











Procedure file

Basic information	
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2017/2035(INI)
Procedure completed	
Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Kazakhstan, of the other part	
See also 2016/0166(NLE)	
Subject 6.20.03 Bilateral economic and trade agreements and relations 6.40.04.04 Relations with Caucasus countries	
Geographical area Kazakhstan	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Foreign Affairs	 JAAKONSAARI Liisa	13/12/2016
		Shadow rapporteur	
		 KUKAN Eduard	
		 KARSKI Karol	
		 PAET Urmas	
		 MESZERICS Tamás	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	 International Trade	 BORRELLI David	10/07/2017

Key events			
10/10/2017	Vote in committee		
26/10/2017	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0335/2017	Summary
11/12/2017	Debate in Parliament		
12/12/2017	Results of vote in Parliament		

12/12/2017	Decision by Parliament	T8-0485/2017	Summary
12/12/2017	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2017/2035(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
	See also 2016/0166(NLE)
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 107-p2
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/8/09415

Documentation gateway					
Committee draft report		PE608.083	13/07/2017	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE609.634	05/09/2017	EP	
Committee opinion	INTA	PE609.319	27/09/2017	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0335/2017	26/10/2017	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0485/2017	12/12/2017	EP	Summary

Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Kazakhstan, of the other part

The Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted the own-initiative report by Liisa JAAKONSAARI (S&D, FI) containing a motion for a non-legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Kazakhstan, of the other part.

Kazakhstan is the first Central Asian country to have signed an Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA) with the EU. The agreement sets out a broad spectrum of new areas of cooperation.

Members noted Kazakhstans consistent strategy of rapprochement with the EU and stressed the countrys essential contribution to the implementation of the EU-Central Asia strategy, which will undergo a substantial review in 2019.

The EPCA establishes a solid basis for the deepening of relations and Members consider this new-generation agreement to be a good model that could in future also be applied to other countries in the region.

Members reiterated their call on the Council, Commission and the VP/HR to provide for a comprehensive monitoring mechanism between Parliament and the EEAS once the EPCA fully enters into force.

In general, Kazakhstan is called upon to:

- fully implement the recommendations from the OSCE/ODIHR international observation mission to the 20 March 2016 elections according to which the country still has a considerable way to go in meeting its OSCE commitments for democratic elections;
- avoid restricting the activity of independent candidates;
- enhance governance and reform, with a truly independent judiciary free from corruption and guaranteeing the right to a fair trial and defence rights, and for greater, more efficient efforts in fighting corruption, organised crime and drug trafficking;
- step up programmes aimed at strengthening and consolidating the action of independent NGOs;
- end the judicial persecution, harassment and imprisonment of independent journalists, civil society activists, opposition political figures and other outspoken individuals in retaliation for their exercise of the freedom of expression and other fundamental freedoms;
- release of all activists and political prisoners currently in jail, as well as for the lifting of restrictions placed on the movements on others;
- refrain from restricting access to state-critical online and offline media in the country and from abroad;
- revise its Trade Union Law of 2014 and the Labour Code of 2015 to bring them in line with ILO standards;
- eradicate armed conflict through nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament;
- cooperate on countering violent extremism and fighting against terrorism;

For its part, the EU is urged to:

- engage in more active energy cooperation and to bolster its dialogue with Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries to strengthen EU energy security;
- assist Kazakhstan so as to make its economy environmentally friendly and sustainable.

Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Kazakhstan, of the other part

The European Parliament adopted by 545 votes to 68, with 39 abstentions, a non-legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Kazakhstan, of the other part.

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Members noted Kazakhstans consistent strategy of rapprochement with the EU and stressed the countrys essential contribution to the implementation of the EU-Central Asia strategy, which will undergo a substantial review in 2019.

The EPCA establishes a solid basis for the deepening of relations and Members consider this new-generation agreement to be a good model that could in future also be applied to other countries in the region.

Members reiterated their call on the Council, Commission and the VP/HR to provide for a comprehensive monitoring mechanism between Parliament and the EEAS once the EPCA fully enters into force.

Parliament called on the EU to consistently prioritise in its political dialogue with Kazakhstan, the issues of the rule of law and democracy, fundamental freedoms and human rights.

In general, Kazakhstan is called upon to:

- take proactive and concrete steps on political, democratic and social reforms, including a clear separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches, and introducing further checks and balances within the constitutional system;
- fully implement the recommendations from the OSCE/ODIHR international observation mission to the 20 March 2016 elections according to which the country still has a considerable way to go in meeting its OSCE commitments for democratic elections;
- avoid restricting the activity of independent candidates;
- enhance governance and reform, with a truly independent judiciary free from corruption and guaranteeing the right to a fair trial and defence rights, and for greater, more efficient efforts in fighting corruption, organised crime and drug trafficking;
- step up programmes aimed at strengthening and consolidating the action of independent NGOs;
- end the judicial persecution, harassment and imprisonment of independent journalists, civil society activists, opposition political figures and other outspoken individuals in retaliation for their exercise of the freedom of expression and other fundamental freedoms;
- release of all activists and political prisoners currently in jail, as well as for the lifting of restrictions placed on the movements on others;
- refrain from restricting access to state-critical online and offline media in the country and from abroad;
- revise its Trade Union Law of 2014 and the Labour Code of 2015 to bring them in line with ILO standards;
- maintain commitment and play a constructive role on the international scene; Members welcomed in this respect its call for the progressive elimination of armed conflicts by nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament;
- cooperate to fight violent extremism and terrorism.

For its part, the EU is urged to:

- engage in more active energy cooperation and to bolster its dialogue with Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries to strengthen EU energy security;
- assist Kazakhstan so as to make its economy environmentally friendly and sustainable

Parliament recalled that the EU is the countrys first trade and investment partner and that Kazakhstan is the EUs main trade partner in Central Asia. It reiterated the importance of greater diversification of its trade with the EU. It welcomed Kazakhstans accession to the WTO on 1 January 2016 and stressed that the EU could play an important role in the implementation of the programme to diversify Kazakhstans economy which is largely based on the exploitation and export of raw materials and hydrocarbons.