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Contents

II *Non-legislative acts*

REGULATIONS

- ★ **Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2018/306 of 18 December 2017 laying down specifications for the implementation of the landing obligation as regards cod and plaice in Baltic Sea fisheries** 1
- ★ **Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/307 of 28 February 2018 extending the special guarantees concerning *Salmonella* spp. laid down in Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council to meat derived from broilers (*Gallus gallus*) intended for Denmark ⁽¹⁾** 5
- ★ **Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/308 of 1 March 2018 laying down implementing technical standards for Directive 2014/59/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to formats, templates and definitions for the identification and transmission of information by resolution authorities for the purposes of informing the European Banking Authority of the minimum requirement for own funds and eligible liabilities ⁽¹⁾** 7
- ★ **Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/309 of 1 March 2018 concerning the non-renewal of approval of the active substance propineb, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market, and amending the Annex to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011 ⁽¹⁾** 16
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/310 of 1 March 2018 fixing the import duties in the cereals sector applicable from 2 March 2018 19

⁽¹⁾ Text with EEA relevance.

EN

Acts whose titles are printed in light type are those relating to day-to-day management of agricultural matters, and are generally valid for a limited period.

The titles of all other acts are printed in bold type and preceded by an asterisk.

DECISIONS

- ★ **Council Decision (EU) 2018/311 of 27 February 2018 establishing the position to be taken on behalf of the Union within the Joint Committee set up under the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas, with regard to the adoption of common guidelines for the implementation of that Agreement** 23
- ★ **Council Decision (EU) 2018/312 of 27 February 2018 appointing a member, proposed by the Kingdom of Spain, of the Committee of the Regions** 39
- ★ **Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/313 of 28 February 2018 amending Decision 2009/821/EC as regards the lists of border inspection posts and veterinary units in Traces (notified under document C(2018) 1149)⁽¹⁾** 40
- ★ **Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/314 of 1 March 2018 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 on protective measures in relation to outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza in certain Member States (notified under document C(2018) 1401)⁽¹⁾** 44

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ★ **Recommendation No 1/2017 of the EU-Armenia Cooperation Council of 20 November 2017 on the EU-Armenia Partnership Priorities [2018/315]** 51

Corrigenda

- ★ **Corrigendum to Guideline (EU) 2017/697 of the European Central Bank of 4 April 2017 on the exercise of options and discretions available in Union law by national competent authorities in relation to less significant institutions (ECB/2017/9) (OJ L 101, 13.4.2017)** 56
- ★ **Corrigendum to Guideline (EU) 2016/2249 of the European Central Bank of 3 November 2016 on the legal framework for accounting and financial reporting in the European System of Central Banks (ECB/2016/34) (OJ L 347, 20.12.2016)** 57
- ★ **Corrigendum to Decision (EU) 2017/2081 of the European Central Bank of 10 October 2017 amending Decision ECB/2007/7 concerning the terms and conditions of TARGET2-ECB (ECB/2017/30) (OJ L 295, 14.11.2017)** 57
- ★ **Corrigendum to Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/2379 of 18 December 2017 on recognition of the report of Canada including typical greenhouse gas emissions from cultivation of agricultural raw materials pursuant to Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 337, 19.12.2017)** 57

⁽¹⁾ Text with EEA relevance.

II

(Non-legislative acts)

REGULATIONS

COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) 2018/306

of 18 December 2017

laying down specifications for the implementation of the landing obligation as regards cod and plaice in Baltic Sea fisheries

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to the Regulation (EU) 2016/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a multiannual plan for the stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks, amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2187/2005 and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1098/2007 ⁽¹⁾, and in particular Articles 7,

Whereas:

- (1) Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽²⁾ aims to progressively eliminate discards in all Union fisheries through the introduction of a landing obligation for catches of species subject to catch limits.
- (2) According to Article 15(1)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, the landing obligation applies from 1 January 2015 in fisheries for herring and sprat and in fisheries for industrial purposes..
- (3) According to Article 15(1)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, in Baltic Sea fisheries other than those covered by Article 15(1)(a) of that Regulation, the landing obligation applies from 1 January 2015 to species which define the fisheries and from 1 January 2017 to all other species subject to catch limits. Cod is considered as a species defining certain fisheries in the Baltic Sea. Plaice is mostly caught as a by-catch in certain cod fisheries. In accordance with Article 15(1)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 the landing obligation applies in consequence to cod from 1 January 2015 and to plaice from 1 January 2017.
- (4) Article 15(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 provides that, where no multiannual plan is adopted for the fishery in question, the Commission may adopt a discard plan specifying details of the implementation of the landing obligation on a temporary basis.
- (5) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1396/2014 ⁽³⁾ established a discard plan as regards fisheries for salmon, herring, sprat and cod in the Baltic Sea. That discard plan includes i.a. an exemption from the landing obligation for cod and salmon on account of high survival rates demonstrated for those species, as provided for in Article 15(4)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013. Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1396/2014 expires on 31 December 2017.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 191, 15.7.2016, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1954/2003 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2371/2002 and (EC) No 639/2004 and Council Decision 2004/585/EC (OJ L 354, 28.12.2013, p. 22).

⁽³⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1396/2014 of 20 October 2014 establishing a discard plan in the Baltic Sea (OJ L 370, 30.12.2014, p. 40).

- (6) Regulation (EU) 2016/1139 establishes a multiannual plan for the stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks. The multiannual plan also contains provisions applicable to the plaice stock. Article 7(1) of Regulation (EU) 2016/1139 empowers the Commission to adopt provisions linked to the landing obligation by means of a delegated act on the basis of joint recommendations developed by Member States in consultation with the relevant Advisory Councils.
- (7) Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Finland and Sweden have a direct fisheries management interest in the Baltic Sea. On 31 May 2017 those Member States submitted a joint recommendation ⁽¹⁾ to the Commission, after consulting the Baltic Sea Advisory Council and obtaining scientific contribution from relevant scientific bodies.
- (8) The joint recommendation proposes that the exemption from the landing obligation for cod and plaice caught with trap-nets, creels/pots, fyke-nets and pound nets, as well as, the minimum conservation reference size for cod, provided for by Regulation (EU) No 1396/2014, continue to apply after 31 December 2017.
- (9) The joint recommendation is based on scientific evidence of high survivability, provided by the Baltic Sea Fisheries Forum (BALTFISH) and reviewed by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF).
- (10) STECF stated that more detailed information on plaice would be useful to assess the representativeness and quality of the discard survival estimate. However STECF concluded that, based on the fact that such gears operate by trapping fish inside a static netting structure, as opposed to entangling or hooking for example, it may be reasonably assumed that mortality for these gears will be low.
- (11) The measures included in the joint recommendation comply with Article 15(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and should therefore, in line with Article 18(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, be included in this Regulation.
- (12) According to Article 15(10) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and to Article 7(d) of Regulation (EU) 2016/1139 minimum conservation reference sizes (MCRS) may be established with the aim of ensuring the protection of juveniles of marine organisms. A minimum size of 35 cm for cod introduced by Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1396/2014 should continue to apply, taking into account that STECF has concluded that there may be sound biological reasons to have the MCRS fixed at 35 cm.
- (13) Regulation (EU) 2016/1139 does not establish a time limitation for the application of the survivability exemptions from the landing obligation. It is however appropriate to ensure that the impact of such exemption is reviewed regularly on the basis of the best scientific advice available. In case of new evidences, the exemption should be revised accordingly.
- (14) According to Article 16(2) of Regulation (EU) 2016/1139, the power to adopt delegated acts with regards to the landing obligation is conferred on the Commission for a period of five years from 20 July 2016. It is therefore appropriate to revise the impact of the survivability exemptions from the landing obligation in the third year of application of this Regulation.
- (15) Since Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1396/2014 expires on 31 December 2017, this Regulation should apply from 1 January 2018,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Subject matter and scope

This Regulation specifies the details for implementing the landing obligation, as regards cod and plaice caught in the fisheries for herring, sprat and cod in the Baltic Sea.

⁽¹⁾ 'BALTFISH High Level Group Joint Recommendation on the Outline of a Discard Plan for the Baltic Sea', transmitted on 31 May 2017.

*Article 2***Definitions**

For the purposes of this Regulation, the following definition shall apply:

'Baltic Sea' means ICES divisions IIIb, IIIc and IIId, as specified in Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 218/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾.

*Article 3***Survivability exemption**

1. By way of derogation from Article 15(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, the landing obligation shall not apply to cod and plaice caught with trap-nets, creels/pots, fyke-nets and pound nets in the fisheries for herring, sprat and cod.
2. Such species caught without an available quota or below the minimum conservation reference size in the circumstances referred to in paragraph 1 shall be released back into the sea.

*Article 4***Minimum conservation reference sizes**

The minimum conservation reference size for cod in the Baltic Sea shall be 35 cm.

*Article 5***Final provisions**

1. By 1 March 2019, Member States having a direct management interest shall provide the Commission with information allowing to assess the representativeness and quality of the discard survival estimate of plaice caught with trap-nets, creels/pots, fyke-nets and pound nets.
2. The Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) shall assess the information referred to in paragraph 1 by 1 August 2019 at the latest.

*Article 6***Revision of survivability exemption**

The Commission shall, on the basis of advice from STECF, evaluate the impact of the survivability exemption on the stocks concerned and on the fisheries exploiting those stocks in the third year of application of this Regulation.

*Article 7***Entry into force**

This Regulation shall enter into force on the third day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply from 1 January 2018.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EC) No 218/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on the submission of nominal catch statistics by Member States fishing in the north-east Atlantic (OJ L 87, 31.3.2009, p. 70).

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels, 18 December 2017.

For the Commission

The President

Jean-Claude JUNKER

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2018/307**of 28 February 2018****extending the special guarantees concerning *Salmonella* spp. laid down in Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council to meat derived from broilers (*Gallus gallus*) intended for Denmark****(Text with EEA relevance)**

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin ⁽¹⁾, and in particular Article 8(3)(b) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 lays down specific rules on the hygiene of food of animal origin for food business operators, with certain special guarantees for certain food of animal origin intended for the Finnish and Swedish markets. Accordingly, food business operators intending to place meat from specified animals on the market in those Member States must comply with certain rules in respect of *Salmonella*. Furthermore, consignments of such meat are to be accompanied by a trade document stating that a microbiological test has been carried out with negative results in accordance with Union legislation.
- (2) In addition, Commission Regulation (EC) No 1688/2005 ⁽²⁾ specifies those special guarantees, laying down rules on the sampling of such meat and microbiological methods for the examination of those samples. It also sets out a trade document to accompany consignments of the meat.
- (3) On 5 October 2007, the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration forwarded an application to the Commission for special guarantees to be authorised for Denmark concerning *Salmonella* in meat derived from broilers (*Gallus gallus*) for the whole of Denmark in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 853/2004. The application includes a description of the Danish *Salmonella* Control Programme for meat derived from broilers (*Gallus gallus*).
- (4) During its meeting on 18 June 2008, the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health agreed on a Commission staff working document entitled 'Guidance document on the minimum requirements for *Salmonella* control programmes to be recognised equivalent to those approved for Sweden and Finland in respect of meat and eggs of *Gallus gallus*' ⁽³⁾ (the 'Guidance document').
- (5) The Danish *Salmonella* Control Programme for meat derived from broilers (*Gallus gallus*) is considered equivalent to that approved for Finland and Sweden and is in line with the Guidance document. However, the prevalence of *Salmonella* in Danish flocks of breeders of *Gallus gallus* was higher than the upper limit proposed in the Guidance document, therefore it could not be considered equivalent to the situation in Finland and Sweden.
- (6) On 6 February 2017, the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration forwarded data on the prevalence of *Salmonella* in flocks of rearing breeders, adult breeders, broilers and meat of *Gallus gallus* for the period 2011-2016. The prevalences for 2015-2016 are in accordance with the upper limits set in the Guidance document.
- (7) The special guarantees should therefore be extended to consignments of meat derived from broilers (*Gallus gallus*) intended for Denmark. In addition, the rules laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1688/2005 concerning the sampling of such meat, the microbiological methods for the examination of those samples and the trade document should apply to such consignments.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 55.

⁽²⁾ Commission Regulation (EC) No 1688/2005 of 14 October 2005 implementing Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards special guarantees concerning *Salmonella* for consignments to Finland and Sweden of certain meat and eggs (OJ L 271, 15.10.2005, p. 17).

⁽³⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/biosafety_food-borne-disease_salmonella_guidance_min-req_eggs-poultry-meat.pdf

- (8) The measures provided for in this Regulation are in accordance with the opinion of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Denmark is authorised to apply the special guarantees concerning *Salmonella* spp. laid down in Article 8(2) of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 to consignments of meat as defined in point 1.1 of Annex I to that Regulation, derived from broilers (*Gallus gallus*) intended for Denmark.

Article 2

Consignments of meat referred to in Article 1 shall be accompanied by a trade document complying with the model set out in Annex IV to Regulation (EC) No 1688/2005.

Article 3

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels, 28 February 2018.

For the Commission
The President
Jean-Claude JUNCKER

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2018/308**of 1 March 2018**

laying down implementing technical standards for Directive 2014/59/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to formats, templates and definitions for the identification and transmission of information by resolution authorities for the purposes of informing the European Banking Authority of the minimum requirement for own funds and eligible liabilities

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Directive 2014/59/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 establishing a framework for the recovery and resolution of credit institutions and investment firms and amending Council Directive 82/891/EEC, and Directives 2001/24/EC, 2002/47/EC, 2004/25/EC, 2005/56/EC, 2007/36/EC, 2011/35/EU, 2012/30/EU and 2013/36/EU, and Regulations (EU) No 1093/2010 and (EU) No 648/2012, of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾, and in particular the third subparagraph of Article 45(17) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Resolution authorities have been given the task of setting, for each institution, the minimum requirement for own funds and eligible liabilities ('MREL') in accordance with the requirements and the procedures laid down in Article 45 of Directive 2014/59/EU as further specified by Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450 ⁽²⁾.
- (2) Resolution authorities are required under Article 45(16) of Directive 2014/59/EU to inform the European Banking Authority (EBA), in coordination with competent authorities, of the requirements they have set. Uniform formats, templates and definitions for the identification and transmission of that information to the EBA should be designed in such a way that they facilitate the monitoring by the EBA of MREL decisions and ensure a meaningful assessment of convergence in approach across the Union.
- (3) In respect of groups which are subject to a consolidated MREL, it is necessary to clarify which resolution authority should transmit to the EBA the information on, first, the MREL determined for the parent undertaking concerned, and second, the MREL applied to the subsidiaries, whether on the basis of a joint decision reached between the group-level resolution authority and the resolution authority responsible for the subsidiary on an individual basis, or of a decision taken by the resolution authority of the subsidiary in the absence of a joint decision. In order to ensure that the EBA is provided with the necessary information as regards both the parent undertaking and the subsidiaries, the relevant group-level resolution authority should be required to inform the EBA, in coordination with the consolidating supervisor, of both the MREL determined on an individual and the MREL determined on a consolidated basis for the parent undertaking concerned, and the resolution authorities responsible for a group's subsidiaries, in coordination with competent authorities, should be required to inform the EBA of the MREL that has been set for each institution under their jurisdiction.
- (4) In order to promote convergence of practices regarding MREL decisions and to strengthen the monitoring role of the EBA, uniform reporting periods and submission dates for the transmission of information by the resolution authorities to the EBA should be established.
- (5) This Regulation is based on the draft implementing technical standards submitted by the EBA to the Commission.
- (6) The EBA has conducted open public consultations on the draft implementing technical standards on which this Regulation is based, analysed the potential related costs and benefits, and requested the opinion of the Banking Stakeholder Group established in accordance with Article 37 of Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽³⁾,

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 173, 12.6.2014, p. 190.

