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Union and Kyrgyzstan: The
development of cooperation and
the basic stage of political dialog**

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RELATIONS BETWEEN EUROPEAN UNION AND KYRGYZSTAN: THE DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATION AND THE BASIC STAGES OF POLITICAL DIALOG

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Abstract

Central Asia, still struggling with the problems caused by the planned borders drawn by the USSR, has become an important region where global powers are fighting for supremacy. The world powers have sought to strengthen relations with the Central Asian countries in order to benefit from the rich energy resources here and keep them under control. The European Union, in particular, sought favorable conditions to advance its geopolitical interests after the collapse of the USSR, and accordingly, the EU began to develop relations with Central Asian countries. In order to strengthen its position in the region, the EU signed cooperation and association agreements with the countries of the region. In order to become an effective power on the international stage, Central Asian countries have sought to develop policies based on a balance with the EU. This study analyzes in detail the European Union's efforts to survive in Central Asia and in particular its relations with Kyrgyzstan.

Keywords: Kyrgyzstan, European Union, Central Asia

Introduce

After the end of the Soviet era and the collapse of the bipolar system of international relations, the geopolitical realities of the global order have changed. Many new independent states on the Eurasian continent, including the Central Asian countries, took their place in the new order. As a result of these developments, a number of political concepts and ideas related to the region emerged in the European Union.

The Central Asian region has been the object of attention of Western and Eastern countries since ancient times, as it occupies an important geopolitical and economic position as a bridge between Asian and European states. For this reason, after the dissolution of the USSR, the increasing importance of the region for energy supply and its critical geopolitical position became of interest to the EU, and the EU turned its attention to Central Asia.

The European Union has taken a number of steps to strengthen its position in the region. These steps were based on cooperation and partnership agreements signed with the countries of the region. These agreements aimed to formalize the



EU's political and economic relations with the countries of the region. Various forms of bilateral and regional cooperation were established and EU representations were opened in the countries of the region.

Against the background of these developments, this article will examine in detail the EU's struggle for its existence in the region, its policies and in particular its policy towards Kyrgyzstan, and the development of cooperation and relations based on the EU's relations with the Central Asian states. The article will consist of two parts: First, the EU's Central Asia Strategy (1992-2007) and the EU's Central Asia policy in general will be discussed. The second part will discuss the future and problems of the EU's interaction with Kyrgyzstan, covering various aspects such as political, economic, social, trade and cultural.

The EU's Central Asia strategy and the EU from the perspective of Central Asia

Central Asia has been a strategically important region linking Europe and Asia for centuries. After gaining independence, five Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) underwent a profound political and economic transformation with the creation of independent states and political institutions and the transition from a planned to a market economy. The common goal of securing stability and prosperity through cooperation has made the European Union and the Central Asian countries close [partners](#).

The importance of Central Asia has always been characterized by its enormous economic potential and its strategic location at the crossroads of trade routes and political interests. In recent years, its proximity to war-torn Afghanistan has attracted the attention of the EU, the US and other countries to explore the role those Central Asian countries can play in stabilizing the entire [region](#).

Cooperation between the EU and Central Asia is also important for security in the region. The EU is Central Asia's second largest trading partner and also acts as a facilitator and donor in the area of cooperation projects aimed at modernization and [reform](#). The Central Asian region has enormous potential for business and development opportunities.

Since 2007, when the EU developed a political strategy for cooperation with the Central Asian countries, bilateral relations have become even closer in various areas. Over time, both the EU and the Central Asian countries have repeatedly reaffirmed their intention to continue working to promote mutual cooperation. Security issues have been at the forefront of relations with the EU as the region faces new and increasing security challenges, particularly in relation to [Afghanistan](#).

Over the last ten years, the European Union has become heavily involved in Central Asia and has taken on a more important role. As part of this engagement, diplomatic missions have been expanded, development cooperation has been intensified and various cooperation mechanisms have been established. Despite



these initiatives, the EU's impact in terms of improving security conditions or contributing to the development of democratic societies that respect human rights has been [modest](#).

The European Union's focus on Central Asia is a consequence of the progress of European integration. The EU, which has been called an "economic giant and political dwarf" in the past, is actively working to address its shortcomings and strengthen its military and political cooperation. The EU's approach to Central Asia should be seen as an extension of its efforts to build strong political relations with regions outside the Western [Hemisphere](#).

