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EU - Central Asia Rule of Law Platform Phase II

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EU - Central Asia Rule of Law Platform

Support to the Rule of Law Initiative

The Rule of Law Initiative constitutes the overarching regional framework for enhanced cooperation in the Rule of Law area, aimed at supporting reform and good governance in judicial systems. The Initiative proceeds on a joint multilateral and bilateral path, similarly to other key initiatives of EU engagement with Central Asia. The Initiative is based on a sustained EU-Central Asia policy dialogue at regional and bilateral levels, which provides the framework for strengthened cooperation implemented through EU-funded programmes both regionally and bilaterally.

The Initiative assists the countries of Central Asia in the approximation of their national judicial models, legislation and practices with international (primarily European) standards.

France and Germany, supported by the EEAS and the European Commission and working with the other EU Member States, coordinate the Initiative.

The Initiative also provides an organisational mechanism under which the support from EU Member States, the EU and other international actors can be coordinated and rationalised.

Under the auspices of the Initiative, the Rule of Law Platform regional support project acts as a coordination mechanism to facilitate policy dialogue and promote the measures needed to encourage and support legal and governance reforms in each of the Central Asian countries. The Platform focuses on Administrative Law and Administrative Procedure, Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure, and Judicial Reform, which form the “common work agenda” agreed on by representatives from the five respective countries at the ministerial conferences in Brussels (2008), Dushanbe (2010), Brussels (2012) and Astana (2014).

The Initiative is a key element of the ‘**EU-Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership**’, which identified three ‘pillars’ for enhanced cooperation: ‘Rule of Law’, ‘Education’ and ‘Environment’.

Overall Project Objective

To contribute towards the development of a stable and democratic political framework in the Central Asian partner countries, as established in the EU Strategy for Central Asia.

Purpose

To improve the capacity of Central Asian countries to contribute to the modernisation and reform of their legal and judiciary systems, by developing legislation and practices in line with internationally accepted standards and fostering dialogue with neighbouring countries.

Target Groups

Major partners in the Central Asian countries are the ministries of justice (Rule of Law Initiative Coordinators), the judiciary, other line ministries, legal training centres and universities. The final beneficiaries are the populations of Central Asia.

Expected Results

As agreed on ministerial level, the expected results are the following:

- The dialogue on rule of law issues between the European Union, the EU Member States and the Central Asian countries is reinforced and improved. It is essential that the experience, and best international standards and practices be shared between European and Central Asian actors and among the Central Asian countries themselves.
- The training of legal professions has improved and supports actively the legal and judicial reform of Central Asia.
- The network of rule of law institutions and specialists in Central Asia created during Phase I has further expanded. Closer linkages among legal specialists, think tanks and universities will further the dialogue, mutual understanding and facilitate the transfer of best practices.
- Quality legal information is disseminated throughout Central Asia, building on the results of the Rule of Law Initiative, other EU initiatives and related projects. Associating the civil society to this process will contribute to increasing public awareness about citizen’s rights and the rule of law.

Project Components

Component 1: Fora for dialogue

Conferences and technical working group and seminars will focus on priority areas. Recommendations will be provided to enhance policy coherence and assist the legal and judicial reform.

Component 2: Training

The development of training programmes and syllabi, and the delivery of training sessions for targeted legal professions on the specific topics on the political agenda will be of high importance to the improvement of the legal capacity of Central Asia.

Component 3: Communication/Networking

An interactive community of rule of law experts will support the sharing of experience, provision and dissemination of information on the Platform and other EU programmes. Outreach activities will contribute to raise awareness among specific social target groups.

Component 4: Study facility

Background analyses and studies will complement dialogue events and will serve at developing policy advice.

Timeframe: 36 months



Participating countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan