



EU-KYRGYZ REPUBLIC RELATIONS

The European Union and the Kyrgyz Republic have been partners since the country's independence in 1991, increasing cooperation and exchanges. **A Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA)** has been in force since 1999.

On 25 June 2024, the EU and the Kyrgyz Republic signed an **Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA)**, aimed at strengthening and deepening bilateral cooperation in a number of areas, such as:



The **European Union Strategy for Central Asia**, adopted in June 2019, and the **Joint Roadmap for Deepening Ties between the EU and Central Asia**, adopted in October 2023, also provide strong frameworks for strengthening bilateral and regional relations.

EU-KYRGYZ POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS

The EU-Kyrgyz Republic Partnership and Cooperation Agreement aims at **strengthening the links between the Kyrgyz Republic, the EU and its Member States**.

EU-Kyrgyz trade in goods increased **€2.845 million in 2023**, up from €1.318 million in 2022 (+115.8%).

Since 2016, the Kyrgyz Republic benefits from tariff-free quota-free access to the EU market for two thirds of all products through the **Generalised Scheme of Preferences+ (GSP+)**. The GSP+ opens new prospects for economic relations and **offers opportunities for Kyrgyzstan to increase and diversify its exports and to strengthen its economy**. The Kyrgyz Republic has the potential to maximise the GSP+ benefits by increasing utilisation rates for all eligible products and new GSP+ eligible products. **The GSP+ scheme** offers the Kyrgyz Republic zero customs duties on over 66% of all goods.

In relation to that, the Kyrgyz Republic has committed to the implementation of 27 core international conventions on human and labour rights, climate and environmental protection and good governance. The implementation is regularly monitored by the EU and the UN.

THE EU AND THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC: PARTNERSHIP FOR MODERNISATION

The **Multiannual Indicative Programme 2021-2027** responds to the Kyrgyz National Development Strategy 2040 (NDS), adopted in November 2018, which sets out a roadmap for the Kyrgyz Republic to emerge as a strong, self-sufficient and prosperous state by 2040. Three priority areas for cooperation have been selected:



Bilaterally, €62 million total resources allocated for the period 2021 – 2024

The majority of funds are implemented through budget **support**:



DIGITALISATION (€21.7 MILLION)
Budget support programme concluded in 2023



EDUCATION (€32 MILLION)
Budget support programme ongoing

The EU is considering further budget support programmes on **digitalisation** and **integrated water resource management**. Additionally, under the 2021-2027 regional Central Asia programme:



€140 million are allocated to
REGIONAL COOPERATION



€ 76 million for the
ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

Under the regional allocation, the Kyrgyz Republic benefits from **support in areas related to security**, notably through long-standing border management and drug prevention programmes, as well as other regional priorities such as energy efficiency, water management, digital connectivity, support to private sector development and trade, education, health, migration, transport, and rule of law.

Furthermore, the EU's Global Gateway strategy promotes cooperation in sustainable connectivity. The Kyrgyz Republic participates in two Team Europe Initiatives (TEI), funded and implemented jointly with EU Member States and/or development institutions:

The Team Europe Initiative on Water, Energy and Climate Change, supporting a climate resilient development in the Water-Energy nexus, increased investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency, as well as cooperation between Central Asian countries for more efficient integrated water resource management.

The Team Europe Initiative on Digital Connectivity, enhancing internet connections for remote and underserved communities, both through development of the capacities and skills of the Kyrgyz authorities and population, and constructing infrastructure for satellite connectivity in these areas.

Supporting **transport connectivity** between the Kyrgyz Republic, the rest of Central Asia, and Europe is a **key priority for the EU**. In June 2023, the European Commission published the **Study on Sustainable Transport Connections** between Europe and Central Asia. It was followed by an **Investors Forum on Transport** in January 2024.

Cooperation in research and innovation takes place through the **EU Horizon Europe Framework Programme**. Researchers and research entities from the Kyrgyz Republic are eligible for EU funding on the same basis as entities from the EU Member States.

The Kyrgyz Republic also benefits from support to **chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risk mitigation** actions. The EU has so far invested **EUR 29 million** in a European Bank for Reconstruction and Development - managed fund that remedies some of the most dangerous uranium legacy sites in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

EU SUPPORT TO DEMOCRACY AND RULE OF LAW

Actions supporting the **consolidation of democracy** and helping to **preserve and build peace** form a core part of the EU's external action.

A substantial **rule of law programme** (€ 12 million for 2022-2025) supports the Kyrgyz Republic in **enhancing the quality of legislation and increase the efficiency, independence and capacities of the judiciary and services of the justice sector**.

A regional **Rule of Law programme** (€ 8 million for 2020-2024) covering all five Central Asian countries and implemented by the Council of Europe has reinforced human rights, rule of law and democracy in accordance with European and other international standards, based on a demand-driven approach.

The EU is also planning to adopt in 2024 a EUR 5 million **programme supporting civil society**, youth and gender equality in the Kyrgyz Republic, all of which is geared towards ensuring that Kyrgyz civil society organisations can continue to be a crucial enabler for democracy and fundamental rights.