After the end of the Cold War, a distinct political terminology has emerged in the global landscape, encompassing concepts such as human rights, democracy and free market economy. The use of this new political language has become indispensable in the evolving global order. Consequently, progress and development now seem dependent on the adoption of Western systems and values. In this context, rapprochement with Europe, synonymous with the West, was no longer a mere choice but became an inescapable [necessity](#).

The Central Asian states realized that they had to find their way in the new order and focused their efforts on promoting relations with the European Union. By rapidly establishing and expanding ties with EU member states, these countries have actively participated in cooperation projects. In a remarkably short period of time, they have secured membership in European-oriented formations and organizations.

Relations between the European Union and Kyrgyzstan

After the collapse of the USSR, Kyrgyzstan began to actively establish diplomatic relations with many countries of the world. In order to realize its national interests, Kyrgyzstan has established friendly and mutually beneficial relations, especially with the Central Asian countries, the leading world powers and the integration unions.

Due to its geographical location, Kyrgyzstan, like other Central Asian countries, has attracted the attention of the leading world powers, Russia, the USA, China and other regional powers. Kyrgyzstan, which has been implementing political and economic projects since the early 1990s, and the European Union have tried to establish various cooperation and partnerships.

The European Union and the Kyrgyz Republic established a partnership in 1991 after the republic's independence and began a continuous and growing dialog in the political and economic spheres. Initially, cooperation focused on promoting trade and investment for the European nations, but has developed dynamically since 2002. It now encompasses a broader spectrum dealing with regional security, energy, water-related challenges and human rights issues.



In 2007, the European Union adopted the New Partnership Strategy with the Central Asian countries. This document aims to strengthen political dialog between the EU and Central Asian countries, organize regular meetings between EU foreign ministers and the countries of the region, intensify dialog on human rights issues, education, energy, transport, environment and use of water resources, common threats, border control and illegal drugs. This also includes issues such as the fight against illicit trafficking and the rule of law. This was not the first interaction with the region, but we can say that it was the first significant interaction with individual states that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The implementation of this strategy has contributed to a significant increase in EU assistance to the Central Asian states.

The intensification of cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and the European Union is primarily due to the initiatives of former President A. Atambayev. In the period from 2012 to 2017, President Atambayev actively promoted ties with the leadership of the European Union, paving the way for increased cooperation.

The intensification of relations with the EU took place against the backdrop of deteriorating bilateral relations with the USA. One of the issues that strained Kyrgyz-American relations was the location of the American airbase on the country's territory. On June 20, 2014, Kyrgyzstan unilaterally decided to withdraw the US airbase from the country. In addition, Kyrgyzstan hoped to improve the balance of the country's foreign policy through better cooperation with the European Union. Kyrgyzstan's position made it possible to start a new phase of negotiations with the EU. During the political contacts, issues related to the conclusion of a new strategic basic agreement on enhanced cooperation between the European Union and the Kyrgyz Republic were discussed.

Under the basic agreement for comprehensive cooperation between the Kyrgyz Republic and the European Union (February 1999) and complementary sectoral agreements, the European Union was designated as the main donor to Kyrgyzstan. The EU provided non-repayable assistance in various areas, including environmental initiatives, promotion of democratic reforms and human rights, support for socio-economic, humanitarian and educational reforms, strengthening border and regional security, combating drug trafficking and ensuring food security.

Kyrgyzstan has had extensive access to various financial support mechanisms of the European Union. The country received 106 million euros via the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) in the period 2007-2013. From 2014 to 2020, this amount increased by an impressive 74% to a total of 184 million euros. According to the European Union, this increase in funding is justified by objective criteria such as population size, income level and compliance with democratic values. The DCI distribution for 2014-2020 focused mainly on three key areas: Education (39%), Integrated Rural Development (39%) and Rule of Law and Democracy (20.5%). Other cooperative areas received 1.5% of the allocated aid.

Development and priorities of cooperation



With the establishment of diplomatic contacts between President Almazbek Atambayev (former President of Kyrgyzstan) and leading representatives of the European Union, prospects for cooperation with countries of the European Union were outlined. During President A. Atambayev's visit to Germany from December 10 to 12, 2012, a bilateral memorandum on cooperation in the fields of education, science, culture and health was formally signed. In addition, an agreement between Kyrgyzstan and Germany was reached during the meeting between President A. Atambayev and German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

In September 2013, President A. Atambayev made his first working visit to the European Union. During the visit to Brussels, an agreement between the Kyrgyz Republic and the European Investment Bank within the framework of the agreement "On the activities of the European Investment Bank in the Kyrgyz Republic" and the "Rule of Law Platform" project were ratified. President A. Atambayev then traveled to Austria, France, Switzerland, Belgium and Germany in March 2015 and met with representatives of the OSCE and the European Parliament. Following the negotiations, the cooperation program for 2015-2016 was formalized between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Ministry of International and European Affairs of the Republic of Austria. After talks with the Swiss Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland was solemnly signed in the presence of A. Atambayev. This gesture was interpreted as EU support for the ongoing democratic reforms, particularly in the area of parliamentary democracy. President A. Atambayev's visit to Europe was followed by reciprocal visits: Bundestag Vice President Johannes Singhammer, the President of the Hanns Seidel Foundation, the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany and finally the visit of German Chancellor A. Merkel [in July 2016](#).

The European Union, a major donor to the Kyrgyz Republic, has provided financial support under the Multiannual Indicative Program for the period 2014-2020. The EU has provided funding for various sectors, including education (36 million euros), social protection (30 million euros) and electoral reform (13 million euros). In addition, a macro-financial assistance program for the Kyrgyz Republic in the amount of 30 million euros was financed by the [European Union](#).

Of particular importance for strengthening relations between Kyrgyzstan and the European Union is the joint implementation of the EU's cross-border regional projects, which aim to increase the integration potential of regional countries in Central Asia. The expansion of military-technical cooperation with the member states of the anti-terror coalition creates a basis for increased interaction in areas such as trade, economy, culture and human rights.

After years of negotiations, the European Union granted Bishkek GSP+ status (Generalized System of Preferences) on January 27, 2016. This status involves the elimination of tariffs on more than 6 thousand goods, and this plan is important for developing countries, including Kyrgyzstan. These range from agricultural products to fabrics, felts and leather products. This development has given



Kyrgyzstan the opportunity to better access the European market. In this context, the Council of the European Union decided in October 2017 to draw up a new comprehensive agreement to strengthen partnership and cooperation with Kyrgyzstan. With eight chapters, the agreement covers almost all areas of cooperation in order to create a broad framework for strengthening the future [partnership](#).

On December 19, 2017, the first round of negotiations on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the Heads of State and Government of the European Union and the Kyrgyz Republic took place in Brussels. This marked the start of a new basic document that is intended to strengthen bilateral relations. The planned agreement will replace the existing Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which entered into force in 1999. Both parties defined the procedures for the negotiation process and discussed the expected objectives and general principles of the [future agreement](#).

In March 2018, the parties then discussed the issues in three thematic negotiating groups. The first group dealt with the chapters on common objectives, political dialog and reforms, justice and freedom, human rights and security issues. The second group dealt with the chapters on trade and investment. The third group discussed the remaining chapters on a wide range of issues related to economic and sustainable development, international norms, current realities and future prospects.

In the third round of negotiations, which took place in Brussels on April 17, 2018, the parties discussed a new draft for an extended cooperation agreement. The new agreement should take into account the visions and strategic plans in line with the national strategy for sustainable development until 2040 and the Taza Koom¹ digital transformation program. The parties evaluated and approved this proposal during the [negotiations](#).

On June 29, 2018, during the fourth round of negotiations between Kyrgyzstan and the European Union in [Bishkek](#), important areas of cooperation such as consumer protection, employment, social policy, health, culture, youth policy, sports and regional development were discussed. Following the results of the negotiation round, the representatives of the negotiating groups of the EU and the Kyrgyz Republic issued joint statements. Deputy Foreign Minister Nurlan Abdrakhmanov stated that Kyrgyzstan is actively working in various areas, including the protection of human rights and the improvement of [legislation](#).

Raimonds Virgins, Head of the Policy, Information and Press Department of the EU Delegation to Kyrgyzstan, recalled the fifth round of negotiations, which took place on October 17 and 18, 2018, and referred to the talks on cooperation in the fields of energy, transport, communications, mobile technologies and innovation. The level of political support for reforms in Kyrgyzstan and the protection of human rights were also discussed during the talks.

When the new EU strategy for Central Asia was adopted on June 17, 2019, it was stated that one of the main objectives is to strengthen relations between the EU



and the Central Asian countries. The strategy focuses on strengthening the capacities of Central Asian states to address internal and external challenges and support economic modernization. The EU also emphasized that it wants to strengthen dialog and interaction in Central Asia by promoting regional [cooperation](#).

The recently presented new Multiannual Indicative Program for 2021-2027 is in line with Kyrgyzstan's National Development Strategy 2040 (NDS) adopted in November 2018. This strategic framework outlines a comprehensive path for the Kyrgyz Republic (KR) to develop into a resilient, self-reliant and prosperous state by 2040. Cooperation will mainly focus on three key areas: Governance and digital transformation, human development and a green and climate resilient [economy](#).

As part of the Central Asia Regional Program 2021-2027, a considerable 140 million euros have been earmarked for the region, which will be strategically allocated to various priority areas. In addition, a remarkable EUR 76 million has been allocated specifically for the Erasmus+ program, which aims to improve student and academic mobility and promote valuable people-to-people [contacts](#).

In the area of regional allocation, the EU supports Central Asia in key areas, including security, through well-established border management and counter-narcotics initiatives. In addition, the EU is actively promoting regional priorities such as energy efficiency, water management, private sector development, trade and the promotion of the rule of [law](#).

Kyrgyzstan is currently benefiting from various regional projects, including the Dialog and Action for Resourceful Youth in Central Asia ([DARYA](#)) project, which focuses on vocational education and training. Another important initiative is the EU Support to Sustainable Energy Connectivity in Central Asia ([SECCEA](#)), which deals with regional energy integration and renewable energy reforms.

In addition, the EU plays a central role in mitigating risks related to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear hazards. The EU has taken the lead in setting up a fund managed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to address some of the most dangerous uranium legacies in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. With a substantial investment of 29 million euros, the EU is the main contributor to this [fund](#).

Finally, on January 15, 2024, Kyrgyz President Japarov and EU Vice President Schinas met in Bishkek to discuss cooperation, priority projects, investments, banking relations and regional security. Japarov emphasized the importance of the upcoming EU-Central Asia Transport Connectivity Investors Forum in Brussels on 29 and 30 January. The meeting also addressed human rights, with a focus on civil society and media freedom. Schinas explained that the EU wanted to strengthen cooperation in the areas of finance, climate projects, digitalization and transport corridors. This meeting builds on previous diplomatic activities, including President Charles Michel's visit to Kyrgyzstan and the first summit between Central Asian leaders and the EU in June [2023](#).



Aid programs

The EU officially recognized Kyrgyzstan in 1991 and established diplomatic relations in 1992. Kyrgyzstan opened an EU diplomatic representation in Brussels in 1995. The EU has supported the region through the Technical Assistance Program ([TACIS](#)) for the 12 newly independent states of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

As part of this program, Kyrgyzstan participates in the [TRACECA](#) (Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia), [WARMAP](#) (Water Resources Management and Agricultural Production) and [INOGATE](#) (Interstate Transportation of Oil and Gas to Europe) [projects](#).

Under the TACIS program, Kyrgyzstan received a total of 132.9 million euros in aid in the period 1996-2006. The main objectives of the assistance were to contribute to the development of the state by providing the necessary support in key areas such as promoting the private sector, improving infrastructure, implementing legal reforms, respecting human rights, protecting minority rights and promoting market reforms. The assistance should play an important role in promoting the overall progress and development of [Kyrgyzstan](#).

These projects have become an important part of the cooperation between the EU and Kyrgyzstan. For example, the new partnership strategy includes the INOGATE and TRACECA programs as part of the EU's enhanced approach. By supporting regional infrastructures, the EU continues to create economic benefits for the Union and offers the region more opportunities to trade with each other. Therefore, the TACIS programs form the basis of the EU's policy to promote regional cooperation in Central Asia. [BOMCA/CADAP](#) is another important element of TACIS and has become a core component of the new cooperation framework. Moreover, this component has become the center of mutual cooperation and has been more successful in its [implementation](#).

