



Bishkek, 6 July 2019

FACT SHEET

EU-Kyrgyz Republic Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

On 6 July 2019 in Bishkek, the European Union and the Kyrgyz Republic successfully concluded the negotiations of the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Kyrgyzstan, launched on 19 December 2017. The draft agreement has been initialed in the presence of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the Commission Federica Mogherini and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic Chingiz Aidarbekov. This is an important milestone in bilateral relations between the EU and Kyrgyzstan, as the new Agreement will significantly deepen political and economic ties between the two sides for the benefit of their citizens.

Objectives and content of the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

Partnership between the EU and the Kyrgyz Republic has developed significantly since the first Partnership and Cooperation Agreement entered into force in 1999. The objective of negotiating the new agreement was to reflect the developments in Kyrgyzstan and in the region, build on achievements of bilateral cooperation to date and provide a new, modern and ambitious legal framework for the future bilateral partnership. The agreement includes new cooperation areas and significantly upgrades the regulatory framework for our trade and economic relations in line with the WTO rules and regional economic agreements.

Main areas of cooperation

Political cooperation and reforms: the Agreement puts a strong emphasis on shared values, democracy and the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms and sustainable development.

Enhanced cooperation in foreign and security policy will the focus on regional stability and international cooperation, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), conflict prevention and crisis management.

Justice, Freedom and Security cooperation will cover data protection, migration, the fight against money laundering and terrorism, organised crime and corruption, tackling illicit

drugs, as well as judicial cooperation and consular protection.

Trade: the Agreement ensures better regulatory environment for the economic operators in areas such as trade in goods and services, government procurement or intellectual property rights.

Enhanced cooperation in some other 24 key sector policy areas, including in the sectors of economic and financial cooperation, energy, transport, environment and climate change, digital economy, agriculture and rural development, employment and social affairs, culture, education and youth or research.

The EU has committed to supporting Kyrgyzstan through financial and technical assistance.

Next steps

Lawyers and linguists will review the text to ensure consistence and legal certainty, in all the official languages of the EU and the Kyrgyz Republic. The Parties will pursue their internal procedures authorising their representative to sign the international agreement. Once signed, the agreement may be provisionally applied already during the process of ratification.

Implementation and immediate benefits

Once signed and implemented, concrete benefits can flow from the Agreement. Examples include a better functioning judiciary sector, a strengthened rule of law and increased transparency. This will result in an improved business environment, more business opportunities for small and medium enterprises, more jobs; more efficient use of energy and the development of renewable energy sources; stronger environmental protection and increased capacity to deal with the climate change; new connectivity initiatives, including digital connectivity and people to people contacts.

In the trade area, the benefits of the EPCA will come on top of the unilateral preferences already granted by the EU to Kyrgyz exporters through the Generalized System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) scheme. These preferences relate to the elimination of tariffs for a large list of products exported to the EU, as counterpart of the implementation by the Kyrgyz Republic of 27 international conventions related to human rights, labor rights, protection of the environment and good governance. On its side, the EPCA focuses on trade rules and establishes a more business-friendly environment for economic operators while ensuring, through its trade and sustainable development chapter, that the agreement is implemented in full support of high levels of protection in the areas of environment and labor.

In particular, the EPCA foresees a better protection for the intellectual property rights, notably the geographical indications (167 EU geographical indications will be protected directly in the agreement, which is the first agreement of this kind in Central Asia). It integrates also provisions which are going in line with the WTO regulations (e.g. rules related to public procurement, competition, technical barriers to trade or better access to raw materials). This will provide more predictability and attractiveness for EU investors.