⁽²⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450 of 23 May 2016 supplementing Directive 2014/59/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to regulatory technical standards specifying the criteria relating to the methodology for setting the minimum requirement for own funds and eligible liabilities (OJ L 237, 3.9.2016, p. 1).

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 establishing a European Supervisory Authority (European Banking Authority), amending Decision No 716/2009/EC and repealing Commission Decision 2009/78/EC (OJ L 331, 15.12.2010, p. 12).

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Information included in the templates

1. For the purposes of informing the EBA of the minimum requirement for own funds and eligible liabilities ('MREL'), and where relevant the requirement laid down in Article 45(13) of Directive 2014/59/EU, that have been set for each institution under their jurisdiction in accordance with Article 45(16) of that Directive on an individual and consolidated basis, resolution authorities, in coordination with competent authorities, shall transmit to the EBA the information specified in the templates set out in Annexes I and II to this Regulation.
2. In respect of institutions that are part of a group subject to a consolidated MREL, resolution authorities, in coordination with competent authorities, shall also transmit to the EBA the information as specified in the template set out in Annex III.
3. For the purposes of paragraphs 1 and 2, resolution authorities shall, where indicated in the template set out in Annex II, provide qualitative information explaining the reasons for MREL decisions on a best effort basis including, where appropriate, references to individual or group resolution plans, public decisions or policy statements of the resolution authority, or other supporting documents.
4. The terms used in Annex II shall have the meaning attributed to them in the relevant provisions referred to in the relevant column of the table included in that Annex.

Article 2

Simplified reporting requirement for institutions subject to waivers and institutions for which the recapitalisation amount is zero

1. By way of derogation from Article 1 of this Regulation, in relation to those institutions for which the application of the MREL has been waived under Article 45(11) or (12) of Directive 2014/59/EU, resolution authorities shall transmit to the EBA the information specified in Annex I, columns 10 to 90 of Annex II and, in respect of institutions that are part of a group subject to consolidated MREL, Annex III to this Regulation.
2. By way of derogation from Article 1 of this Regulation, in respect of those institutions for which the recapitalisation amount is zero in accordance with Article 2(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450, resolution authorities shall transmit to the EBA the information specified in Annex I, columns 10 to 120 of Annex II and, in respect of institutions that are part of a group subject to consolidated MREL, Annex III to this Regulation.

Article 3

Reporting authority in respect of groups

In respect of groups which are subject to a consolidated MREL, the information referred to in Articles 1 and 2 shall be submitted in the following manner:

- (a) the relevant group-level resolution authority, in coordination with the consolidating supervisor, shall inform the EBA of both the MREL determined on an individual, and the MREL determined on a consolidated basis for the Union parent undertaking or the parent undertaking referred to in Article 2 of Regulation (EU) No 806/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾;
- (b) the relevant resolution authorities, in coordination with the competent authority, shall inform the EBA of the MREL to be applied to the group subsidiaries under their jurisdiction on an individual basis.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) No 806/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 July 2014 establishing uniform rules and a uniform procedure for the resolution of credit institutions and certain investment firms in the framework of a Single Resolution Mechanism and a Single Resolution Fund and amending Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010 (OJ L 225, 30.7.2014, p. 1).

*Article 4***Reporting periods and submission dates**

1. Resolution authorities shall transmit the information referred to in Article 1 without undue delay after the decision establishing the MREL is taken or updated.
2. Resolution authorities shall transmit the information referred to in Article 2 for the MREL which has been determined and remains applicable as at 1 April of each year by 30 April of the same year.

*Article 5***Entry into force**

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels, 1 March 2018.

For the Commission

The President

Jean-Claude JUNKER

ANNEX I

Information about the reporting resolution authority

Reporting resolution authority	
Submission date	
Contact person	
	Name
	Email
	Phone
General comments (if any)	

ANNEX II

MREL information

Mandatory								Simplified reporting template (if 90 is 'Yes')			
To be filled for all institutions								For institutions for which the recapitalization amount is zero in application of Article 2(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450			
Legal reference	Article 45(7) and (8) of Directive 2014/59/EU or Article 12(8) of Regulation (EU) No 806/2014	General information				Article 45(11) and (12) of Directive 2014/59/EU or Article 12(10) of Regulation (EU) No 806/2014		Simplified reporting template (if applicable)	Article 1(4) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/962	Article 1(4) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450	Article 1(5)(b)(i) and/or Article 1(5)(b)(ii) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450
Legal entity identifier (LEI code)	Consolidated or individual requirement?	Entity name	Member state of incorporation	Is the reporting resolution authority the Group-level resolution authority?	Date of MREL decision or waiver decision	Application of MREL waived by resolution authority?	Notes	Simplified reporting template (if applicable)	Category of institution (if applicable)	MREL equal to default loss absorption amount?	Types of adjustments to loss absorption amount (if applicable)
10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	110	120

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 of June 2013 on prudential requirements for credit institutions and investment firms and amending Regulation (EU) No 648/2012 (OJ L 176, 27.6.2013, p.1)

Not mandatory for institutions for which the recapitalisation amount is zero in application of Article 2(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450																		
Type of requirement	Total liabilities and own funds		Total risk exposure amount				Leverage ratio denominator				Loss absorption amount							
Article 45(9) and (10) of Directive 2014/59/EU	Article 7(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450		Article 2(3) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450 and Article 92(3) and (4) of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 ⁽¹⁾				Article 2(3) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450 and Article 429(4) to (11) of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013				Article 1(4) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450	Article 1(5)(b)(i) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450			Article 1(5)(b)(ii) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450			
MREL set by joint decision	Current	Reporting reference date of item 140	Current	Reporting reference date of item 160	Assumed after resolution	Notes	Current	Reporting reference date of item 200	Assumed after resolution	Notes	Default loss absorption amount pursuant to Article 1 (4) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450	Upward adjustment	Type(s) of upward adjustment	Notes	Downward adjustment	Type(s) of downward adjustment	Notes	Total (240 + 250 + 280)
130	140	150	160	170	180	190	200	210	220	230	240	250	260	270	280	290	300	310

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 of June 2013 on prudential requirements for credit institutions and investment firms and amending Regulation (EU) No 648/2012 (OJ L 176, 27.6.2013, p.1)

Not mandatory for institutions for which the recapitalisation amount is zero in application of Article 2(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450															
Recapitalisation amount								Adjustments related to impediments to resolvability, size, systemic risk and DGS contributions							
Article 2(5) and (6) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450	Article 2(7) and (8) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450	Article 2(8) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450		Article 2(9) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450		Article 2(10) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450			Article 3 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450		Article 5 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450		Article 6 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450		
To meet conditions for authorisation	Default additional amount to maintain market confidence by meeting buffers	Adjustment to maintain market confidence following peer group comparison	Notes	Downward adjustment taking into account information received from the competent authority relating to the institution's business model, funding model, and overall risk profile	Notes	Adjustment to column 330 for group subsidiaries	Notes	Total (320 + 330 + 340 + 360 + 380)	For exclusions from bail-in	Notes	For size and systemic risk	Notes	For contributions by the DGS to the financing of resolution	Notes	Total (410 + 430 + 450)
320	330	340	350	360	370	380	390	400	410	420	430	440	450	460	470

(¹) Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 of June 2013 on prudential requirements for credit institutions and investment firms and amending Regulation (EU) No 648/2012 (OJ L 176, 27.6.2013, p.1)

Not mandatory for institutions for which the recapitalisation amount is zero in application of Article 2(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450													
Combined assessment of MREL				Transitional or post-resolution arrangements (if applicable)									
Article 7(1) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450	Article 7(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450	Article 45(13) of Directive 2014/59/EU		Article 8 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450	Article 8(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/1450								
Total (310 + 400 + 470)	MREL as % of total liabilities and own funds (480 / 140)	Percentage of MREL to be met through contractual bail-in instruments	Date at which requirement set in 490 must be met	Type of transitional arrangements	Planned MREL (as % of total liabilities and own funds)	Intended date of application	Planned MREL (as % of total liabilities and own funds)	Intended date of application	Planned MREL (as % of total liabilities and own funds)	Intended date of application	Planned MREL (as % of total liabilities and own funds)	Intended date of application	Accounting framework
480	490	500	510	520	530	540	550	560	570	580	590	600	610

(¹) Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 of June 2013 on prudential requirements for credit institutions and investment firms and amending Regulation (EU) No 648/2012 (OJ L 176, 27.6.2013, p.1)

MREL location

Institution			Ultimate parent undertaking			Union parent undertaking			Relevant immediate parent undertaking		
Legal entity identifier (LEI code)	Entity name	Member state of incorporation	LEI code	Entity name	Country of incorporation	LEI code	Entity name	Member state of incorporation	LEI code	Entity name	Country of incorporation

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2018/309**of 1 March 2018****concerning the non-renewal of approval of the active substance propineb, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market, and amending the Annex to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011****(Text with EEA relevance)**

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market and repealing Council Directives 79/117/EEC and 91/414/EEC ⁽¹⁾, and in particular Article 20(1) and Article 78(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Commission Directive 2003/39/EC ⁽²⁾ included propineb as an active substance in Annex I to Council Directive 91/414/EEC ⁽³⁾.
- (2) Active substances included in Annex I to Directive 91/414/EEC are deemed to have been approved under Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 and are listed in Part A of the Annex to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011 ⁽⁴⁾.
- (3) The approval of the active substance propineb, as set out in Part A of the Annex to Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011, expires on 31 January 2019.
- (4) An application for the renewal of the approval of propineb was submitted in accordance with Article 1 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 844/2012 ⁽⁵⁾ within the time period provided for in that Article.
- (5) The applicant submitted the supplementary dossiers required in accordance with Article 6 of Implementing Regulation (EU) No 844/2012. The application was found to be complete by the rapporteur Member State.
- (6) The rapporteur Member State prepared a renewal assessment report in consultation with the co-rapporteur Member State and submitted it to the European Food Safety Authority ('the Authority') and the Commission on 1 October 2015.
- (7) The Authority communicated the renewal assessment report to the applicant and to the Member States for comments and forwarded the comments received to the Commission. The Authority also made the supplementary summary dossier available to the public.
- (8) On 15 November 2016 the Authority communicated to the Commission its conclusion ⁽⁶⁾ on whether propineb can be expected to meet the approval criteria provided for in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009. The Authority concluded that the consumer risk assessment through dietary intake cannot be conducted for the products of plant and animal origin. Based on the data available in the dossier it was not possible to complete the assessment of relevant metabolites of propineb.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ Commission Directive 2003/39/EC of 15 May 2003 amending Council Directive 91/414/EEC to include propineb and propyzamide as active substances (OJ L 124, 20.5.2003, p. 30).

⁽³⁾ Council Directive 91/414/EEC of 15 July 1991 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market (OJ L 230, 19.8.1991, p. 1).

⁽⁴⁾ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011 of 25 May 2011 implementing Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the list of approved active substances (OJ L 153, 11.6.2011, p. 1).

⁽⁵⁾ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 844/2012 of 18 September 2012 setting out the provisions necessary for the implementation of the renewal procedure for active substances, as provided for in Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market (OJ L 252, 19.9.2012, p. 26).

⁽⁶⁾ EFSA (European Food Safety Authority), 2016. Conclusion on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment of the active substance propineb. *EFSA Journal* 2016;14(11):4605, 26 pp. doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2016.4605.

- (9) In addition, the Authority underlined a critical area of concern for propineb related to the endocrine-disrupting properties of the relevant metabolite 4-methylimidazolidine-2-thione (PTU) which is classified as toxic for reproduction category 2 and has the thyroid as a target organ for toxicity.
- (10) Moreover, the Authority could not finalise the assessment of the risk to honeybee brood and concluded that a high risk to honeybee brood development could not be excluded for propineb.
- (11) The Commission invited the applicant to submit its comments on the conclusion of the Authority. Furthermore, in accordance with the third paragraph of Article 14(1) of Implementing Regulation (EU) No 844/2012, the Commission invited the applicant to submit comments on the draft renewal report. The applicant submitted its comments, which have been carefully examined.
- (12) However, despite the arguments put forward by the applicant, the concerns related to the substance could not be eliminated.
- (13) Based on these identified risks, it has not been established with respect to one or more representative uses of at least one plant protection product that the approval criteria provided for in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 are satisfied. It is therefore appropriate not to renew the approval of the active substance propineb in accordance with Article 20(1)(b) of that Regulation.
- (14) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011 should therefore be amended accordingly.
- (15) Member States should be allowed sufficient time to withdraw authorisations for plant protection products containing propineb.
- (16) For plant protection products containing propineb, where Member States grant any grace period in accordance with Article 46 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009, that period should, at the latest, expire on 22 June 2019.
- (17) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/84 ⁽¹⁾ extended the expiry date of propineb to 31 January 2019 in order to allow the renewal process to be completed before the expiry of the approval of that substance. However, given that a decision has been taken ahead of that extended expiry date, this Regulation should apply as soon as possible.
- (18) This Regulation does not prejudice the submission of a further application for the approval of propineb pursuant to Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009.
- (19) The measures provided for in this Regulation are in accordance with the opinion of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Non-renewal of approval of active substance

The approval of the active substance propineb is not renewed.