The TACIS program has shown that the Kyrgyz government is satisfied with the technical assistance and funds, but it shows that the implementation of reforms is far from complete. The lack of mechanisms to implement the discussed regulations on a small scale and the lack of political will on a large scale significantly affect the willingness to overcome a bundle of problems. The results of TACIS in the 1990s were the provision of humanitarian aid, food and equipment, which did not require institutional changes. In the mid-2000s, the outcomes shifted towards security, stability and infrastructure development projects, implicitly emphasizing the importance of democracy.

The EU strategy has maintained the same trend by implementing successful TACIS projects and being very restrained in promoting democracy. The democratic component has thus become so self-evident that it is not obvious. On the one hand, this component contributes to the values of the EU and has the right to participate in politics. On the other hand, relations between the EU and Kyrgyzstan are geared towards strengthening security and controlling borders. This activity is far from



promoting democratic standards. In reality, relations between the EU and Kyrgyzstan are very balanced from a security point of view, and democracy has no place there. There are no preconditions for democratic development. TACIS has already set the path of relations, so the strategy merely continues it.

With regard to TACIS, the following conclusions can be drawn: First, both positive and negative experiences have been made, and the reason for the negative experiences is the lack of monitoring, documentation and the wrong choice of instruments by the European Union.

The European Union supports Kyrgyzstan primarily through budget support. Budget support is a means of delivering effective aid and achieving sustainable results by supporting the reform efforts of EU partners and contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals. This approach is based on a strategic approach with clearly defined, long-term policy priorities supported by adequate [resources](#).

The European Union's assistance and cooperation with the Kyrgyz Republic has played an important role in the [2014-2020 period](#). The EU's total bilateral assistance of €174 million focused on rural development, education and the rule of law in Kyrgyzstan under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI).

The budget of 38 million euros for the rule of law aimed to support judicial reforms by providing technical assistance and expertise to Kyrgyz institutions. It also includes efforts to strengthen democratic processes by promoting comprehensive electoral [reforms](#).

The investment of EUR 72 million in the education sector aims to increase the potential for sustainable economic development and employment of Kyrgyzstan's young and growing population. Efforts to make education policy more inclusive, cost-efficient and transparent, as well as initiatives to promote equal access to quality education and to align education efforts with the needs of the labor market, characterize the EU's contributions to the education [sector](#).

The budget of 62 million euros for rural development supports social development and local economic initiatives, including support for income-generating measures in rural areas. The aim is to reduce poverty and promote social justice by developing a robust social protection system and integrated water management in [key areas](#).

With the allocation of 255 million euros for regional cooperation projects in Central Asia, the EU has provided support in security-related areas such as border management, water security and the fight against drugs. In addition, the €116 million granted for regional priorities such as waste management, water supply and energy efficiency in urban areas is complemented by the use of the EU's thematic [instruments](#).

Aid to Kyrgyzstan to improve preparedness and response to natural disasters has amounted to more than €5.4 million since [2003](#). In addition, the allocation of €140 million for the Central Asia Regional Program in 2021-2027, together with €76 million for the Erasmus+ program, aims to increase student and academic mobility



and facilitate people-to-people contacts. This comprehensive approach in various areas underlines the EU's commitment to providing comprehensive and sustainable support to Kyrgyzstan and the Central [Asian region](#).

Optimization of trade and economic cooperation and expansion of relations at the economic level

Economic relations between Kyrgyzstan and the European Union were initially quite limited. In 2002, the European Union imported goods worth around 20 million euros from Kyrgyzstan. In 2001, the gold trade accounted for more than half of imports with a value of 117 million euros. Exports from the European Union to Kyrgyzstan amounted to around 90 million euros in 2002. Chemical products, means of transportation and machinery accounted for almost half of the European Union's exports. The countries of the European Union accounted for 13.1% of Kyrgyzstan's total imports in 2004. In the same year, however, only 5.4% of Kyrgyz exports went to the countries of the [European Union](#).

In 2006, the volume of trade between the EU and Kyrgyzstan amounted to around 186 million euros. The countries of the European Union ranked Kyrgyzstan 4th in imports, 5th in foreign trade and 6th in exports, while Kyrgyzstan ranked 168th in EU imports, 186th in foreign trade and 137th in [exports](#).

