



European Union Programme for Central Asia
Central Asian Education Platform
EuropeAid/131004/C/SER/RSCR



Brief Project Description

Background

In response to the growing importance of the Central Asian region, the EU launched in 2007 the “EU Central Asian Strategy for New Partnership”, aiming at the five Central Asian (CA) states, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The EU's Central Asia Strategy focuses on a number of priorities for cooperation (security, stability, rule of law, good governance, human rights, youth and education, environment and energy, security, and water management, etc.).

High-level political and thematic dialogues in three main areas have been agreed upon. In order to prepare, organise and implement these dialogues, as well as disseminate their results, three platforms are to be set up:

- Rule of Law Platform;
- Environment and Water Platform;
- Education Platform.

The Central Asian Education Platform (CAEP) is a key pillar of the European Education Initiative for Central Asia which is to “contribute to the adaptation of education systems of Central Asian States to the needs to the globalised world”¹ as well as the necessities of the region and the societies in each particular country.

Objective

The CAEP is being established to increase cooperation between the European Union and Central Asia, and to improve regional cooperation between Central Asian countries in order to reinforce their education sector reforms. It also aims at better coordinating donors' activities in the education sector.

The DG Development Cooperation of the European Commission is managing the CAEP's implementation. It is organised in close partnership with the CA countries in the form of a structured dialogue, to ensure that topics selected and actions undertaken are in line with national and regional priorities and interests. The regional and national education sector dialogue, bilateral and multilateral, will be accompanied by an intensive communication initiative and by needs-driven studies.

Tasks

The main tasks of the Project are to develop and implement a CA education platform by:

1. Initiating, preparing, implementing and wrapping up a needs-oriented national and regional dialogue in the education sector;
2. Communicating and disseminating the results of the dialogue forums and other achievements of technical assistance in education;
3. Preparing, feeding and wrapping up the regional and national dialogue with supplementary research studies.

Instruments

- Regional cooperation opportunities in education sector reforms are discussed, prioritised and their implementation initiated in:
 - 2 national meetings per country (10 altogether with 60-70 participants each);

¹ EU Central Asian Strategy on New Partnership, Council of the EU, 31 May 2007, p.9

- 2 regional conferences at ministerial level (with 70-80 participants each);
- 2 regional thematic workshops on sector reform issues (with 70-80 participants each).
- European best practices are shared through contributions of approximately 15 high-ranking EU guest speakers on the topics chosen for dialogue forums;
- Regional cooperation and national coordination of sector reform activities supported by a communication platform consisting of webpage, mapping database, periodical and event-based print media;
- 4 – 5 Studies supporting the regional and national education reform dialogue.

Contents

The CAEP includes the whole education system and focuses on two main components:

- Higher education;
- Vocational education and training.

The EU's regional and bilateral technical assistance in the areas of youth and education is mainly funded through DCI². CAEP uses, improves and further disseminates programmes and projects that are already in place in Central Asia and have proved highly successful, for example:

- Tempus Programme;
- Erasmus Mundus Exchange Programme;
- ETF projects.

Within the CAEP, they will be focused strictly on the needs of the education systems in the CA region, and of the societies in the particular countries.

Results

The CAEP Project will lead to the following results:

1. Europe/CA education sector dialogue is improved;
2. Quality of mutual multi-country learning is improved, lessons learned, best/good practices shared;
3. Evidence-based policy approach is initiated;
4. People-to-people exchange and mutual understanding are enhanced;
5. Support to local stakeholders to better implement education reform programmes at all institutional levels is improved;
6. Capacity of policy makers through policy analysis and learning is enhanced.

The CAEP will contribute towards designing and providing education services leading to higher competitiveness and productivity in the CA countries. Education of young people in, and based on, principles of rule of law, democracy, good governance, market economy, etc., will produce multipliers of values to which the EU has committed itself and which it also wants to share with CA countries.

Sustainability

The CAEP Project will define and discuss regional and national education needs and priorities together with the relevant CA partners. Each CA partner will be asked to take the lead and initiate decisions adequately responding to the challenges identified. After the Project's finalisation, the partner should take over and make further use of the communication tools, especially websites and databases.

² DCI – development cooperation instrument