Article 2

Amendments to Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011

In Part A of the Annex to Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011, row 54, on propineb, is deleted.

⁽¹⁾ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/84 of 19 January 2018 amending Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011 as regards the extension of the approval periods of the active substances chlorpyrifos, chlorpyrifos-methyl, clothianidin, copper compounds, dimoxystrobin, mancozeb, mecoprop-p, metiram, oxamyl, pethoxamid, propiconazole, propineb, propyzamide, pyraclostrobin and zoxamide (OJ L 16, 20.1.2018, p. 8).

*Article 3***Transitional measures**

Member States shall withdraw authorisations for plant protection products containing propineb as active substance by 22 June 2018 at the latest.

*Article 4***Grace Period**

Any grace period granted by Member States in accordance with Article 46 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 shall be as short as possible and shall expire by 22 June 2019 at the latest.

*Article 5***Entry into force**

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels, 1 March 2018.

For the Commission

The President

Jean-Claude JUNCKER

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2018/310
of 1 March 2018
fixing the import duties in the cereals sector applicable from 2 March 2018

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) No 922/72, (EEC) No 234/79, (EC) No 1037/2001 and (EC) No 1234/2007 ⁽¹⁾, and in particular Article 183 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Article 1(1) of Commission Regulation (EU) No 642/2010 ⁽²⁾ states that the import duty on products covered by CN codes 1001 11 00, 1001 19 00, ex 1001 91 20 (common wheat seed), ex 1001 99 00 (high quality common wheat other than for sowing), 1002 10 00, 1002 90 00, 1005 10 90, 1005 90 00, 1007 10 90 and 1007 90 00 is to be equal to the intervention price valid for such products on importation, increased by 55 %, minus the CIF import price applicable to the consignment in question. However, that duty may not exceed the rate of duty in the Common Customs Tariff.
- (2) Article 1(2) of Regulation (EU) No 642/2010 lays down that, for the purposes of calculating the import duty referred to in paragraph 1 of that Article, representative CIF import prices are to be established on a regular basis for the products referred to in that paragraph.
- (3) Under Article 2(1) of Regulation (EU) No 642/2010, the import price to be used for the calculation of the import duty on products referred to in Article 1(1) of that Regulation is the daily CIF representative import price determined as specified in Article 5 of that Regulation.
- (4) From 21 September 2017 the import duty on products originating in Canada covered by CN codes 1001 11 00, 1001 19 00, ex 1001 99 00 (high quality common wheat other than for sowing), 1002 10 00 and 1002 90 00 is to be calculated in accordance with Article 2(5) of Regulation (EU) No 642/2010.
- (5) Import duties should be fixed for the period from 2 March 2018 and should apply until new import duties are fixed and enter into force.
- (6) Under Article 2(2) of Regulation (EU) No 642/2010, this Regulation should enter into force on the day of its publication,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

From 2 March 2018, the import duties in the cereals sector referred to in Article 1(1) of Regulation (EU) No 642/2010 shall be those fixed in Annex I to this Regulation on the basis of the information contained in Annex II.

Article 2

This Regulation shall enter into force on the day of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 671.

⁽²⁾ Commission Regulation (EU) No 642/2010 of 20 July 2010 on rules of application (cereal sector import duties) for Council Regulation (EC) No 1234/2007 (OJ L 187, 21.7.2010, p. 5).

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels, 1 March 2018.

*For the Commission,
On behalf of the President,
Jerzy PLEWA
Director-General
Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development*

ANNEX I

<i>Import duties on the products referred to in Article 1(1) of Regulation (EU) No 642/2010 applicable from 2 March 2018</i>		
CN code	Description	Import duties ⁽¹⁾ ⁽²⁾ (EUR/tonne)
1001 11 00	Durum wheat seed	0,00
1001 19 00	High quality durum wheat, other than for sowing	0,00
	Medium quality, other than for sowing	0,00
	Low quality, other than for sowing	0,00
ex 1001 91 20	Common wheat seed	0,00
ex 1001 99 00	High quality common wheat, other than for sowing	0,00
1002 10 00	Rye seed	0,56
1002 90 00	Rye, other than for sowing	0,56
1005 10 90	Maize seed, other than hybrid	0,56
1005 90 00	Maize, other than for sowing ⁽³⁾	0,56
1007 10 90	Grain sorghum, other than hybrids for sowing	0,56
1007 90 00	Grain sorghum, other than for sowing	0,56

- ⁽¹⁾ The importer may benefit, under Article 2(4) of Regulation (EU) No 642/2010, from a reduction in the duty of:
- EUR 3/tonne, where the port of unloading is located on the Mediterranean Sea (beyond the Strait of Gibraltar) or on the Black Sea, for goods arriving in the Union via the Atlantic Ocean or the Suez Canal,
 - EUR 2/tonne, where the port of unloading is located in Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Finland, Sweden, the United Kingdom or on the Atlantic coast of the Iberian Peninsula, for goods arriving in the Union via the Atlantic Ocean.
- ⁽²⁾ For products originating in Canada covered by CN codes 1001 11 00, 1001 19 00, ex 1001 99 00 (high quality common wheat other than for sowing), 1002 10 00 and 1002 90 00, the duty is calculated in accordance with Article 2(5) of Regulation (EU) No 642/2010.
- ⁽³⁾ The importer may benefit from a flat-rate reduction of EUR 24/tonne where the conditions laid down in Article 3 of Regulation (EU) No 642/2010 are met.

ANNEX II

FACTORS FOR CALCULATING THE DUTIES LAID DOWN IN ANNEX I

1. Averages over the reference period referred to in Article 2(2) of Regulation (EU) No 642/2010:

	(EUR/tonne)	
	Common wheat ⁽¹⁾	Maize
Exchange	Minneapolis	Chicago
Quotation	193,300	117,450
Gulf of Mexico premium	84,902	21,549
Great Lakes premium	—	—

(¹) Premium of EUR 14/t incorporated (Article 5(3) of Regulation (EU) No 642/2010).

2. Averages over the reference period referred to in Article 2(2) of Regulation (EU) No 642/2010:

Freight costs: Gulf of Mexico-Rotterdam:	17,471 EUR/tonne
Freight costs: Great Lakes-Rotterdam:	— EUR/tonne

DECISIONS

COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2018/311

of 27 February 2018

establishing the position to be taken on behalf of the Union within the Joint Committee set up under the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas, with regard to the adoption of common guidelines for the implementation of that Agreement

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular point (a) of Article 77(2), in conjunction with Article 218(9) thereof,

Having regard to Council Decision 2014/242/EU of 14 April 2014 on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas ⁽¹⁾,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

- (1) Article 12 of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas ⁽²⁾ ('the Agreement') sets up a Joint Committee (the 'Joint Committee'). It provides, in particular, that the Joint Committee is to monitor the implementation of the Agreement.
- (2) Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽³⁾ established the procedures and conditions for issuing visas for transit through, or intended stays on, the territory of the Member States not exceeding 90 days in any 180-day period.
- (3) Common guidelines are needed to ensure fully consistent implementation of the Agreement by the diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Member States and to clarify the relationship between the provisions of the Agreement and the provisions of the legislation of the contracting Parties that continue to apply to visa issues not covered by the Agreement.
- (4) It is appropriate to establish the position to be taken on the Union's behalf within the Joint Committee as regards adopting common guidelines for the implementation of the Agreement.
- (5) This Decision constitutes a development of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* in which the United Kingdom does not take part, in accordance with Council Decision 2000/365/EC ⁽⁴⁾; the United Kingdom is therefore not taking part in the adoption of this Decision and is not bound by it or subject to its application.
- (6) This Decision constitutes a development of Schengen *acquis* provisions in which Ireland does not take part, in accordance with Council Decision 2002/192/EC ⁽⁵⁾; Ireland is therefore not taking part in the adoption of this Decision and is not bound by it or subject to its application.
- (7) In accordance with Articles 1 and 2 of Protocol No 22 on the position of Denmark, annexed to the Treaty on European Union and to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Denmark is not taking part in the adoption of this Decision and is not bound by it or subject to its application,

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 128, 30.4.2014, p. 47.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 128, 30.4.2014, p. 49.

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code) (OJ L 243, 15.9.2009, p. 1).

⁽⁴⁾ Council Decision 2000/365/EC of 29 May 2000 concerning the request of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to take part in some of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* (OJ L 131, 1.6.2000, p. 43).

⁽⁵⁾ Council Decision 2002/192/EC of 28 February 2002 concerning Ireland's request to take part in some of the provisions of the Schengen *acquis* (OJ L 64, 7.3.2002, p. 20).

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The position to be taken on behalf of the European Union within the Joint Committee set up by Article 12 of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas, with regard to the adoption of common guidelines for the implementation of that Agreement, shall be based on the draft Decision of the Joint Committee attached to this Decision.

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels, 27 February 2018.

For the Council
The President
E. ZAHARIEVA

DRAFT

**DECISION No .../201... OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE SET UP UNDER THE AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE
FACILITATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF VISAS**

of ...

with regard to the adoption of common guidelines for the implementation of that Agreement

THE JOINT COMMITTEE,

Having regard to the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas ⁽¹⁾ ('the Agreement'), and in particular Article 12 thereof,

Whereas the Agreement entered into force on 1 September 2014,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The common guidelines for the implementation of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the facilitation the issuance of visas are set out in the Annex to this Decision.

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

Done at ...,

For the European Union

For the Republic of Azerbaijan

⁽¹⁾ OJ EUL 128, 30.4.2014, p. 49.

ANNEX

COMMON GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND
THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ON THE FACILITATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF VISAS

The purpose of the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas (the 'Agreement'), which entered into force on 1 September 2014, is to facilitate, on the basis of reciprocity, the procedures for issuing visas for an intended stay of no more than 90 days per period of 180 days to the citizens of the Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Agreement establishes, on the basis of reciprocity, legally binding rights and obligations for the purpose of simplifying the visa issuing procedures for the citizens of the Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

These Guidelines, adopted by the Joint Committee set up under Article 12 of the Agreement (the 'Joint Committee'), aim at ensuring a harmonised implementation of the Agreement by the diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Member States of the Union ('Member States') and the Republic of Azerbaijan. These Guidelines are not part of the Agreement and therefore are not legally binding. However, it is highly recommended that diplomatic and consular staff consistently follow them when implementing the Agreement.

These Guidelines are intended to be updated in light of experiences gained in the implementation of the Agreement under the responsibility of the Joint Committee.

In order to ensure the continued and harmonized implementation of the Agreement and in conformity with the rules of procedure of the Joint Visa Facilitation Committee, the Parties agreed to undertake informal contacts between formal meetings of the Joint Committee, in order to deal with urgent issues. Detailed reports about these issues and the informal contacts will be submitted at the subsequent Joint Committee meeting.

I. GENERAL ISSUES

1.1. Purpose and scope of application

Article 1 of the Agreement provides that: 'The purpose of this Agreement is to facilitate, on the basis of reciprocity, the issuance of visas for an intended stay of no more than 90 days per period of 180 days to the citizens of the Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan.'

The Agreement applies to all citizens of the Union and of the Republic of Azerbaijan who apply for a short-stay visa, whichever the country they reside in.

The Agreement does not apply to stateless persons holding a residence permit issued by any of the Member States or the Republic of Azerbaijan. The rules of the Union *visa acquis* and the national law of the Republic of Azerbaijan apply to that category of persons.

1.2. Scope of the Agreement

Article 2 of the Agreement provides that:

'1. The visa facilitations provided in this Agreement shall apply to citizens of the Union and of the Republic of Azerbaijan only insofar as they are not exempted from the visa requirement by the laws and regulations of the Republic of Azerbaijan, of the Union or the Member States, this Agreement or other international Agreements.

2. The national law of the Republic of Azerbaijan or of the Member States or Union law shall apply to issues not covered by the provisions of this Agreement, such as the refusal to issue a visa, recognition of travel documents, proof of sufficient means of subsistence and the refusal of entry and expulsion measures.'

The Agreement, without prejudice to Article 10 thereof (which provides for the exemption from the visa requirement for the citizens of the Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan who are holders of valid diplomatic passports) does not affect the existing rules on visa obligations and visa exemptions. For instance, Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 ⁽¹⁾ allows the Member States to exempt from the visa requirement, among other categories of persons, civilian air and sea crews.

⁽¹⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 of 15 March 2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement (OJ EU L 81, 21.3.2001, p. 1).

In that context it should be added that in accordance with Article 21 of the Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement of 14 June 1985 between the Governments of the States of the Benelux Economic Union, the Federal Republic of Germany and the French Republic on the gradual abolition of checks at their common borders ⁽¹⁾, all Schengen Member States must recognise long-stay visas and residence permits issued by each other as valid for short stays on each other's territories. All Schengen Member States accept residence permits, D visas and short stay visas of Schengen associated countries for entry and short stay and vice versa.

Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽²⁾ (the 'Visa Code') applies to all issues not covered by the Agreement such as the determination of the Schengen Member State responsible for processing a visa application, the motivation of a refusal to issue a visa, the right to appeal against a negative decision and the general rule of the personal interview with the visa applicant and providing all relevant information in relation to the visa application. Furthermore, Schengen rules notably Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽³⁾ (i.e. the refusal of entry in the territory, proof of sufficient means of subsistence etc.) and national law, where appropriate, continue also to apply to issues which are not covered by the Agreement, such as the recognition of travel documents, proof of sufficient means of subsistence, the refusal of entry in the territory of the Member States and expulsion measures.

Even if the conditions provided for in the Agreement are met, for example, proof of documentary evidence regarding the purpose of the journey for the categories provided for in Article 4 is provided by the visa applicant, the issuance of the visa can still be refused if the conditions laid down in Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council ('Schengen Borders Code') are not fulfilled, i.e. the person is not in possession of a valid travel document, an alert in the Schengen Information System (SIS) has been issued, the person is considered to be a threat to public policy, internal security, etc.

Other flexibilities in the issuing of visas provided for by the Visa Code continue to apply. For instance, multiple-entry visas for a long period of validity – up to five years – can be issued to categories of persons other than those mentioned in Article 5 of the Agreement, if the conditions provided for in Article 24 of the Visa Code are met. In the same way, the provisions contained in Article 16(5) and (6) of the Visa Code allowing waiver or reduction of the visa fee will continue to apply.

