



# *Central Asia Strategy by European Union*

# New EU strategy on Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan)

## Stronger, modern and broad partnership



### Investing in regional cooperation

- Moving towards common rules and a more integrated regional market
- Tackling common challenges such as environment degradation and terrorism
- Stepping up cooperation with Central Asia 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 modernization
- ✓ Leading supporter of the accession of Central Asian states to the World Trade Organization

# New Central Asia Strategy adds education as a priority, but mostly reinforces support in existing areas

## 2007 EU Central Asia strategy

- 1 Responding to security threats
- 2 Protecting human rights
- 3 Promoting economic development
- 4 Developing transport and energy links
- 5 Ensuring environmental protection



## 2019 EU Central Asia strategy

- 1 Cooperation on addressing Common Security Challenges
- 2 Promoting Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law
- 3 Consolidating the Partnership for Economic Reform
- 4 Facilitating Inter-regional Trade and Investment
- 5 Enhancing Environmental, Climate and Water Resilience
- 6 Promoting Sustainable Connectivity
- 7 Investing in Youth, Education, Innovation and Culture



# Attention to the educational system and programs in Central Asia is a special strategic course for EU



## 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 program
- ✓ 69 projects have so far been selected since 2014 involving Central Asian higher education institutions focusing on curriculum development and modernization
- ✓ Providing substantial support to Vocational Education and Training

- **The EU has allocated EUR1.1 bln to development cooperation with Central Asia for 2014-2020, including over EUR454 mln for regional programs, of which EUR115 mln is for Erasmus+. These regional programs 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.



**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.**

# Key areas of 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 organized 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

# Conclusion

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- **The New EU Central Asia Strategy aims to forge a stronger, modern and non-exclusive partnership** with the countries of Central Asia so that the region develops as a sustainable, more resilient, prosperous, and closely interconnected economic and political space.
- The EU Strategy will focus on **three interconnected and mutually reinforcing priorities**:
  - **Partnering for Resilience**

The EU will partner with Central Asian countries in anticipating and addressing the challenges affecting their socio-economic goals and security and enhancing their ability to embrace reform and modernisation.
  - **Partnering for Prosperity**

The EU will partner with Central Asian countries in unlocking their significant growth potential by fostering the development of a competitive private sector and promoting a sound and open investment environment.
  - **Working Better Together**

The EU will work together with the countries of Central Asia to strengthen the architecture of the partnership, intensifying political dialogue and opening up space for civil society participation.
- In comparison with the previous strategy adopted in 2007, **the New Central Asia Strategy mostly reinforces support and cooperation in existing areas, such as responding to security threats, protecting human rights, economic development and connectivity, with the main difference being the investment in education as an additional priority.**

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