



EU-KYRGYZ REPUBLIC RELATIONS

The European Union and the Kyrgyz Republic have been partners since the country's independence in 1991, increasing their cooperation and areas of interaction year-on-year. The **Partnership and Cooperation Agreement** (PCA), in force since 1999, outlines three main pillars of cooperation: political dialogue, economic relations and cooperation in a variety of sectors, such as social, finance, science, technology and culture. The EU and the Kyrgyz Republic are currently negotiating a modernised, comprehensive bilateral agreement, which will replace the PCA.

At the regional level, the Kyrgyz Republic is one of the European Union's partners within the **European Union and Central Asia Strategy**, which outlines the overall cooperation objectives, policy responses and priority fields for the EU's engagement in Central Asia.

EU-KYRGYZ POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS

The political dialogue element of the EU-Kyrgyz Republic PCA aims at strengthening the links between the Kyrgyz Republic, the EU and its Member States.

Discussions take place on many levels, in different formats and on different issues, including:

- ◇ The Cooperation Council at ministerial level, last held in March 2017; next meeting will take place on 10 December 2018.
- ◇ Cooperation Committee at senior official level, last held in June 2018;
- ◇ Subcommittee on Trade and Investment; Subcommittee on Development

Cooperation, last held in February 2018;

- ◇ Human Rights Dialogue, last held in June 2018;
- ◇ Parliamentary Cooperation Committee.

Three EU-Central Asia initiatives supported by regional projects aim at enhancing cooperation on common issues: the rule of law; education; environment and water cooperation; private sector development.

In 2017, total **EU-Kyrgyz trade** amounted to €459 million. The Kyrgyz Republic has been a member of the WTO since 1998. In 2016, the European Union granted Kyrgyzstan GSP+ status. This opened up new potential for economic relations between the two partners and offers opportunities for Kyrgyzstan to increase and diversify its exports and to strengthen its economy. The GSP+ scheme offers Kyrgyzstan zero customs duties on over 6,200 EU tariff lines. In exchange, Kyrgyzstan has committed to the effective implementation of 27 core international conventions on human and labour rights, environmental protection and good governance.

THE EU AND THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC: PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

The European Union is one of the main donors in the Kyrgyz Republic. For the timeframe 2014-2020, the EU has allocated **€174 million of bilateral aid** to the Kyrgyz Republic in grants in the framework of the Development Cooperation Instrument. This aid is primarily directed at three focal sectors and support measures: **integrated rural development, education** and the **rule of law**.

Additionally, the EU is allocating **€255 million to regional cooperation projects** in Central Asia



in 2014-2020. Under this framework, the EU provides support in areas related to security, notably through long-standing border management, water security and drug prevention programmes. On the economic side, the **Investment Facility for Central Asia** adds EU grants to loans provided by Financial Institutions, for example the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Over **€116 million** in grants were allocated between 2011-2017 to regional priorities such as infrastructure for waste management and water supply in urban areas, or energy efficiency. This generous financial contribution is further complemented by the use of the EU's **thematic instruments**: the [Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace](#), the [European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights](#) and [Erasmus+](#). The EU also contributes to chemical biological radiological and nuclear risks mitigation. In addition, a one-off **macro-financial assistance worth €30 million** (50% in grants and 50% in loans) has been disbursed in 2015-16.

EU SUPPORT TO DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

Actions supporting the **consolidation of democracy** and helping to **preserve and build peace** form a core part of the EU's external action. In the aftermath of the ethnic clashes of 2010, the EU quickly mobilised funds for **support of institutional reform and democracy consolidation**, and has remained engaged in this area ever since. The EU supported the Constitutional Council in preparing the Kyrgyz Constitution, as well as the alignment of legal frameworks, justice sector reform and the

establishment and work of the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court. Support to democratic elections as the cornerstone of any democratic system has been provided since 2010, and a new **programme for democratisation through electoral reform** became operational in 2016 (€13.1 million). A substantial **Rule of Law** programme (€13.5 million for 2014-2018, €13 million for 2018-2021) helps to enhance the quality of legislation and increase the efficiency, independence, professionalism and capacities of the judiciary. In addition, the EU provided support to people affected by the violence and financed a large number of projects aiming at **increasing human security, building trust and preventing future conflicts**. Around €20 million has been committed for stabilisation and democratisation support.

EU HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS AND SUPPORT TO CRISIS RESPONSE

Central Asia as a region, and Kyrgyzstan in particular, is prone to natural hazards, including earthquakes, floods and landslides. Kyrgyzstan is at risk from the impact of climate change, which has the potential to intensify the vulnerabilities and exposure to hazards in the coming years. The EU supports national institutions' and local communities' capacity to **prepare for and respond to disaster**. Through its current Disaster Preparedness Programme, the Commission is funding community-based initiatives to increase the resilience of populations to recurrent disaster (€5.4 million since 2003).

€174 million
for development cooperation
in **2014-2020** to:



**STRENGTHEN
THE RULE OF
LAW**



**IMPROVE
THE QUALITY OF
EDUCATION**



**SUPPORT
RURAL
DEVELOPMENT**