In terms of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Migration Code ⁽⁴⁾ and other corresponding normative legal acts of the Republic of Azerbaijan applies to all issues not covered by the Agreement, such as the motivation of refusal to issue a visa, the right to appeal against a negative decision or the general rule of the personal interview with the applicant and providing information in relation to the visa application, recognition of travel documents, proof of sufficient means of subsistence, the refusal of entry in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, expulsion measures.

Other flexibilities in the issuing of visas allowed for by the national law of the Republic of Azerbaijan continue to apply if they set a more favourable regime for the applicant. For instance, the provisions of Article 17(2) of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan 'On State Fees' allowing waiv of the visa fee and of Article 38 of the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan allowing issuance of the electronic visas will continue to apply.

Even if the conditions foreseen in the Agreement are met, for example, proof of documentary evidence regarding the purpose of the journey for the categories foreseen in Article 4 is provided by the visa applicant, the issuance of the visa still can be refused if the conditions laid down in Article 36 of the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan (except for paragraph 36.1.7 thereof) are not fulfilled or if there are circumstances listed in Article 16 of the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

1.3. Types of visas falling within the scope of the Agreement

Point (d) of Article 3 of the Agreement defines 'visa' as 'authorisation issued by a Member State or the Republic of Azerbaijan with a view to transiting through, or an intended stay of a duration of no more than 90 days in any 180-day period, in the territory of Member States or the Republic of Azerbaijan.'

⁽¹⁾ OJ EUL 239, 22.9.2000, p. 19.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code) (OJ EUL 243, 15.9.2009, p. 1).

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EU) 2016/399 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on a Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code) (OJ EUL 77, 23.3.2016, p. 1).

⁽⁴⁾ The Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan was adopted by the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan No 713-IVQ, on July 2, 2013 and entered into force in August 1, 2013.

The facilitations provided by the Agreement apply both to uniform visas valid for the entire territory of the Member States and to visas with limited territorial validity.

The facilitations provided by the Agreement apply to all visas determined in the Chapter 5 of the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

1.4. Calculation of the length of stay authorised by a visa

The Schengen Borders Code defines the notion of short-stay as follows: 'no more than 90 days in any 180-day period, which entails considering the 180-day period preceding each day of stay'.

This definition also applies to short stay visas issued by the Republic of Azerbaijan, in line with the Agreement.

The day of entry will be calculated as the first day of stay in the territory of the Member States and the day of exit will be calculated as the last day of stay in the territory of the Member States. The notion of 'any' implies the application of a 'moving' 180-day reference period, on each day of the stay looking back to the last 180-day period, in order to verify if the 90/180-day requirement continues to be fulfilled. That means that an absence from the territory of the Member States for an uninterrupted period of 90 days allows for a new stay of up to 90 days.

A short-stay calculator, which can be used for calculating the period of allowed stay under the new rules, can be found on-line at the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/border-crossing/index_en.htm.

Example of calculation of stay on the basis of the current definition:

A person holding a multiple-entry visa for 1 year (18 April 2014 – 18 April 2015) enters for the first time on 19 April 2014 and stays for three days. Then the same person enters again on 18 June 2014 and stays for 86 days. What is the situation on specific dates? When will that person be allowed to enter again?

On 11 September 2014: over the last 180 days (16 March 2014 – 11 September 2014) the person had stayed for three days (19-21 April 2014) plus 86 days (18 June 2014 – 11 September 2014) = 89 days = no overstay. The person may still stay for up to one day.

As of 16 October 2014: the person might enter for a stay of three additional days. On 16 October 2014 the stay on 19 April 2014 becomes irrelevant (outside the 180-day period); on 17 October 2014 the stay on 20 April 2014 becomes irrelevant (outside the 180-day period; etc.).

As of 15 December 2014: the person might enter for 86 additional days. On 15 December 2014 the stay on 18 June 2014 becomes irrelevant (outside the 180-day period); on 16 December 2014 the stay on 19 June 2014 becomes irrelevant, etc.

1.5. Situation regarding the Member States that do not yet fully apply the Schengen *acquis*, Member States that do not participate in the Union common visa policy and associated countries

Member States that joined the Union in 2004 (the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia), 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania), and 2013 (Croatia) are bound by the Agreement as from its entry into force.

Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania do not yet fully implement the Schengen *acquis*. They will continue issuing national visas with a validity limited to their own national territory. Once those Member States fully implement the Schengen *acquis*, they will apply the Agreement in full.

National law continues to apply to all issues not covered by the Agreement until the date of full implementation of the Schengen *acquis* by those Member States. As from that date, Schengen rules and/or national law shall apply to issues not covered by the Agreement.

Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania are authorised to recognise residence permits, D visas and short stay visas issued by all Schengen Member States and associated countries for short stays on their territory ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Decision No 565/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 introducing a simplified regime for the control of persons at the external borders based on the unilateral recognition by Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania of certain documents as equivalent to their national visas for transit through or intended stays on their territories not exceeding 90 days in any 180-day period and repealing Decisions No 895/2006/EC and No 582/2008/EC (OJ EU L 157, 27.5.2014, p. 23). Due to the absence of diplomatic relations, Cyprus currently exempts holders of Azerbaijani passports (except from diplomatic passport) from the provisions of Decision No 565/2014/EU.

According to Article 21 of the Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement of 14 June 1985 on the gradual abolition of checks at the common borders, all Parties to that Convention must recognise the long-stay visas and residence permits issued by each other as valid for short stays on each other's territories. They accept residence permits, D visas and short stay visas of associated countries for entry and short stay and vice versa.

The Agreement does not apply to Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom but includes joint declarations about the desirability of those Member States to conclude bilateral agreements on visa facilitation with the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Although associated to Schengen, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland are not bound by the Agreement. However, the Agreement includes a Joint Declaration about the desirability of those Schengen associated countries to conclude, without delay, bilateral agreements on the facilitation of the issuance of short-stay visas with the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Agreement on the facilitation of the issuance of visas between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Kingdom of Norway was signed on 3 December 2013 and entered into force on 1 June 2015. The Agreement on the facilitation of the issuance of visas between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Swiss Federal Council was signed on 10 October 2016 and entered into force on 1 April 2017. Moreover, the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein on mutual application of the rules, mentioned in the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the facilitation of the issuance of visas, entered into force on 15 February 2017.

1.6. The Agreement and bilateral agreements

Article 13 of the Agreement provides that:

'As from its entry into force, this Agreement shall take precedence over provisions of any bilateral or multilateral agreements or arrangements concluded between individual Member States and the Republic of Azerbaijan, insofar as the provisions of the latter agreements or arrangements cover issues dealt with by this Agreement.'

As from the date of entry into force of the Agreement, provisions of the bilateral agreements in force between Member States and the Republic of Azerbaijan on issues covered by the Agreement ceased to apply. In accordance with Union law, Member States have to take the necessary measures to eliminate the incompatibilities between their bilateral agreements and the Agreement.

Should a Member State have concluded a bilateral agreement or arrangement with the Republic of Azerbaijan on issues not covered by the Agreement, for instance, providing for the exemption from the visa obligation for holders of service passports, that exemption would continue to apply after the entry into force of the Agreement.

The following Member States have a bilateral agreement with the Republic of Azerbaijan providing for the exemption from the visa obligation for holders of service passports: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Latvia and Slovakia ⁽¹⁾.

The visa exemption for service passport holders granted by a Member State only applies for travelling on the territory of this Member State and not for travelling to the other Schengen Member States.

II. SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

2.1. Rules that apply to all visa applicants

It is recalled that the facilitations mentioned below, with regard to the visa fee, the length of procedures for processing visa applications, departure in case of lost or stolen documents, and the extension of visa in exceptional circumstances, apply to all visa applicants and visa holders being citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan or Member States bound by the Agreement, including tourists.

2.1.1. Fees for processing visa applications

Article 6(1) of the Agreement provides that:

'1. The fee for processing visa applications shall amount to EUR 35.'

⁽¹⁾ Exemption from the visa requirement in accordance with Article 4(1) of Regulation (EC) No 539/2001.

In accordance with Article 6(1) of the Agreement, the fee for processing a visa application is EUR 35. That fee applies to all visa applicants being citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan or of the Union (including tourists) and concerns short-stay visas, irrespective of the number of entries.

Article 6(2) of the Agreement provides that:

‘2. Without prejudice to paragraph 3 fees for processing the visa application are waived for the following categories of persons:

- (a) for close relatives – spouses, children (including adopted), parents (including custodians), grandparents and grand-children – of citizens of the European Union legally residing in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, of citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan legally residing in the territory of the Member States, of citizens of the European Union residing in the territory of the Member State of which they are nationals, and of citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan residing in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- (b) for members of official delegations, including permanent members of official delegations, who, following an official invitation addressed to the Member States, the European Union or the Republic of Azerbaijan, shall participate in official meetings, consultations, negotiations or exchange programmes, as well as in events held in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or one of the Member States by intergovernmental organisations;
- (c) pupils, students, post-graduate students and accompanying teachers who undertake trips for the purposes of study or educational training, including in the framework of exchange programmes as well as other school related activities;
- (d) persons with disabilities and the persons accompanying them, if necessary;’.

In order to benefit from the fee waiver, evidence should be provided that both visa applicants fall under this category. In cases where the disability of the visa applicant is obvious (blind persons, people missing limbs) the visual recognition at the consular post is acceptable.

In justified cases the visa application may be submitted by a representative or the guardian of the disabled person.

- ‘(e) participants in international sports events and persons accompanying them in a professional capacity; (N.B. Supporters will not be considered as accompanying persons);
- (f) persons participating in scientific, cultural and artistic activities, including university and other exchange programmes;
- (g) persons who have presented documents proving the necessity of their travel on humanitarian grounds, including to receive urgent medical treatment and the person accompanying such person, or to attend a funeral of a close relative, or to visit a seriously ill close relative;
- (h) representatives of civil society organizations when undertaking trips for the purposes of educational training, seminars, conferences, including in the framework of exchange programmes;’.

In order to benefit from the fee waiver for this category, visa applicants must present proof of being members of civil society organisations or non-profit organisations registered in the Member States or the Republic of Azerbaijan – see Article 4 of the Agreement.

- ‘(i) pensioners;’.

In order to benefit from the fee waiver for this category, visa applicants must present a proof of their pensioner status. The waiver is not justified in cases where the purpose of the journey is paid activity.

- ‘(j) children below the age of 12;

- (k) journalists and technical crew accompanying them in a professional capacity;’.

In order to benefit from the fee waiver for this category, visa applicants must present proof of being members of professional journalistic or media organisations – see Article 4 of the Agreement.

As far as the Member States are concerned, the fee is waived for the abovementioned categories of persons. In addition, the fee is also waived, in accordance with Article 16(4) of the Visa Code, for the following categories of persons:

- researchers from third countries travelling within the European Union for the purpose of carrying out scientific research as defined in Recommendation 2005/761/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽¹⁾;
- representatives of non-profit organisations aged 25 years or less participating in seminars, conferences, sports, cultural or educational events organised by non-profit organisations.

Article 16(6) of the Visa Code provides that:

‘6. In individual cases, the amount of the fee to be charged may be waived or reduced when to do so serves to promote cultural or sporting interests as well as interests in the field of foreign policy, development policy and other areas of vital public interest or for humanitarian reasons.’

Article 16(7) of the Visa Code provides that the visa fee is to be charged in euro, in the national currency of the third country or in the currency usually used in the third country where the application is lodged, and is not refundable except in the cases of an inadmissible application or if the consulate is not competent.

In order to avoid discrepancies which could lead to visa shopping, diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Member States in the Republic of Azerbaijan should endeavour to ensure similar visa fees for all Azerbaijani visa applicants when charged in foreign currencies.

Likewise, in terms of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the fee is also waived, in accordance with Article 17(2) of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan ‘On State Fees’, for the following categories of foreigners;

- members of the state delegation and officials;
- representatives of international humanitarian organizations in the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- persons who are studying or are engaged in pedagogical activities via state programmes;
- persons who travel for defence purposes.

Visa applicants from the Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan will be given a receipt for the visa fee paid.

Article 6(3) of the Agreement provides that:

‘3. If a Member State or the Republic of Azerbaijan cooperates with an external service provider in view of issuing a visa the external service provider may charge a service fee. This fee shall be proportionate to the costs incurred by the external service provider while performing its tasks and shall not exceed EUR 30. The Member States and the Republic of Azerbaijan shall maintain the possibility for all applicants to lodge their applications directly at their consulates.

For the Union, the external service provider shall conduct its operations in accordance with the Visa Code and in full respect of the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

For the Republic of Azerbaijan, the external service provider shall conduct its operations in accordance with the Azerbaijani legislation and of the legislation of the EU Member States.’

With regard to the arrangements of the cooperation with external services providers, Article 43 of the Visa Code provides detailed information concerning their tasks.

2.1.2. Length of procedures for processing visa applications

Article 7 of the Agreement provides that:

‘1. Diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Member States and the Republic of Azerbaijan shall take a decision on the request to issue a visa within 10 calendar days of the date of the receipt of the application and documents required for issuing the visa.

2. The period of time for taking a decision on a visa application may be extended up to 30 calendar days in individual cases, notably when further scrutiny of the application is needed.

⁽¹⁾ Recommendation 2005/761/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 September 2005 to facilitate the issue by the Member States of uniform short-stay visas for researchers from third countries travelling within the Community for the purpose of carrying out scientific research (OJ EU L 289, 3.11.2005, p. 23).

3. The period of time for taking a decision on a visa application may be reduced to 2 working days or less in urgent cases.’.

A decision on the visa application will be taken, in principle, within 10 calendar days of the date of the lodging of an admissible visa application.

That period may be extended up to 30 calendar days in individual cases, notably when further scrutiny of the application is needed or in cases of representation where the authorities of the represented Member State are consulted.

All those deadlines start running only when the visa application file is complete, i.e. as from the date of receipt of the visa application and supporting documents.

As a principle, for diplomatic missions and consular posts that have an appointment system, the waiting time to get an appointment is not included in the processing time. The general rules set out in Article 9 of the Visa Code and in the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan are applicable to that issue as well as to other practical arrangements for lodging a visa application.

