



# EU-TAJIKISTAN RELATIONS

The European Union's engagement with Tajikistan has developed significantly since the country's independence in 1991. The current basis for our relations is the **Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA)**, in force since 2010. The EU is also preparing to engage in negotiations for an Enhanced **Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA)** with Tajikistan.

At the regional level, the Republic of Tajikistan is a partner within the European Union's **Strategy on Central Asia**, which was adopted in June 2019. The Strategy defines the overall cooperation objectives and priorities for the EU's engagement in the region, focusing on promoting resilience, prosperity, and regional cooperation in Central Asia. In addition, the Strategy aims at promoting of EU principles and values: good governance, human rights, rules-based regional cooperation. The EU supports the work of Tajik civil society, in partnership with local and international Non-Governmental Organisations.

## DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

EU cooperation for the 2021-2027 period will build on earlier achievements in key sectors such as **health, education, public finance management, water, energy and agriculture**, while stepping up support on SME empowerment, greening the economy and disaster risk reduction.

EU bilateral development assistance allocation for 2021-2024 is EUR 91 million. The following 3 priority areas have been identified for the 2021-2027 Multiannual Indicative Programme:

### Inclusive Green and Digital Economy:



contribute towards poverty reduction, food security and livelihood creation through the potential of greening agribusiness, promoting private sector development and the adoption of new low-carbon technologies as drivers for growth. Improving the policy and monitoring frameworks for climate-smart and sustainable agriculture will require capacity building, know-how transfer as well as sector governance.

### Human Development:



continue to assist Tajikistan in accelerating achievements in the education and health sectors, especially considering the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the provision of essential services

### Natural resources management, efficiency and resilience:



contribute to the development and implementation of a sound policy on environmental protection and Climate Change adaptation and mitigation, which can also contribute to security and stability of the Central Asia region. The EU aims to employ vast experience with innovative solutions to tackle challenges under this priority area, dramatically improving data collection and management in support of the river basin approach, climate change adaptation and monitoring of ecologically relevant indicators.

So far two programmes have been adopted under the new MIP: Sustainable Energy Support Programme in Tajikistan (2021, EUR 15 million) and Rural drinking water supply and sanitation Project (2022, EUR 14 million)

## REGIONAL AND THEMATIC DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

The interest of the European Union in Central Asia is to support long-term stability and to promote gradual modernization and reforms for a greater prosperity. The EU also supports regional initiatives in the fields of **energy, environment, socio-economic development, education, border management and security**. The European Union, together with its Member States, the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is developing two regional **Team Europe Initiatives** on Water, Energy Climate Change and on Digital Connectivity.

In 2022, two new regional actions were launched that will benefit Tajikistan:

- **Dialogue and Action for Resourceful Youth in Central Asia (DARYA):** This EUR 10 million programme, implemented by the European Training Foundation, supports inclusive skills development and prepares young Central Asian women and men for the labour market.
- **EU Support to Sustainable Energy Connectivity in Central Asia (SECCA):** This EUR 7 million programme promotes a more sustainable energy mix in the Central Asia region in line with EU best practices. The programme works through a range of activities to achieve concrete outputs to strengthen public capacity (institutional, human and regulatory, financial), raise awareness, improve data and modelling, improve the identification of bankable projects, and boost regional cooperation, eventually paving the way for greater energy connectivity.

Tajikistan also benefits from thematic support through the **European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights**, global initiatives like the **Spotlight Initiative, Global Partnership for Education**, and the Instrument for **Nuclear Safety Cooperation**, and others.



## TRADE RELATIONS

Trade and economic relations between the EU and Tajikistan are governed by Tajikistan's World Trade Organisation membership and by the bilateral Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. The agreement provides for a non-preferential agreement under which the parties grant each other **'most-favoured nation'** treatment. The agreement also envisages progressive regulatory approximation of national legislation and practices to the most important EU trade-related standards. This should lead to better practical access to the EU markets for goods originating from Tajikistan. Tajikistan is also a beneficiary of the EU's Generalised System of Preferences. Preferential imports from Tajikistan are mostly concentrated in the textiles sector but also include industrial products. In 2021, EU imports in goods from Tajikistan amounted to €162 million. Around €13.7 million worth of goods benefitted from GSP in 2021. EU exports in goods to Tajikistan amounted to €239 million. The EU exports mainly machinery, motor vehicles and pharmaceuticals to Tajikistan.



## HUMAN RIGHTS

Promoting respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms is a central aspect of the EU's external action, including in its bilateral relations with Tajikistan. The EU and Tajikistan entered into an enhanced dialogue on human rights in October 2008.

This dialogue offers a platform for discussion on questions of mutual interest, and serves to promote cooperation on human rights in multilateral fora such as the OSCE and the United Nations. Officials from the European Union meet their counterparts from Tajikistan's government on a yearly basis to address concerns in the field of human rights. The EU also organises "Civil Society Seminars" which bring together Non-Governmental Organisations, academics and practitioners from the EU and Tajikistan to discuss specific questions and exchange best practice.

## HUMANITARIAN AID AND CIVIL PROTECTION

Central Asia is prone to natural hazards, including earthquakes, floods and landslides, and vulnerable to the effects of climate change. **EU humanitarian action in the region** is largely focused on improving the capacity of national institutions and local communities to prepare for and respond to disasters.

Through its Disaster Preparedness programme, the European Union is funding community-based initiatives to increase the resilience of local populations in Tajikistan and across Central Asia. Since 1994, the Commission has provided over €222 million in humanitarian funding to Central Asia. The EU provides direct humanitarian aid to assist the Tajikistan population in times of need, such as quick response to floods, mudflows or man-made disasters.

