



EU BUILDS A STRONG AND MODERN PARTNERSHIP WITH CENTRAL ASIA

Central Asia has a centuries-old tradition of bringing Europe and Asia together. Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have renewed this role for the region since attaining independence. EU-Central Asia relations have developed significantly over recent years, as illustrated by the new-generation Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreements signed with Kazakhstan and under negotiation with Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

Central Asia's strategic geographical location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia against the backdrop of renewed efforts to promote Euro-Asian connectivity, its share in EU energy imports and the market potential of seventy million inhabitants, as well as the EU's interest in regional security, have made Central Asia an increasingly important partner for the European Union. In May 2019, the EU has set out a fresh strategic vision for its partnership with Central Asia.



NEW EU STRATEGY ON CENTRAL ASIA

STRONGER, MODERN &



BROAD PARTNERSHIP

INVESTING IN REGIONAL COOPERATION

- ◆ Moving towards common rules and a more integrated regional market
- ◆ Tackling common challenges such as environmental degradation and terrorism
- ◆ Stepping up cooperation with Central Asian partners to promote peace in Afghanistan



PARTNERING FOR RESILIENCE

- ◆ Strengthening Central Asian countries so they can overcome internal & external challenges
- ◆ Supporting the delivery of successful reforms
- ◆ Closer cooperation on promoting human rights and the rule of law
- ◆ Turning environmental challenges into opportunities
- ◆ Sharing know-how on renewable energy and energy efficiency



PARTNERING FOR PROSPERITY

- ◆ Developing a competitive private sector and promoting an open investment environment
- ◆ Fostering research and innovation with a focus on skills development for youth
- ◆ Promoting sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based connectivity
- ◆ Supporting economic modernisation
- ◆ Leading supporter of the accession of Central Asian states to the World Trade Organization



KEY DATES

1990s

EU's engagement with Central Asia has significantly expanded since the early 1990s

2007

EU adopted its first Strategy on Central Asia that established a regular political dialogue and enhanced cooperation in key initiatives including the rule of law, education and environment

2017

EU and its Member States reaffirmed their commitment to develop a strong and durable relationship with Central Asia

2019

Joint Communication on "The EU and Central Asia: New Opportunities for a Stronger Partnership" was adopted by the European Commission and the High Representative



SUPPORTING EDUCATION IN PARTICULAR

- ◇ Since 2015, **5,544 short-term EU placements** have been awarded to students and staff from Central Asia
- ◇ Between 2014-2018, more than **250 two-year Master-level scholarships** were awarded to students from Central Asia under the Erasmus Mundus programme
- ◇ **69 projects** have so far been selected since 2014 involving Central Asian higher education institutions focusing on curriculum development and modernisation
- ◇ Providing substantial **support to Vocational Education and Training**



FOCUS OF CURRENT SUPPORT

- ◇ Cooperating on energy, water, environment and the use of natural resources
- ◇ Supporting socio-economic development
- ◇ Addressing the needs of a rapidly growing young population through new jobs
- ◇ Enabling a better response to climate change
- ◇ Strengthening the rule of law and legal capacity
- ◇ Building cooperation through integrated border management
- ◇ Intensifying the fight against organised crime and trafficking
- ◇ Supporting drug demand reduction, prevention and health aspects of drug use
- ◇ Stimulating regional exchanges on competitiveness and the business environment
- ◇ Growing intra-regional trade and linking up with the global value chain
- ◇ Promoting job creation through the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises

The EU has allocated €1.1 billion to development cooperation with Central Asia for 2014-2020, including over €454 million for regional programmes, of which €115 million is for Erasmus+. These regional programmes promote cooperation in the areas of sustainable development and regional security. The new EU Strategy will also guide the programming of EU development cooperation and assistance.