Article 7(3) of the Agreement provides that:

‘If applicants are required to obtain an appointment for the lodging of an application the appointment shall, as a rule, take place within a period of two weeks from the date the appointment was requested.’.

‘In justified cases of urgency (where the visa application could not have been lodged earlier for reasons that could not have been foreseen by the applicant), the consulate may allow applicants to lodge their applications either without appointment, or an appointment shall be given immediately.’.

When setting the appointment, the possible urgency claimed by the visa applicant should be taken into account in view of the implementation of Article 7(3) of the Agreement. The decision on reducing the time for taking a decision on a visa application is taken by the consular officer.

2.1.3. Leaving the country in the event of the loss or theft of identity documents

Article 8 of the Agreement provides that:

‘Citizens of the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan who have lost their identity documents, or from whom these documents have been stolen while staying in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or the Member States, may leave the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or the Member States on the basis of valid identity documents entitling them to cross the border issued by diplomatic missions or consular posts of the Member States or of the Republic of Azerbaijan without any visa or other authorisation.’.

In the event of a loss or theft of identity documents, valid identity documents entitling visa holders to cross the border issued by diplomatic missions or consular posts will be sufficient as the basis for leaving the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or the Schengen area. No further documents, authorisations or formalities of any sort can be expected by the host country authorities from the visa holder or the consular post.

2.1.4. Extension of visa in exceptional circumstances

Article 9 of the Agreement provides that:

‘Citizens of the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan who are not able to leave the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or the territory of the Member States by the time stated in their visas for reasons of *force majeure* shall have the period of validity and/or the duration of stay of the issued visa extended free of charge in accordance with the legislation applied by the Republic of Azerbaijan or the receiving Member State for the period required for their return to the State of their residence.’.

With regard to extending the validity of the visa in cases of justified personal reasons, where the holder of the visa is unable to leave the territory of the Member State by the date indicated on the visa sticker, the provisions of Article 33 of the Visa Code shall apply as long as they are compatible with the Agreement. However, under the Agreement the extension of the visa is carried out free of charge in case of *force majeure* or humanitarian reasons.

In terms of the Republic of Azerbaijan the Migration Code applies to issues regarding the extension of temporary staying period of foreigners in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The decision on extension of the temporary staying period of foreigners in the Republic of Azerbaijan is an official document authorizing foreigners to stay temporarily in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Foreigners with the extended temporary staying period in the Republic of Azerbaijan can exit the country through state border crossing points presenting their passports or other border crossing documents and the decision on extension of temporary staying period.

2.2. Rules that apply to certain categories of visa applicants

2.2.1. Documentary evidence regarding the purpose of the journey

For the categories of persons listed in Article 4(1) of the Agreement, only the indicated documentary evidence proving the purpose of the journey will be required. As provided for in Article 4(3) of the Agreement, no other justification, invitation or validation concerning the purpose of the journey will be required.

However, this does not mean a waiver of the general requirement to appear in person in order to submit the visa application or to provide supporting documents with regard to e.g. the means of subsistence.

If in individual cases, doubts remain regarding the authenticity of the document proving the purpose of the journey, under Article 21(8) of the Visa Code and the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the visa applicant may be called for an additional interview to the embassy and/or the consulate where that applicant can be questioned regarding the actual purpose of the visit or the applicant's intention to return. In such individual cases, additional documents may be voluntarily provided by the visa applicant or exceptionally requested by the consular officer. That practice shall, however, not be systematic and will be closely monitored by the Joint Committee.

In principle, the original of the document required by Article 4(1) of the Agreement will be submitted with the visa application. However, the consulate can start processing the visa application based on the facsimile or copies of the document. Nevertheless, the consulate may ask for the original document in case of the first time visa application and will ask for it in individual cases where there are doubts.

For the categories of persons not mentioned in Article 4 of the Agreement (for example tourists), the general rules regarding documentation proving the purpose of the journey continue to apply. The same applies to documents regarding parental consent for travel of children under 18 years of age.

Schengen rules and national law shall apply to issues not covered by the Agreement, such as the recognition of travel documents and guarantees regarding return and sufficient means of subsistence.

Article 4(1) of the Agreement provides that:

'1. For the following categories of citizens of the Union and of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the following documents are sufficient for justifying the purpose of the journey to the other Party:

- (a) for close relatives – spouses, children (including adopted), parents (including custodians), grandparents and grand-children – visiting citizens of the European Union legally residing in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan legally residing in the Member States, or citizens of the European Union residing in the territory of the Member State of which they are nationals, or citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan residing in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan:

- a written request from the host person;'

The authenticity of the signature of the inviting person must be confirmed by the competent authority according to the national legislation of the country of residence. Invitation should be validated by competent authorities.

This provision also applies to relatives of staff working in diplomatic missions and consulates travelling for a family visit of up to 90 days to the territory of the Member States or of the Republic of Azerbaijan, except for the need to prove legal residence and family ties.

‘(b) without prejudice to Article 10, for members of official delegations including permanent members of such delegations who, following an official invitation addressed to the Member States, the European Union or the Republic of Azerbaijan, shall participate in official meetings, consultations, negotiations or exchange programmes, as well as in events held in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or one of the Member States by intergovernmental organisations:

- letter issued by a competent authority of a Member State or of the Republic of Azerbaijan or by an institution of the European Union confirming that the applicant is a member of its delegation respectively or a permanent member of its delegation travelling to the territory of the other Party to participate in the aforementioned events, accompanied by a copy of the official invitation;’.

The name of the visa applicant must be indicated in the letter issued by the competent authority confirming that the person is part of the delegation travelling to the territory of the other Party to participate in the official meeting. The name of the visa applicant does not need to be indicated in the official invitation to participate in the meeting, although this might be the case when the official invitation is addressed to a specific person.

That provision applies to members of official delegations irrespective of the type of passport (service or ordinary passport) they hold.

‘(c) for business people and representatives of business organisations:

- a written request from the host legal person or company, organization or an office or a branch of such legal person or company, state, or local authorities of the Republic of Azerbaijan or the Member States or organising committees or trade and industrial exhibitions, conferences and symposia held in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or one of the Member States endorsed by the competent authorities in accordance with the national legislation;’.

In addition to the above, the national business registry will issue a document confirming the existence of the business organizations.

‘(d) for drivers conducting international cargo and passenger transportation services between the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Member States in vehicles registered in the Member States or in the Republic of Azerbaijan:

- a written request from the national company or association (union) of carriers of the Republic of Azerbaijan or the national associations of carriers of the Member States providing for international road transportation, stating the purpose, itinerary, duration and frequency of the trips;’.

The association competent to issue the written request is the national association of the country of origin of the driver. Regional or other branches of national associations of the Member States can also issue the written requests.

‘(e) for pupils, students, post-graduate students and accompanying teachers who undertake trips for the purposes of study or educational training, including in the framework of exchange programmes as well as other school related activities:

- a written request or a certificate of enrolment from the host university, academy, institute, college or school or student cards or certificates of the courses to be attended;’.

A student card is only accepted as justification of the purpose of the journey if it has been issued by the host university, college or school where the studies or educational training are going to take place.

‘(f) for persons participating in scientific, academic, cultural or artistic activities, including university and other exchange programmes:

- a written request from the host organisation to participate in those activities;

(g) for journalists and technical crew accompanying them in a professional capacity:

- a certificate or other document issued by a professional organization or the applicant’s employer proving that the person concerned is a qualified journalist and stating that the purpose of the journey is to carry out journalistic work or proving that he/she is a member of technical crew accompanying the journalist in a professional capacity;’.

This category does not cover free-lance journalists and their assistants.

A certificate or document issued by a professional journalist organisation or the visa applicant's employer, proving that the visa applicant is a professional journalist or an accompanying person in a professional capacity and stating that the purpose of the journey is to carry out a journalistic work or assist in such work, must be presented.

'(h) for participants in international sports events and persons accompanying them in a professional capacity:

- a written request from the host organization, competent authorities, national sport Federations of the Member States or the Republic of Azerbaijan or National Olympic Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan or National Olympic Committees of the Member States;'

The list of accompanying persons in case of international sports events will be limited to those accompanying the sportsperson in a professional capacity: coaches, masseurs, managers, medical staff, and head of the sports club. Supporters will thus not be considered as accompanying persons.

'(i) for participants in official exchange programmes organized by twin cities:

- a written request of the Head of Administration/Mayor of these cities;'

The Head of Administration/Mayor of the city or other locality competent to issue the written request is the Head of Administration/Mayor of the host city or other locality where the twinning activity is going to take place. That category only covers official twinning.

'(j) for persons travelling for medical reasons and necessary accompanying persons:

- an official document of the medical institution confirming necessity of medical care in this institution, the necessity of being accompanied and proof of sufficient financial means to pay for the medical treatment;'

A document issued by a medical institution confirming the three elements (the necessity of medical care in that institution, the necessity of being accompanied and the proof of sufficient financial means to pay for the medical treatment, e.g. proof of prepayment) must be submitted.

'(k) for members of the professions participating in international exhibitions, conferences, symposia, seminars or other similar events held on the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or Member States:

- a written request from the host organization confirming that the person concerned is participating in the event;

(l) for representatives of civil society organizations when undertaking trips for the purposes of educational training, seminars, conferences, including in the framework of exchange programmes:

- a written request issued by the host organization, a confirmation that the person is representing the civil society organization and the certificate on establishment of such organization from the relevant register issued by a state authority in accordance with the national legislation;'

A document from the civil society organisation confirming that the visa applicant is representing that organisation must be presented.

Individual members of the civil society organisations are not covered by the Agreement.

'(m) relatives visiting for burial ceremonies:

- an official document confirming the fact of death as well as confirmation of the family or other relationship between the applicant and the buried;

(n) for visiting military and civil burial grounds:

- an official document confirming the existence and preservation of the grave as well as family or other relationship between the applicant and the buried;'

The Agreement does not specify whether the above-mentioned official document should be issued by the authorities of the country where the burial ground is located or those of the country in which the person who wants to visit the burial ground resides. It should be accepted that the competent authorities of either country may issue such an official document.

The above-mentioned official document confirming the existence and preservation of the grave as well as of the family or other relationship between the visa applicant and the buried must be presented.

The Agreement does not create any new liability rules for the natural or legal persons issuing the written requests. The respective Union and/or national law applies in case of false issuance of such requests.

2.2.2. Issuance of multiple-entry visas

In cases where the visa applicant needs to travel frequently to the territory of the Member States or of the Republic of Azerbaijan, short-stay visas may be issued for several visits, provided that the total length of those visits does not exceed 90 days per period of 180 days.

Article 5 of the Agreement provides that:

‘1. Diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Member States and of the Republic of Azerbaijan shall issue multiple-entry visas with a term of validity of 5 years to the following categories of citizens:

- (a) spouses, children (including adopted), who are under the age of 21 or are dependant, parents (including custodians), visiting citizens of the European Union legally residing in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan legally residing in the territory of the Member States, or citizens of the European Union residing in the territory of the Member State of which they are nationals, or citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan residing in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- (b) permanent members of official delegations, who following an official invitation addressed to the Member States, the European Union or the Republic of Azerbaijan, are to participate regularly in meetings, consultations, negotiations or exchange programmes, as well as in events held in the territory of the Republic of the Azerbaijan or one of the Member States by intergovernmental organisations;

By way of derogation from the first sentence, where the need or the intention to travel frequently or regularly is manifestly limited to a shorter period, the term of validity of the multiple-entry visa shall be limited to that period, in particular where:

- in the case of the persons referred to in point (a), the period of validity of the authorisation for legal residence of citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan legally residing in one of the Member States or citizens of the Union legally residing in the Republic of Azerbaijan,
- in the case of the persons referred to in point (b), the term of the validity of the status as a permanent member of an official delegation,

is less than five years.’

Taking into account the professional status of those categories of persons, or their family relationship with a citizen of the Republic of Azerbaijan who is legally residing in the territory of the Member States, a Union citizen legally residing in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, or with a Union citizen residing in a Member State whose nationality that person holds, it is justified to grant them a multiple-entry visa with a term of validity of five years, or limited to the term of office or to their legal residence if they are less than five years.

Persons falling under point (a) of Article 5(1) of the Agreement, must present proof of the legal residence of the host person.

With regard to persons falling under point (b) of Article 5(1) of the Agreement, confirmation should be given regarding their professional status and the duration of their term of office.

That provision does not apply to persons falling under point (b) of Article 5(1) of the Agreement if they are exempted from the visa requirement by the Agreement, i.e. if they are holders of a diplomatic passport.

In cases where the need or the intention to travel frequently or regularly is manifestly limited to a shorter period, the validity of the multiple-entry visa will be limited to that period.

‘2. Diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Member States and of the Republic of Azerbaijan shall issue multiple-entry visas with the term of validity of one year to the following categories of citizens, provided that during the previous year they have obtained at least one visa, have made use of it in accordance with the laws on entry and stay of the visited State:

- (a) students, post-graduate students who regularly travel for the purposes of study or educational training, including in the framework of exchange programmes;
- (b) journalists and technical crew accompanying them in a professional capacity;
- (c) participants in official exchange programmes organised by twin cities;

- (d) drivers conducting international cargo and passenger transportation services between the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Member States in vehicles registered in the Member States or the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- (e) persons needing to visit regularly for medical reasons and necessary accompanying persons;
- (f) members of the professions participating in international exhibitions, conferences, symposia, seminars or other similar events who regularly travel to the Republic of Azerbaijan or the Member States;
- (g) representatives of civil society organizations travelling regularly to the Republic of Azerbaijan or the Member States for the purposes of educational training, seminars, conferences, including in the framework of exchange programmes;
- (h) persons participating in scientific, cultural and artistic activities, including university and other exchange programmes, who regularly travel to the Republic of Azerbaijan or the Member States;
- (i) participants in international sports events and persons accompanying them in a professional capacity;
- (j) members of official delegations who, following an official invitation addressed to the Member State, the European Union or the Republic of Azerbaijan, shall participate regularly in meetings, consultations, negotiations or exchange programmes, as well as in events held in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or of the Member States by intergovernmental organisations;
- (k) business people and representatives of business organisations who regularly travel to the Republic of Azerbaijan or the Member States.

By way of derogation from the first sentence, where the need or the intention to travel frequently or regularly is manifestly limited to a shorter period, the term of validity of the multiple-entry visa shall be limited to that period.’.

In principle, multiple-entry visas with the term of validity of one year will be issued to the above mentioned categories of visa applicants if during the previous year (12 months) the visa applicant has obtained at least one visa and has made use of it in accordance with the laws on entry and stay in the territory(ies) of the visited State(s) (for instance, the person has not overstayed) and if there are reasons for requesting a multiple-entry visa.

In cases where it is not justified to issue a visa valid for one year, for instance if the duration of the exchange programme is of less than one year or the person does not need to travel for a full year, the term of validity of the visa will be of less than one year, provided that the other requirements for issuing the visa are met.

‘3. Diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Member States and of the Republic of Azerbaijan shall issue multiple-entry visas with the term of validity of a minimum of 2 years and a maximum of 5 years to the categories of persons referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article, provided that during the previous 2 years they have made use of the one year multiple-entry visas in accordance with the laws on entry and stay of the visited State, unless the need or the intention to travel frequently or regularly is manifestly limited to a shorter period, in which case the term of validity of the multiple-entry visa shall be limited to that period.

4. The total period of stay of persons referred to in paragraphs 1 to 3 of this Article shall not exceed 90 days per period of 180 days in the territory of the Member States or in the Republic of Azerbaijan.’.

Multiple-entry visas with the term of validity of a minimum of two years and a maximum of five years will be issued to the categories of visa applicants referred to in Article 5(2) of the Agreement, provided that during the previous two years (24 months) they have made use of the two one year multiple-entry visas in accordance with the laws on entry and stay in the territory(ies) of the visited State(s) and that the reasons for requesting a multiple-entry visa are still valid. It has to be noted that a visa with a term of validity of a minimum of two years and a maximum of five years, will only be issued if the visa applicant has been issued two visas valid for at least one year during the previous two years (24 months), and if that person has made use of those visas in accordance with the laws on entry and stay in the territory(ies) of the visited State(s). Diplomatic missions and consular posts will decide, on the basis of the assessment of each visa application, on the term of validity of those visas, i.e. from two to five years.

There is no obligation to issue a multiple-entry visa if the visa applicant has not made use of a previously issued visa.

2.2.3. Holders of diplomatic passports

Article 10 of the Agreement provides that:

‘1. Citizens of the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan who are holders of valid diplomatic passports may enter, leave and transit through the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan or the Member States without visas.

2. Persons mentioned in paragraph 1 may stay in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan or the territories of Member States for a period not exceeding 90 days per period of 180 days.’

The procedures for the posting of diplomats in the Member States are not covered by the Agreement. The usual accreditation procedure applies.

III. COOPERATION ON TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

In a Joint Declaration annexed to the Agreement the Parties agreed that the Joint Committee should evaluate the impact of the level of security of the respective travel documents on the functioning of the Agreement. To that end, the Parties agreed to regularly inform each other about the measures taken for avoiding the proliferation of travel documents, developing the technical aspects of travel document security as well as regarding the personalisation process of the issuance of travel documents.

IV. STATISTICS

In order to allow the Joint Committee to effectively monitor the implementation of the Agreement, diplomatic missions and consular posts of the Member States shall submit statistics to the Commission, every six months. Where possible, those statistics should include, presented in a monthly breakdown:

- the number of visa refusals;
 - the number of multiple entry visas issued;
 - the length of validity of multiple entry visas issued;
 - the number of visas issued without fees.
-

COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2018/312**of 27 February 2018****appointing a member, proposed by the Kingdom of Spain, of the Committee of the Regions**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 305 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal of the Spanish Government,

Whereas:

- (1) On 26 January 2015, 5 February 2015 and 23 June 2015, the Council adopted Decisions (EU) 2015/116 ⁽¹⁾, (EU) 2015/190 ⁽²⁾ and (EU) 2015/994 ⁽³⁾ appointing the members and alternate members of the Committee of the Regions for the period from 26 January 2015 to 25 January 2020.
- (2) A member's seat on the Committee of the Regions has become vacant following the end of the term of office of Mr Iñigo de la SERNA HERNÁIZ,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The following is hereby appointed as a member of the Committee of the Regions for the remainder of the current term of office, which runs until 25 January 2020:

— Ms Concepción GAMARRA RUIZ-CLAVIJO, *Alcaldesa de Logroño*.

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels, 27 February 2018.

For the Council

The President

E. ZAHARIEVA

⁽¹⁾ Council Decision (EU) 2015/116 of 26 January 2015 appointing the members and alternate members of the Committee of the Regions for the period from 26 January 2015 to 25 January 2020 (OJ L 20, 27.1.2015, p. 42).

⁽²⁾ Council Decision (EU) 2015/190 of 5 February 2015 appointing the members and alternate members of the Committee of the Regions for the period from 26 January 2015 to 25 January 2020 (OJ L 31, 7.2.2015, p. 25).

⁽³⁾ Council Decision (EU) 2015/994 of 23 June 2015 appointing the members and alternate members of the Committee of the Regions for the period from 26 January 2015 to 25 January 2020 (OJ L 159, 25.6.2015, p. 70).

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION (EU) 2018/313**of 28 February 2018****amending Decision 2009/821/EC as regards the lists of border inspection posts and veterinary units in Traces***(notified under document C(2018) 1149)***(Text with EEA relevance)**

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Council Directive 90/425/EEC of 26 June 1990 concerning veterinary and zootechnical checks applicable in intra-Community trade in certain live animals and products with a view to the completion of the internal market ⁽¹⁾, and in particular Article 20(1) and (3) thereof,

Having regard to Council Directive 91/496/EEC of 15 July 1991 laying down the principles governing the organisation of veterinary checks on animals entering the Community from third countries and amending Directives 89/662/EEC, 90/425/EEC and 90/675/EEC ⁽²⁾, and in particular the second sentence of the second subparagraph of Article 6(4) and Article 6(5) thereof,

Having regard to Council Directive 97/78/EC of 18 December 1997 laying down the principles governing the organisation of veterinary checks on products entering the Community from third countries ⁽³⁾, and in particular Article 6(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Commission Decision 2009/821/EC ⁽⁴⁾ lays down a list of border inspection posts approved in accordance with Directives 91/496/EEC and 97/78/EC. That list is set out in Annex I to that Decision.
- (2) Belgium informed the Commission that the approval of inspection centres, Avia Partner and WFS, at Brussel-Zaventem airport should be restricted to products under certain controlled temperatures. Annex I to Decision 2009/821/EC should therefore be amended accordingly.
- (3) Following the proposal from Denmark, the approval of the border inspection post at the port of København should be restricted to packed products only. Therefore, Annex I to Decision 2009/821/EC should be amended accordingly.
- (4) Germany informed the Commission that it has withdrawn the approval for products for the border inspection post at Hannover-Langenhagen airport. Therefore, Annex I to Decision 2009/821/EC should be amended accordingly.
- (5) Ireland informed the Commission that it has withdrawn the approval for live ungulates for the border inspection post at Shannon airport. Annex I to Decision 2009/821/EC should therefore be amended accordingly.
- (6) Spain informed the Commission that it has suspended the approval of the border inspection post at Alicante airport in respect of live animals and products not for human consumption. Annex I to Decision 2009/821/EC should therefore be amended accordingly.
- (7) Following the proposal from Spain, the approval of the new inspection centre Alaire at the border inspection post at Madrid airport should be added and the approval of the inspection centre Frigalsa at the border inspection post at the port of Vigo should be restored. Annex I to Decision 2009/821/EC should therefore be amended accordingly.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 224, 18.8.1990, p. 29.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 268, 24.9.1991, p. 56.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 24, 30.1.1998, p. 9.

⁽⁴⁾ Commission Decision 2009/821/EC of 28 September 2009 drawing up a list of approved border inspection posts, laying down certain rules on the inspections carried out by Commission veterinary experts and laying down the veterinary units in Traces (OJ L 296, 12.11.2009, p. 1).

- (8) Annex II to Decision 2009/821/EC lays down the list of central, regional and local units in the integrated computerised veterinary system (Traces).
- (9) Following information received from Croatia, certain changes should be made to the list of local units in Traces for that Member State. Decision 2009/821/EC should therefore be amended accordingly.
- (10) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Annexes I and II to Decision 2009/821/EC are amended in accordance with the Annex to this Decision.

Article 2

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels, 28 February 2018.

For the Commission
Vytenis ANDRIUKAITIS
Member of the Commission

ANNEX

Annexes I and II to Decision 2009/821/EC are amended as follows:

(1) Annex I is amended as follows:

(a) in the part concerning Belgium, the entry for the airport at Brussel-Zaventem is replaced by the following:

'Brussel-Zaventem Bruxelles-Zaventem	BE BRU 4	A	Flight Care 2	NHC(2)	U, E, O
			Avia Partner	HC-T(2)	
			WFS	HC-T(CH)(2)	
			Swiss Port	HC(2)'	

(b) in the part concerning Denmark, the entry for the port at København is replaced by the following:

'København	DK CPH 1	P		HC(1)(2), NHC-T(FR)(2), NHC-NT(2)'	
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(c) in the part concerning Germany, the entry for the airport at Hannover-Langenhagen is replaced by the following:

'Hannover-Langenhagen	DE HAJ 4	A			O(10)'
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(d) in the part concerning Ireland, the entry for the airport at Shannon is replaced by the following:

'Shannon	IE SNN 4	A		HC(2), NHC(2)	E'
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(e) the part concerning Spain is amended as follows:

(i) the entry for the airport at Alicante is replaced by the following:

'Alicante	ES ALC 4	A		HC(2), NHC(2) (*)	O(10) (*)'
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(ii) the entry for the airport at Madrid is replaced by the following:

'Madrid	ES MAD 4	A	Iberia	HC-T(FR)(2) (*), HC-NT(2) (*), NHC(2)	U, E, O
			Swissport	HC(2), NHC(2)	O
			PER4	HC-T(CH)(2)	
			WFS: World Wide Flight Services	HC(2), NHC-T(CH)(2), NHC-NT	O
			Alaire	HC-T(2)'	

(iii) the entry for the port at Vigo is replaced by the following:

'Vigo	ES VGO 1	P	T.C. Guixar	HC, NHC-T(FR), NHC-NT	
			Frioya	HC-T(FR)(2)(3)	
			Frigalsa	HC-T(FR)(3)	
			Pescanova	HC-T(FR)(2)(3)	
			Fandicosta (*)	HC-T(FR)(2)(3) (*)	
			Frig. Morrazo	HC-T(FR)(3)'	

(2) in Annex II, in the part concerning Croatia, the entries are replaced by the following:

HR00001	BJELOVAR
HR00007	GRAD ZAGREB
HR00002	VUKOVAR
HR00003	PULA
HR00009	ŠIBENIK
HR00008	SLAVONSKI BROD
HR00004	SPLIT
HR00005	VARAŽDIN
HR00006	ZAGREB
HR00010	KARLOVAC
HR00011	SISAK
HR00012	VIROVITICA'

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION (EU) 2018/314**of 1 March 2018****amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 on protective measures in relation to outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza in certain Member States***(notified under document C(2018) 1401)***(Text with EEA relevance)**

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Council Directive 89/662/EEC of 11 December 1989 concerning veterinary checks in intra-Community trade with a view to the completion of the internal market ⁽¹⁾, and in particular Article 9(4) thereof,

Having regard to Council Directive 90/425/EEC of 26 June 1990 concerning veterinary and zootechnical checks applicable in intra-Community trade in certain live animals and products with a view to the completion of the internal market ⁽²⁾, and in particular Article 10(4) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 ⁽³⁾ was adopted following outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza of subtype H5 in a number of Member States ('the concerned Member States'), and the establishment of protection and surveillance zones by the competent authority of the concerned Member States in accordance with Article 16(1) of Council Directive 2005/94/EC ⁽⁴⁾.
- (2) Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 provides that the protection and surveillance zones established by the competent authorities of the concerned Member States in accordance with Directive 2005/94/EC are to comprise at least the areas listed as protection and surveillance zones in the Annex to that Implementing Decision. Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 also lays down that the measures to be applied in the protection and surveillance zones, as provided for in Article 29(1) and Article 31 of Directive 2005/94/EC, are to be maintained until at least the dates for those zones set out in the Annex to that Implementing Decision.
- (3) Since the date of its adoption, Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 has been amended several times to take account of developments in the epidemiological situation in the Union as regards avian influenza. In particular, Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 was amended by Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/696 ⁽⁵⁾ in order to lay down rules regarding the dispatch of consignments of day-old chicks from the areas listed in the Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247. That amendment took into account the fact that day-old chicks pose a very low risk for the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza compared to other poultry commodities.
- (4) Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 was also subsequently amended by Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1841 ⁽⁶⁾ in order to strengthen the disease control measures applicable where there is an increased risk for the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza. Consequently, Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 now provides for the establishment at Union level of further restricted zones in the concerned Member States, as referred to in Article 16(4) of Directive 2005/94/EC, following an outbreak or outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza, and the duration of the measures to be applied therein. Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 now also lays down rules for the dispatch of live poultry, day-old chicks and hatching eggs from the further restricted zones to other Member States, subject to certain conditions. Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1841 also amended Article 5 of Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 in order to prolong the period of application of that act until 31 May 2018.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 395, 30.12.1989, p. 13.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 224, 18.8.1990, p. 29.

⁽³⁾ Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 of 9 February 2017 on protective measures in relation to outbreaks of the highly pathogenic avian influenza in certain Member States (OJ L 36, 11.2.2017, p. 62).

⁽⁴⁾ Council Directive 2005/94/EC of 20 December 2005 on Community measures for the control of avian influenza and repealing Directive 92/40/EEC (OJ L 10, 14.1.2006, p. 16).

⁽⁵⁾ Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/696 of 11 April 2017 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 on protective measures in relation to outbreaks of the highly pathogenic avian influenza in certain Member States (OJ L 101, 13.4.2017, p. 80).

⁽⁶⁾ Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1841 of 10 October 2017 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 on protective measures in relation to outbreaks of the highly pathogenic avian influenza in certain Member States (OJ L 261, 11.10.2017, p. 26).

