following priority areas: (i) Strengthening of democratic structures, of the rule of law, including reform of the judiciary and combat of fraud and corruption; (ii) Strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in compliance with international

cooperation. Based on those priorities, the Commission has developed a Country Strategy Paper (CSP), which identifies the main priorities of EC assistance to Armenia for the 2007-2013 periods, and a National Indicative Program (NIP), which proposes more specific interventions for the 2007-2010 period.

EC assistance over the period covered by this strategy will therefore aim to support these policy objectives, which find their joint and detailed expression in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which came into force on July 1, 1999, and the EU- Armenia Action Plan. The strategy is also fully aligned with the Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper of the GoA

### ENPI

The Country Strategy Paper (CSP) for Armenia covers the period of 2007-2013. Assistance to Armenia over that period will principally be provided under the new European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) which is being established to provide assistance for the development of an area of prosperity and good neighborliness involving the European Union and the partner countries covered by the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP).

Funding levels for Armenia under the national European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument allocation are currently estimated at \$98.4 million for the period of 2007-2013. In addition, Armenia will benefit from allocations under its regional program and other programs.

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commitments of Armenia (PCA, CoE, OSCE, UN); (iii) Encourage further economic development, enhance poverty reduction efforts and social cohesion, thereby contributing to the long term objective of sustainable development, including the protection of the environment; (iv) Further improvement of investment climate and strengthening of private sector-led growth; (v) Further convergence of economic legislation and administrative practices; (vi) Development of an energy strategy, including an early decommissioning of the Medzamor Nuclear Power Plant (MNPP); (vii) Contribute to a peaceful solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict; (viii) Enhanced efforts in the field of regional cooperation, available at [www.enpi-programming.eu/wcm/dmdocuments/Armenia%202007%20AAP,%20Twinning%20fiches%20for%205m.pdf](http://www.enpi-programming.eu/wcm/dmdocuments/Armenia%202007%20AAP,%20Twinning%20fiches%20for%205m.pdf)

Table 1: **Total EC grants to Armenia since 1991**<sup>8</sup>

	1991-1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002-2003	2004-2006	Total (M €)
<b>Tacis National Allocations</b>	28.9	-	6.0	14.0	-	10.0	-	10.0	-	10.0	20.0	<b>98.9</b>
<b>Nuclear Safety</b>	-	-	-	10.0	1.0	-	-	11.0	-	-	7.0	<b>29.0</b>
<b>Humanitarian</b>	10.4	19.9	23.9	4.97	1.96	1.6	2.3	1.1	2.1	0.5	-	<b>68.79</b>
<b>EAGGF</b>	-	-	34.0	13.2	-	-	-	3.0	-	-	-	<b>50.2</b>
<b>FSP</b>	-	-	-	13.0	6.0	12.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	20.3	21.0	<b>102.3</b>
<b>Macro financial assistance /disbursed</b>	-	5.7	-	-	-	8.0	4.0	-	-	11.0	7.0	<b>35.7</b>
<b>Aid against effects of Russian financial crisis</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.5	-	-	-	-	<b>1.5</b>
<b>Total (M €)</b>	<b>38.3</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>63.96</b>	<b>55.17</b>	<b>8.96</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>41.8</b>	<b>55.0</b>	<b>386.39</b>

The new Strategy Paper for Armenia has been developed in close consultation with the Armenian authorities and fully reflects national priorities. Member States, other donors and civil society organizations have been consulted during the drafting process.

Assistance provided under the national ENPI 2007-2010 envelope for Armenia will focus on three main priority areas, which have been selected based on joint EU-Armenia policy objectives. In case that a still stronger prioritization will be requested the first sub-priorities under each headline will get most attention, and support will be based on lessons learnt from the previous assistance programs.

### **Priority Area 1: Support for Democratic Structures and Good Governance**

- ❖ Sub-priority 1: Rule of law and reform of the judiciary;
- ❖ Sub-priority 2: Public administration reform, including local self government / public finance management / public internal financial control and external audit / combat of corruption;
- ❖ Sub-priority 3: Human rights, fundamental freedoms, civil society, people to people contacts;

<sup>8</sup>Commission Staff Working Paper. (2005) European Neighbourhood Policy: Country Report. Armenia, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/armenia\\_country\\_report\\_2005\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/armenia_country_report_2005_en.pdf)

**Priority Area 2: Support for Regulatory Reform and Administrative Capacity Building**

- ❖ Sub-priority1: Approximation of legislation, norms and standards (mainly based on National Program for PCA implementation) and administrative capacity building;
- ❖ Sub-priority 2: Sector-specific regulatory aspects (including environmental aspects) and administrative capacity building;

**Priority Area 3: Support for Poverty Reduction Efforts<sup>9</sup>**

- ❖ Sub-priority 1: Education;
- ❖ Sub-priority 2: Regional development and social Services.

Depending on developments regarding the complementarily with other donors settlement of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, the EC would provide specific assistance related to all aspects of peaceful conflict settlement and settlement consolidation.

The table personated below outlines the key differences between ENP and ENPI.

**Table 2: Difference between ENP and ENPI<sup>10</sup>**

ENP	ENPI
The main goal of the <i>European Neighborhood And Partnership Policy</i> is to implement reforms and deepen relationship between the EU and partner country.	The main goal of the <i>European Neighborhood And Partnership Instrument</i> is to assist the partner country in its reforms and needs (implement with EC assistance, thematic programs).
Responsible bodies: Government and Ministries and European Commission - RELEX (and keep the delegation informed)	Responsible bodies: European Commission in Brussels (RELEX and AIDCO) and in delegation (and keep the government informed)
Main documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ EU Action Plan</li> <li>❖ PCA<sup>11</sup> (East)</li> <li>❖ Association Agreements (MED)</li> </ul>	Main Document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Country/regional strategy paper (CSP, RSP)</li> <li>❖ National Indicative Programs</li> <li>❖ Call for proposal/tenders</li> </ul>
Civil Society function: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ comment on priorities (mentioned in the Action Plan) and how they should be implemented, which ones are the most important, etc.</li> <li>❖ monitor the implementation of the Action Plan</li> <li>❖ ask for being involved in the drafting of the government work plan (priorities to be chosen for each year of the implementation of the Action Plan)</li> </ul>	Civil Society function: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ “short-medium term”: Comments on priorities (mentioned in the strategy paper and indicative program), how they should be implemented, which ones are the most relevant for the country (what is missing, etc.</li> <li>❖ ask for draft annual action program</li> <li>❖ influence the mid-term revision of the ENPI (in 2010)</li> <li>❖ “Long term”: monitor the implementation and prepare for the revision of the CSPs and RSPs</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup>The overall allocations to the first, second and third priorities are 29,52 m €(30%), 29,52 m €(30%) and 39,36 m €(40% of the total) respectively, available at [www.enpi-programming.eu/wcm/dmdocuments/CSP%20screening%20Armenia.pdf](http://www.enpi-programming.eu/wcm/dmdocuments/CSP%20screening%20Armenia.pdf) .

<sup>10</sup> Available at [www.enpi-programming.eu/wcm/content/category/5/161/209/en/](http://www.enpi-programming.eu/wcm/content/category/5/161/209/en/)

<sup>11</sup>Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument: Armenia National Indicative Program 2007-2010, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/enpi\\_csp\\_nip\\_armenia\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/enpi_csp_nip_armenia_en.pdf)