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The EU Newsletter No. 179

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Welcome to the EU Newsletter. This Newsletter will keep you abreast of all important developments in the EU and its relations with Kazakhstan.

- Declaration by the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on behalf of the European Union on Kazakhstan
- European Union launches three projects aimed at assisting Kazakhstan's State Programme on Health Care Reform and Development
- Commission Vice President Kallas convenes European airports to draw the lessons from air travel disruption due to snow
- Job Creation on Ministers' Agenda in Godollo

Declaration by the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on behalf of the European Union on Kazakhstan

On 21 January 2011 the EU released its statement regarding the referendum plebiscite on a single presidential candidate in Kazakhstan. It is stated in the document, that "the EU has noted with serious concern that the Parliament of Kazakhstan decided, on January 14, to adopt constitutional amendments opening the way to extending, through a national referendum, the term in office of Pres. Nazarbayev for another eight years."

The EU takes the view that replacing the normal presidential electoral contests due in 2012 and 2017 with a plebiscite on a single presidential candidate would not be consistent with OSCE principles, reaffirmed in the recent Astana Commemorative Declaration, and would cast serious doubts on Kazakhstan's commitment to promote democracy and political pluralism.

The EU expects that an important EU partner and OSCE member such as Kazakhstan will abide by accepted international norms on democracy, according to which the political leadership should be either confirmed or replaced through regular fair and free elections.

The EU strongly urges President Nazarbayev and the Kazakh national authorities to ensure that free and fair elections will take place according to the current Constitution and international commitments.

For more information: [Declaration by the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on behalf of the European Union on Kazakhstan \(full text\)](#)

European Union launches three projects aimed at assisting Kazakhstan's State Programme on Health Care Reform and Development

In 2011, the European Union launches three projects within the framework of the general project Support to Capacity Development for the Ministry of Health to implement the State Programme on Health Care Reform and Development (starting 2010), financed from the Development Co-Operation Instrument Programme for Central Asia (DCI-ASIE).

All of these projects are generally aimed at prevention and decreasing the number of cases of such deceases as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB), sexually transmitted infections (STV).

The main objective of a project "Our positive in the activity" is to reduce the number of new HIV/AIDS cases in Pavlodar and Pavlodar oblast by conducting primary prevention in educational institutions and hospitals for injecting drug users (IDUs). The project's duration is 30 months, and the EU has allocated Euro 158 968 for its implementation.

A project "Scaling-up HIV and TB services for most-at-risk population in Kazakhstan" is aimed to contribute to universal access of HIV and TB services for vulnerable population groups. The main activities will take place in Karaganda oblast and East Kazakhstan oblasts in the next 2 years. The European Union financed this project to the tune of Euro 269 999.

The goal of a third project "A model program against the spread of HIV/AIDS and TB in women prisons" is to improve the situation of prevention, diagnostics, and rehabilitation treatment of patients with HIV/AIDS and TB among imprisoned women, to educate them and prisons' workers on HIV/AIDS and TB transmission, to ensure expert advice, guidance, and support for the transition of medical services of prisons from the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of Health, etc. The project will be implemented mainly in Karaganda and East Kazakhstan oblasts. The project's duration is 24 months, the EU financing amounts to Euro 228 052.

For more information: [Press release](#)

Commission Vice President Kallas convenes European airports to draw the lessons from air travel disruption due to snow

On 19 January Siim Kallas, European Commission Vice President in charge of transport, met in Brussels with CEO's from major European airports to discuss how to prevent the problems that occurred at airports last month due to heavy snow fall. The adverse weather forced major EU airports to close or partially close which significantly disrupted air traffic across Europe. Several thousand passengers had to spend the night at airports and 35,000 flights were cancelled. This is more than the cancellations for the whole of 2009. The Commission will bring forward specific measures to address some of the key issues in the Airports Package which will be published later this year.

For more information: [Press release](#), [ACI Europe website](#)

Job Creation on Ministers' Agenda in Godollo

Creating better job opportunities for young people and promoting an employment-friendly economic growth were a priority issue at the informal meeting of employment ministers on 16–18 January in Godollo. The Hungarian Presidency treats employment policy as a key matter, since the Europe 2020 Strategy appropriates several tasks in this area.

The first workshop of the informal meeting reviewed employment policy issues related to European youth. The crisis gave rise to a situation in the labour market, which is more unfavourable for the younger generations than ever before. EU member states now have five million registered young people unemployed, a third more than immediately before the crisis.

The second workshop centred on how the EU and member states could stimulate an employment-friendly economic growth.

For more information: [Press release](#)

RECENT SPEECHES

[Statement of European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso following his meeting with the President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov – Brussels, 24 January 2011](#)

[Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission - Remarks on Belarus - European Parliament, Strasbourg, 19 January 2011](#)