- (5) In addition, the Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 has been amended numerous times, mainly to take account of changes in the boundaries of the protection and surveillance zones established by the concerned Member States in accordance with Directive 2005/94/EC.
- (6) The Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 was last amended by Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/2412 ⁽¹⁾, following the notification by the Netherlands and Italy of outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza in those Member States. Those Member States also notified the Commission that they had duly taken the necessary measures required in accordance with Directive 2005/94/EC following those outbreaks, including the establishment of protection and surveillance zones around the infected poultry holdings.
- (7) Since the date of the last amendment made to Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 by Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/2412, the Netherlands has notified the Commission of a new outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza of subtype H5N6 in a poultry holding in the province of Groningen, in the north of that Member State. The Netherlands has also notified the Commission that it has taken the necessary measures required in accordance with Directive 2005/94/EC following that recent outbreak, including the establishment of protection and surveillance zones around the infected poultry holding.
- (8) The Commission has examined those measures in collaboration with the Netherlands, and is satisfied that the boundaries of the protection and surveillance zones, established by the competent authority in that Member State, are at a sufficient distance to the poultry holding where the outbreak was confirmed.
- (9) In order to prevent any unnecessary disturbance to trade within the Union, and to avoid unjustified barriers to trade being imposed by third countries, it is necessary to rapidly describe at Union level, in collaboration with the Netherlands the protection and surveillance zones established in that Member State, in accordance with Directive 2005/94/EC, following the recent outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza in that Member State.
- (10) Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 should therefore be updated to take account of the up-to-date epidemiological situation in the Netherlands as regards highly pathogenic avian influenza. In particular, the protection and surveillance zones in the Netherlands, now subject to restrictions in accordance with Directive 2005/94/EC, should be listed in the Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247.
- (11) The Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 should therefore be amended to update regionalization at Union level in order to include the protection and surveillance zones established in the Netherlands in accordance with Directive 2005/94/EC, following the recent outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza in that Member State, and the duration of the restrictions applicable therein.
- (12) In addition, taking into account confirmation of the recent outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza in the Netherlands, and the continuing risk of further outbreaks of that disease in the Union, that can persist over prolonged periods of time even during the summer months, the measures laid down in that Implementing Decision should continue to apply until the end of the year. It is therefore appropriate to prolong the period of application of Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 until 31 December 2018.
- (13) Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 should therefore be amended accordingly.
- (14) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 is amended as follows:

- (1) in Article 5, the date ‘31 May 2018’ is replaced by the date ‘31 December 2018’;
- (2) the Annex is amended in accordance with the Annex to this Decision.

⁽¹⁾ Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/2412 of 20 December 2017 amending the Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 on protective measures in relation to outbreaks of the highly pathogenic avian influenza in certain Member States (OJ L 342, 21.12.2017, p. 29).

Article 2

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels, 1 March 2018.

For the Commission
Vytenis ANDRIUKAITIS
Member of the Commission

ANNEX

The Annex to Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/247 is amended as follows:

(1) in Part A, the entry for the Netherlands is replaced by the following:

Member State: The Netherlands

Area comprising:	Date until applicable in accordance with Article 29(1) of Directive 2005/94/EC
In the province of Groningen	
— Vanaf de kruising van Heirweg (Visvliet) en de N355, de N355 volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de Bosscherweg. — De Bosscherweg volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Westerwaarddijk. — De Westwaarddijk volgend in oostelijke richting overgaand in de Oosterwaarddijk overgaand in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Pamaweg. — De Pamaweg volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de Heereburen. — De Heereburen volgend in zuidelijke richting overgaand in oostelijke richting overgaand in zuidelijke richting overgaand in oostelijke richting tot aan de Frijtumerweg. — De Frijtumerweg volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Balmahuisterweg. — De Balmahuisterweg volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de N355. — De N355 volgend in oostelijke richting overgaand in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Van Starckenborghkanaal ZZ. — De Van Starckenborghkanaal ZZ volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de Hoendiep Oostzijde. — De Hoendiep Oostzijde volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Niekerkerdiep ZZ. — De Niekerkerdiep ZZ volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de Millinghaweg. — De Millinghaweg volgend in zuidelijke richting overgaand in de Fanerweg tot aan de Maarsdijk. — De Maarsdijk volgend in westelijke richting overgaand in noordelijke richting tot aan de N980. — De N980 volgend in zuidelijke richting overgaand in westelijke richting tot aan de De Noord. — De De Noord volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Caspar Roblesdijk. — De Caspar Roblesdijk volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de De Wieren. — De De Wieren volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Abel Tasmanweg. — De Abel Tasmanweg volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de Stationsweg. — De Stationsweg volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Heirweg. — De Heirweg volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de kruising met de N355.	29.3.2018'

(2) in Part B, the entry for the Netherlands is replaced by the following:

Member State: The Netherlands

Area comprising:	Date until applicable in accordance with Article 31 of Directive 2005/94/EC
In the province of Groningen	
— Vanaf de kruising van de Kuipersweg en de N355 (Buitenpost), de N355 volgen in oostelijke richting tot aan de Steenharts. — De Steenharst volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Zevenhuisterweg. — De Zevenhuisterweg volgend in west noordelijke richting tot aan de Hesseweg. — De Hesseweg volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de Brongersmaweg. — De Brongersmaweg volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Foijingaweg. — De Foijingaweg volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de Wester-Nieuwkruisland. — De Wester-Nieuwkruisland volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Kwelderweg. — De Kwelderweg volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de W. van der Ploegweg. — De W. van der Ploegweg volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Hooge Zuidwal. — De Hooge Zuidwal volgend in oostzuidelijke richting tot aan de N388. — De N388 volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Stationsstraat. — De Stationsstraat volgend in noordoostelijke richting tot aan het Hunsingokanaal (Water). — Het Hunsingokanaal (Water) volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de Kanaalstraat. — De Kanaalstraat volgend in oostzuidelijke richting tot aan de Hoofdstraat. — De Hoofdstraat volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Vlakkeriet. — De Vlakkeriet volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de Kattenburgerweg. — De Kattenburgerweg volgend in noordelijke richting overgaand in oostelijke richting overgaand in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Zuurdijksterweg. — De Zuurdijksterweg volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de N983. — De N983 volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan het Reitdiep (Water). — Het Reitdiep (Water) volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan het Aduarderdiep (Water). — Het Aduarderdiep (Water) volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan het van Starkenborgh Kanaal (Water). — Het Starkenborgh Kanaal (Water) volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de Gaaikemadijk. — De Gaaikemadijk volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de N355. — De N355 volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de N977. — De N977 volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Hoendiep. — De Hoendiep volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de Roderwolderdijk. — De Roderwolderdijk volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de A7. — De A7 volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de Matsloot. — De Matsloot volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Sandebuur. — De Sandebuur volgend in westelijke richting overgaand in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Sandebuursedijk. — De Sandebuursedijk volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de Aan De Vaart.	29.3.2018

Area comprising:	Date until applicable in accordance with Article 31 of Directive 2005/94/EC
— De Aan de Vaart volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Damweg. — De Damweg volgend in westelijke richting overgaand in de Turfweg tot aan de N372. — De N372 volgend in west noordelijke richting tot aan de Van Panhuijslaan. — De Van Panhuijslaan volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Lindensteinlaan. — De Lindensteinlaan volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de Auwemalaan. — De Auwemalaan volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Pastoor Hopperlaan. — De Pastoor Hopperlaan volgend in westelijke richting overgaand in de Veenderij tot aan de Turfring. — De Turfring volgend in zuidelijke richting overgaand in westelijke richting tot aan de Tolbertervaart. — De Tolbertervaart volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de N979. — De N979 volgend in westzuidelijke richting tot aan de Carolieweg. — De Carolieweg volgend in noordelijke richting overgaand in westelijke richting overgaand in de Grouwweg tot aan de Jonkersweg. — De Jonkersweg volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Nieuweweg. — De Nieuweweg volgend in westelijke richting overgaand in de Kruisweg tot aan de N980. — De N980 volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Leidijk. — De Leidijk volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de Zuiderweg. — De Zuiderweg volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de Oude Dijk. — De Oude Dijk volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de N981. — De N981 volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de N358. — De N358 volgend in noordelijke richting overgaand in Lutkepost overgaand in de Kuipersweg tot aan de kruising met de N355.	
— Vanaf de kruising van Heirweg (Visvliet) en de N355, de N355 volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de Bosscherweg. — De Bosscherweg volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Westerwaarddijk. — De Westwaarddijk volgend in oostelijke richting overgaand in de Oosterwaarddijk overgaand in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Pamaweg. — De Pamaweg volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de Heereburen. — De Heereburen volgend in zuidelijke richting overgaand in oostelijke richting overgaand in zuidelijke richting overgaand in oostelijke richting tot aan de Frijtumerweg. — De Frijtumerweg volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Balmahuisterweg. — De Balmahuisterweg volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de N355. — De N355 volgend in oostelijke richting overgaand in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Van Starkenborghkanaal ZZ. — De Van Starkenborghkanaal ZZ volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de Hoendiep Oostzijde. — De Hoendiep Oostzijde volgend in zuidelijke richting tot aan de Niekerkerdiep ZZ. — De Niekerkerdiep ZZ volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de Millinghaweg. — De Millinghaweg volgend in zuidelijke richting overgaand in de Fanerweg tot aan de Maarsdijk. — De Maarsdijk volgend in westelijke richting overgaand in noordelijke richting tot aan de N980.	29.3.2018'

Area comprising:	Date until applicable in accordance with Article 31 of Directive 2005/94/EC
— De N980 volgend in zuidelijke richting overgaand in westelijke richting tot aan de De Noord. — De De Noord volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Caspar Roblesdijk. — De Caspar Roblesdijk volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de De Wieren. — De De Wieren volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Abel Tasmanweg. — De Abel Tasmanweg volgend in westelijke richting tot aan de Stationsweg. — De Stationsweg volgend in noordelijke richting tot aan de Heirweg. — De Heirweg volgend in oostelijke richting tot aan de kruising met de N355.	

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION No 1/2017 OF THE EU-ARMENIA COOPERATION COUNCIL

of 20 November 2017

on the EU-Armenia Partnership Priorities [2018/315]

THE EU-ARMENIA COOPERATION COUNCIL,

Having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Armenia, of the other part, and in particular Article 78 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Armenia, of the other part ⁽¹⁾ (the 'Agreement'), was signed on 22 April 1996 and entered into force on 1 July 1999.
- (2) In accordance with Article 78 of the Agreement, the Cooperation Council may make appropriate recommendations to attain the objectives of the Agreement.
- (3) Pursuant to Article 95(1) of the Agreement, the Parties are to take any general or specific measures required to fulfil their obligations under the Agreement and are to see to it that the objectives set out in the Agreement are attained.
- (4) The review of the European Neighbourhood Policy proposed a new phase of engagement with partners, allowing a greater sense of ownership by both sides.
- (5) The Union and Armenia have agreed to consolidate their partnership by agreeing on a set of priorities for the period 2017-2020 with the aim of supporting and strengthening the resilience and stability of Armenia.
- (6) The Parties to the Agreement have therefore agreed on the text of the EU-Armenia Partnership Priorities, which will support the implementation of the Agreement, focusing cooperation on commonly identified shared interests,

HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATION:

Article 1

The Cooperation Council recommends that the Parties implement the EU-Armenia Partnership Priorities, as set out in the Annex.

Article 2

This Recommendation shall take effect on the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels, 20 November 2017.

For the Cooperation Council

The European Union
F. MOGHERINI

The Republic of Armenia
E. NALBANDIAN

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 239, 9.9.1999, p. 3.

ANNEX

PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ARMENIA

I. CONTEXT

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part and Armenia, of the other part (the 'Partnership and Cooperation Agreement'), was signed on 22 April 1996 and entered into force on 1 July 1999. The EU and its Member States, on the one part, and Armenia, on the other part have, on 27 February, 2017, completed negotiations on a **Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA)**, the text of which is being finalised for signature. The **EU-Armenia Partnership Priorities** aim to facilitate the implementation of the cooperation between the partners, including in the context of the new agreement. The Partnership Priorities seek to strengthen the relationship between the EU and Armenia and pursue the promotion of universal values and stability, resilience, security and prosperity built on democracy, human rights, rule of law and sustainable economic growth and openness. They are in line with the priorities set out by the **Republic of Armenia** and the EU, including those set out in the **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Review** ⁽¹⁾. The Partnership Priorities follow the principles of co-ownership and differentiation and stem from the four priorities ⁽²⁾ jointly agreed at the 2015 Eastern Partnership (EaP) **Riga Summit**, which were confirmed by both sides at the EU-Eastern Partnership Foreign Affairs Ministerial Meeting in May 2016 as the guiding framework for future work. Finally, the Partnership Priorities are also in accordance with the **2030 Sustainable Development Goals** and the **2015 Paris Agreement on climate change** and their commitment to issues of economic, environmental and social sustainability and climate change.

The EU and Armenia share common **interests** and **values**, notably in view of Armenia's engagement in economic and political reforms as well as regional cooperation, including in the framework of the Eastern Partnership. The **new comprehensive agreement will renew and shape the legal basis for bilateral relations** and the momentum should be seized to reinforce EU-Armenia relations, also through agreeing Partnership Priorities. This new overarching framework and the priority areas of cooperation will build on the **mutual interest** in enhancing our engagement taking into account EU's and Armenia's other international commitments.

The Partnership Priorities build on past fruitful cooperation including in the context of the implementation of the **ENP Action Plan**, which they will replace. These Partnership Priorities should shape the agenda for regular political dialogue meetings and sectoral dialogues as defined in the new Agreement, which will also be the framework for implementation and monitoring of the Priorities.

The future EU-Armenia financial cooperation and programming, notably the next Single Support Framework for Armenia for 2017-2020, will be based on these Partnership Priorities.

II. PRIORITIES

The Partnership Priorities reflect **shared interests** and focus on those areas where cooperation is of mutual benefit. Armenia and the EU will continue to pursue the core objectives of supporting regional stability based on **common values** and strong commitment to democracy and human rights. Civil society is an important actor in the context of the Eastern Partnership and the EU and Armenia will further facilitate its involvement in the implementation of these priorities. **Economic cooperation** towards sustained **growth** is an area where mutual interest is strong and where we will explore all possible opportunities to improve the business environment. Faster and more inclusive growth will require reinforcement of public institutions' appropriate skills and human capital and further improved governance and better infrastructure connections. Tackling these issues will create favourable conditions for stronger cooperation in key sectors and for increased mobility, to the **benefit of citizens** both in the EU and in Armenia. Priorities are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Each priority theme includes several elements in a **multidisciplinary** and **cross-cutting** approach that is necessary to reach the objective. This includes joint active involvement in multilateral cooperation fora, including within the Eastern Partnership framework.