In 2017, the total trade volume between the EU and Kyrgyzstan reached 459 million euros. Kyrgyzstan has been a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) since 1998. In 2016, the European Union granted Kyrgyzstan Generalized System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) status. This has opened up new opportunities for economic relations between the two partners and given Kyrgyzstan the chance to increase, diversify and strengthen its exports. The GSP+ program offers Kyrgyzstan zero tariffs on more than 6,200 EU tariff lines. In return, Kyrgyzstan has committed to effectively implement 27 important international agreements in the areas of human and labor rights, environmental protection and good [governance](#).

Trade in goods between the European Union and Kyrgyzstan has experienced a significant upswing, increasing from 337 million euros in 2021 to 1.32 million euros in 2022. This remarkable growth is mainly due to the Generalized System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) status granted by the EU to the Kyrgyz Republic since 2016. This classification has not only expanded economic relations, but has also opened up new opportunities for Kyrgyzstan to increase its exports, diversify its trade landscape and strengthen its economic foundations. Kyrgyzstan can further realize the full potential of GSP+ by maximizing the utilization rate for all eligible [products](#).

Building civil society and human rights

The TACIS Democracy Program focuses on strengthening democracy in Kyrgyzstan by working towards the creation of a legal framework and a pluralistic society. The projects under this program address such important issues as the protection of human rights, women's rights and the development of trade unions.



In addition, the European Union has made an important contribution to Kyrgyzstan's accession to the European Council. Democracy training for judges, police officers and journalists is carried out as part of EU projects. Civil society organizations are also supported in their work in a democratic environment. The European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), which was founded in 2006 to support the transition to human rights and democracy, places particular emphasis on promoting pluralism in [Kyrgyzstan](#).

Measures that support the strengthening of democracy and contribute to the preservation and establishment of peace are an essential part of the EU's external action. Following the ethnic conflicts² in 2010, the EU quickly mobilized funds to support institutional reforms and the consolidation of democracy and has since continued to address these areas. The EU has supported the drafting of a new constitution, the harmonization of the legal framework, the reform of the judiciary and the launch of a new democratization program (€13.1 million in 2016). A major program to promote the rule of law (EUR 13.5 million for 2014-2018, EUR 13 million for 2018-2021) aims to improve the quality of legislation and increase the efficiency, independence, professionalism and capacity of the judiciary. In addition, the EU has supported projects aimed at helping people affected by violence, improving human security, building trust and preventing future conflicts. Around 20 million euros have been made available to support stability and [democratization](#).

Conclusion

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the European Union (EU) has developed a new strategy that goes beyond the protection of its own borders and focuses on security and neighborhood. The Central Asian region has become a critical area for the EU when it comes to maintaining stability beyond its own borders. Since the Central Asian states declared independence, the EU has tended to keep these states in the background in the first phase. Gradually, however, the European Union has recognized the need to strengthen its relations with these states and develop a new strategy. The European Union took a strategic approach by establishing its relations with the region through the TACIS program.

The TACIS Program played an important role for the European Union in promoting democracy, human rights and market economy in the Central Asian states from 1991 to 1999. Prior to this period, dialog and cooperation between the EU and the Central Asian countries was severely limited. The launch of the TACIS Program marked a significant change in terms of dialog and cooperation.

In summary, Kyrgyzstan's efforts to integrate with the EU and the EU's interests in the areas of transport and energy should be taken into account. Cooperation to promote economic and political stability in the region and to promote regional integration measures would be beneficial for both sides. The development and progress of the relationship will depend on the commitment and willingness of both parties.



Notes

¹ Taza Koom 2040 is a "citizen-centered" initiative of the Kyrgyz Republic aimed at the transition to a digital economy. This project, announced by former President Almazbek Atambayev on April 3, 2017, is part of the national strategy for sustainable development until 2040. The main goals of the initiative are the development of human capital and the creation of an open and transparent state. It also aims to form the core of Kyrgyzstan's digital economy by improving regional [connectivity](#).

² The ethnic clashes of 2010 in southern Kyrgyzstan refer to the conflicts between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in the southern region of Kyrgyzstan after the Kyrgyz revolution of 2010.