⁽¹⁾ 18.11.2015 JOIN(2015) 50 final.

⁽²⁾ See the four titles under Part II. Priorities.

1. Strengthening institutions and good governance

The EU and Armenia are committed to further cooperation with the objective of the promotion of **human rights and the rule of law**, and **the fundamental freedoms**. They will work together towards continuous improvement of Armenian public administration, good governance and judiciary, step up the fight against corruption and strengthen civil society. **Gender equality, environmental and social issues** will be mainstreamed in all areas.

The focus will be on the implementation and enforcement of relevant legislation, including the **new Constitution**. **Electoral reform**, agreed in September 2016 on the basis of, inter alia, the recommendations of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, applies as of the parliamentary elections of 2 April 2017. The parties will also strive to further develop a **favourable environment for civil society, including social partner's organisations**, and its participation in decision making. Civil society has been consulted on the establishment of these Partnership Priorities and will also play an important role by contributing to the monitoring of their implementation.

The parties will step up their efforts for the **reform of public administration**, including local authorities and **law enforcement**. Particular importance will be attached to the rule of law, promoting the independence of the judiciary, access to justice and the right to fair trial. This reform will begin with a strategic framework for public administration reform. The aim of our cooperation is to reinforce the accountability and effectiveness of government by means that include modern, gender-sensitive human resource management and widespread use of **e-government**, including in the health sector. Policy development and evaluation will be based on clear evidence provided by, amongst others, a high quality statistics service.

The **fight against corruption** will be at the heart of administrative reform and the country's effort to reinforce the rule of law. Cooperation will focus both on reinforcing the anti-corruption bodies and reviewing legislation, in particular the public procurement system, the asset declaration system to ensure its proper implementation, and the management of public functions where economic and other stakes are highest (procurement, customs, permits) with a view to ensuring high ethical standards and avoid conflict of interest. The Parties shall implement assistance in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and cooperate in the protection of the financial interests of the EU and of Armenia in accordance with the relevant provisions of the CEPA.

Cooperation in the security sector will seek to reinforce the accountability of security operators and address common concerns in the fight against organised crime, drugs and terrorism, including terrorism financing and money laundering, by means which are respectful of provisions on justice, freedom and security laid down in the various agreements governing EU-Armenia relations. The further modernisation of border management will contribute both to the security of the country and region and to economic development by facilitating legitimate exchanges. The parties will also cooperate on recovery of criminal assets through the improvement of Armenia's legal framework and the establishment of a full-fledged asset recovery office.

2. Economic development and market opportunities

The common goal of the parties is sustainable and inclusive economic development of Armenia. Sustained growth requires sound economic policies that ensure macroeconomic and financial stability. These should include a continued commitment to sustainable budgetary policies while preserving capital and social expenditure and consolidating buffers against external shocks. **Public finance management** (which is an important element both for governance and democracy and for economic development) will adhere to the principles of best international practice. Banking supervision will be further strengthened according to international norms and best practices, to increase the robustness and the resilience of the financial sector. The modernisation and reforms in customs and tax administration, including international cooperation and reinforcement of fight against fraud, will boost revenue collection.

An **improved business environment** is a fundamental condition for economic development. Further simplified administrative procedures and reduced administrative costs, improved access to finance for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in a sound and diversified financial market, and reinforced protection and enforcement of property rights will be the focus areas in this regard. Strong business support organisations and business associations would help economic operators to seize new opportunities and strengthen their voices in economic policy-making. The EU and Armenia will seek to reinforce the ability of Armenian enterprises to participate in international value chains, involving both EU and Armenian economic operators, which will foster technology and knowledge transfer. The role of Business Support Organisations (BSO) in this sense is of pivotal importance and the EU support to match-making between Armenian and European enterprises can leverage the national efforts. The Armenian participation in international value chains can include and be reinforced and accelerated by Foreign Direct investment, which can contribute to building and reinforcing local skills and competencies; to this end it is essential to improve the investment framework by enhancing its transparency, reliability and efficiency. An investment environment supportive to business also includes effective competition in markets for products and services, ensured by a strong, independent competition authority operating to the highest ethical standards, with access to an effective enforcement mechanism for antitrust legislation and effective protection of intellectual property rights, including geographical indications. Mainstreaming ease of doing business in all

policies will be instrumental to fostering growth. Modern employment and social policies will be needed to ensure that the economic development is inclusive and contribute to improving the well-being of all Armenian citizens. This includes appropriate institutions to ensure effective supervision of working conditions including health and safety at work.

It is important to implement the overall Armenian Development Strategy as well as sector specific strategies (SME Strategy and the recommendations of the SBA Assessment, Export Promotion Strategy, rural development etc.) to actively participate in the EU programmes for SMEs (COSME) and for research and innovation (Horizon 2020), and to upgrade the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) regulatory and infrastructure environment, making full use of EU support in these areas.

Fostering the **digital economy**, including through the approximation of Armenia's digital environment with the EU's Digital Single Market, would be important for modernising Armenia's economy and society.

Monitoring the implementation of these strategies should include a public-private dialogue and consultation with relevant civil society organisations, including with social partner's organisations.

The **green economy** offers an important growth path for sustainable development. **Environmental issues, including climate change, will be mainstreamed** in all relevant policies.

The EU and Armenia have established effective cooperation in **agriculture, regional and rural development** to promote the development of farmers groups and value adding chains throughout Armenia. While agriculture and subsistence farming present opportunities for food security and informal employment, it is important to further develop the competitiveness of the sector including through capacity building and access to finance. Building on past achievements and in coordination with the reform of the public administration at all levels, the parties will continue to reinforce economic, social and territorial cohesion **across the regions**.

3. Connectivity, energy efficiency, environment and climate action

A land-locked country, Armenia needs to overcome to the challenges to its connectivity. Also within the country, some areas suffer from remoteness and limited connections to centres of economic, political and social activity. Cooperation with the EU and other Eastern Partnership countries in the above areas, in particular Georgia, can contribute to alleviation of the consequences of the geographical situation of the country.

Armenia's growth potential would be enhanced by improved business opportunities, transport, logistics and value-chain links, fostered by improved internal and cross-border connectivity. Road, rail and air routes are main transport modes in Armenia. As Armenia's main trade partners are the EU, Russia and China, cargo is usually transited on rail ferry services from Georgian ports. The parties will cooperate in developing swift clearance procedures at borders as they are essential for all modes to avoid costly delays.

The parties will also cooperate in the framework of the **extended core Trans-European Transport network (TEN-T)**, based on clear prioritisation, to improve Armenia's access to the international markets. Road safety cooperation, covering both infrastructure and policy aspects, will be also promoted. Investment in infrastructure should be environmentally friendly and climate-proof.

To ensure effective connections and market development beyond the immediate neighbourhood, it is important to pursue civil aviation reform, eventually leading to the conclusion of an **aviation agreement** with the EU.

Good environmental governance (in particular the use of Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Impact Assessment, access to environmental information and access to justice in environmental matters) **and the integration of the environment and climate action into relevant policy areas** will create a solid basis for sustainable development. Commitments in the area of environment as included in the new Agreement will form the basis for relevant reforms. Increased **energy efficiency** will generate quick, significant, and sustained savings, while advancing the **transition** to a low emission and climate resilient economy; in the residential sector, such actions can be linked to the

work of the Covenant of Mayors. As long as nuclear energy is used to maintain an adequate level of energy supply in the country, ensuring high levels of nuclear safety is necessary: International Atomic energy Agency (IAEA) standards and EU standards and practices, as referred to in the CEPA, shall serve as a basis.

Reliable and affordable energy supplies are a necessary condition for the functioning of a modern society and the containment of their environmental and climate impact is a condition for its sustainability. Improved energy and resource efficiency, including in the residential sector, and the increased use of renewable energy will contribute towards this objective through the implementation of the state of the art legislation in energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and electricity market. These goals could also be pursued through the public procurement for services and infrastructure.

Energy security can also be enhanced by improving and increasing connections to neighbouring countries. Armenia's continued active participation in the multilateral cooperation within the Eastern Partnership will be essential for identifying projects of common interest that could benefit from EU financial support. Improving energy efficiency and fostering renewable energy with capacity building and a clear prioritisation of investments are key to ensuring energy safety and security in Armenia.

Lastly, the closure and safe decommissioning of the Medzamor Nuclear Power Plant (MNPP) and the early adoption of a road map/action plan to this effect shall remain a key objective, taking into consideration the need for its replacement with new capacity to ensure Armenia's energy security and conditions for sustainable development.

4. Mobility and people-to-people contacts

The parties will cooperate with the objective of facilitating mobility of their nationals, widening the scope of people-to-people contacts through targeted actions including for youth, students, researchers, artists, cultural operators and business people, reconfirming that enhanced mobility of the citizens of the Parties in a secure and well managed environment remains a core objective and considering in due course the opening of a visa dialogue with Armenia provided that conditions for well-managed and secure mobility are in place, including the effective implementation of visa facilitation and readmission agreements between the Parties. They will cooperate on fighting irregular migration, including through the implementation of the readmission agreement, promoting border management policy as well as legal and operational frameworks.

Management of migration flows will be based on the Visa Facilitation Agreement / Readmission Agreement. The EU acknowledges Armenia's role in settling refugees from Syria, making it eligible for support from the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis ⁽¹⁾.

Facing the challenges of the global marketplace requires a solid package of skills at all levels, be it in enterprises or in the public administration. **Early childhood, primary, secondary and higher education, and vocational education and training**, as well as cooperation between the education and training system and businesses all need to be reinforced to give their full contribution to developing these skills. Particular attention will be paid to research and **innovation** following Armenia's Association to the Horizon 2020 programme.

⁽¹⁾ Commission Decision C(2014) 9615 of 10 December 2014 on the establishment of a European Union Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, 'the Madad Fund'.

CORRIGENDA**Corrigendum to Guideline (EU) 2017/697 of the European Central Bank of 4 April 2017 on the exercise of options and discretions available in Union law by national competent authorities in relation to less significant institutions (ECB/2017/9)**

(Official Journal of the European Union L 101 of 13 April 2017)

On page 157, recital 7:

- for: ‘(7) Options and discretions in relation to the exemption of exposures from the application of the large exposure limits set out in Article 395(1) of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 should be consistently applied to both significant institutions and less significant institutions to establish a level playing field for credit institutions in the participating Member States, limit concentration risks arising from specific exposures, and ensure that the same minimum standards are applied across the SSM for the assessment of compliance with the conditions specified in Article 400(3) of the same Regulation. In particular, concentration risks arising from covered bonds falling within the terms of Article 129(1), (3) and (6) of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 and exposures to or guaranteed by regional governments or local authorities of Member States, where those claims would be assigned a 20 % risk weight under Part Three, Title II, Chapter 2 of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013, should be limited. For intragroup exposures, including participations or other kinds of holdings, it needs to be ensured that the decision to fully exempt these exposures from the application of the large exposure limits is based on a thorough assessment as specified in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2016/445 (ECB/2016/4). The application of common criteria for the assessment of whether an exposure, including participations or other kinds of holdings, to regional or central credit institutions with which the credit institution is associated in a network in accordance with legal or statutory provisions and which are responsible, under those provisions, for cash-clearing operations within the network, meets the conditions for an exemption from the large exposure limits as specified in Annex II to Regulation (EU) 2016/445 (ECB/2016/4) is warranted. Such application should ensure that significant and less significant institutions associated in the same network are treated in a consistent way. The exercise of the option provided for in Article 400(2) of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 as set out in this Guideline should only apply if the relevant Member State has not exercised the option provided for in Article 493(3) of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013.’
- read: ‘(7) Options and discretions in relation to the exemption of exposures from the application of the large exposure limits set out in Article 395(1) of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 should be consistently applied to both significant institutions and less significant institutions to establish a level playing field for credit institutions in the participating Member States, limit concentration risks arising from specific exposures, and ensure that the same minimum standards are applied across the SSM for the assessment of compliance with the conditions specified in Article 400(3) of the same Regulation. In particular, concentration risks arising from covered bonds falling within the terms of Article 129(1), (3) and (6) of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 and exposures to or guaranteed by regional governments or local authorities of Member States, where those claims would be assigned a 20 % risk weight under Part Three, Title II, Chapter 2 of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013, should be limited. The application of common criteria for the assessment of whether an exposure, including participations or other kinds of holdings, to regional or central credit institutions with which the credit institution is associated in a network in accordance with legal or statutory provisions and which are responsible, under those provisions, for cash-clearing operations within the network, meets the conditions for an exemption from the large exposure limits as specified in the Annex to this Guideline is warranted. Such application should ensure that significant and less significant institutions associated in the same network are treated in a consistent way. The exercise of the option provided for in Article 400(2) of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 as set out in this Guideline should only apply if the relevant Member State has not exercised the option provided for in Article 493(3) of Regulation (EU) No 575/2013.’
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Corrigendum to Guideline (EU) 2016/2249 of the European Central Bank of 3 November 2016 on the legal framework for accounting and financial reporting in the European System of Central Banks (ECB/2016/34)

(Official Journal of the European Union L 347 of 20 December 2016)

On page 43, Article 13:

for: '2. In derogation from Article 3(b) and Articles 9(4), 15(1) and 17(2), the following alternative treatment may be applied to the valuation of synthetic instruments:'

read: '2. In derogation from Articles 3(2), 9(4), 15(1) and 17(2), the following alternative treatment may be applied to the valuation of synthetic instruments:'.

Corrigendum to Decision (EU) 2017/2081 of the European Central Bank of 10 October 2017 amending Decision ECB/2007/7 concerning the terms and conditions of TARGET2-ECB (ECB/2017/30)

(Official Journal of the European Union L 295 of 14 November 2017)

On page 89, Article 1:

for: '1. The following Article 3a is added:'

read: 'Decision ECB/2007/7 is amended as follows:

1. The following Article 3a is inserted:'.

Corrigendum to Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/2379 of 18 December 2017 on recognition of the report of Canada including typical greenhouse gas emissions from cultivation of agricultural raw materials pursuant to Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council

(Official Journal of the European Union L 337 of 19 December 2017)

On page 87, in the Annex, in the sub-heading of the last column of the table:

for: 'Kg CO₂eq/MJ FAME',

read: 'g CO₂eq/MJ FAME'.

