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**THE EUROPEAN UNION AND KAZAKHSTAN BILATERAL
RELATIONS: CRITICAL REVIEW ON UNDERLYING MOTIVES**

MASTER THESIS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BOMCA – Border Management Central Asia
CADAP – Central Asia Drugs Action Program
CIS – Commonwealth of Independent States
DCI – Development Cooperation Instrument
EBRD – European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EU – European Union
EAEU – Eurasian Economic Union
EAPC – Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EPCA – Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
EIDHR - European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
ECT – Energy Charter Treaty
FDI – Foreign Direct Investment
INOGATE - Interstate Oil and Gas Transportation to Europe
IMF – International Monetary Fund
LEU – Low Enriched Uranium
OSCE – Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OECD – Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OBOR – One Road One Belt
PACE – Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
PCA – Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
TACIS – Technical Aid to the Commonwealth of Independent States
UN – United Nation
USA – United State of America
WGI – World Governance Indicators
WTO – World Trade Organization

ABSTRACT

The master thesis focuses on bilateral relation of the EU and Kazakhstan centering their driving motives and enabling conditions. The author discusses that cooperation with the EU serves Kazakhstan as an opportunity to raise its economic modernization and to increase its political legitimacy in world politics, which perfectly fits the country's multi-vector political discourse. The work also claims that this partnership is having a place to be as the EU retains concurrent positive direction toward Kazakhstan regardless of the country is taking a slow path on meeting EU values. The author has analysed this bilateral relationship based on "pragmatic modernization" pattern. The master thesis further questions if the bilateral cooperation should reconsider its direction in the realm of today's geopolitics. In the framework of this research is the EU's role in Central Asian cooperation, Eurasian Economic Union as well as Chinese new "One Road One Belt" project also discussed. The focus of the study is on the two Partnership Agreements between the EU and Kazakhstan. The expert survey and content data analyses are conducted to complete this work.

Key words: European Union, Kazakhstan, bilateral relation, Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

ANOTĀCIJA

Maģistra darbā apskatītas ES un Kazahstānas divpusējās attiecības, uzsverot attiecību virzītājmotīvus un veicinošos apstākļus. Darba autore secina, ka sadarbība ar ES Kazahstānai ir kā iespēja paaugstināt tās ekonomisko modernizāciju un palielināt tās politisko leģitimitāti pasaules politikā, kas ļoti labi atbilst Kazahstānas daudzvirzienu politiskajam diskursam. Pētījuma rezultāti liecina, ka šī partnerība ir nozīmīga, tā kā ES saglabā vienlaicīgi pozitīvu virzienu uz Kazahstānu, neatkarīgi no tā, ka valsts turpina lēni virzīties uz ES vērtību sasniegšanu. Autore analizējusi šīs divpusējās attiecības, balstoties uz „pragmatisko modernizācijas” modeli.

Maģistra darbā analizēts, vai būtu jāpārskata divpusējo attiecību virziens mūsdienu ģeopolitikas jomā. Šī pētījuma ietvaros analizēta arī ES loma Centrālāzijas sadarbībā, Eirāzijas Ekonomiskā savienība, kā arī jaunais Ķīnas “One Road One Belt” projekts. Pētījuma uzmanības centrā ir divi partnerības līgumi starp ES un Kazahstānu. Maģistra darba rakstīšanas laikā veiktas ekspertu aptauja un statistisko datu analīze.

Atslēgas vārdi: Eiropas Savienība, Kazahstāna, divpusējās attiecības, Partnerības un sadarbības līgums, Padziļināts Partnerības un sadarbības līgums

INTRODUCTION

Since its independence in 1991, Kazakhstan's main priorities in foreign policy on multi-vector strategy was the establishment and maintenance of mutually favorable political and economic cooperation with the western world, particularly with the European Union. For Kazakhstan, the cooperation with the EU is a precondition for the country's sustainable economic development as well as its independence due to its geographical location between Russia and China, which are major world powers. The EU also had a strong dedication on assistance with Kazakhstan, the country with the large hydrocarbon reserves, and which lies in a strategically important intersection between Asia and Europe.

The **topicality** of this thesis could be explained within the state of current geopolitical changes. Following the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement which was signed in 1995 and entered into force 1999, the EU and Kazakhstan started the second-generation agreement of Enhanced partnership. The first decade of mutual cooperation was highlighted with several positive tendencies. The bilateral talk which was based from its substance on pragmatic modernization approach initially focused on trade and investment and further opened a gave a possibility to build a platform for political dialogues wherein long-term topics on democratization, justice, and human rights will be freely discussed. Further, the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement signed in December of 2015 which was the first extended agreement done by the EU with the first Central Asian state.

At the regional scale, Kazakhstan is considered as a priority country for which the EU is the main investor and trade partner. Kazakhstan's role in promoting the EU and Central Asian cooperation could be seen from its input to sign the first "Strategy for a New Partnership" in 2007. Upcoming new strategy with the region, taking into account Uzbekistan's foreign policy shift toward open political cooperation as well as China's growing influence in the region, will bring to the region a new framework to further reconsideration of region's current geopolitical state of the art.

Russia remains presiding security partner in Central Asian region. Although its economic position in the region is far less in comparison to the EU and more recently to China. Yet, the tension between the EU and Russia is holding back the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and

the EU cooperation where Kazakhstan is one of the main figures. For this reason, Kazakhstan is tentatively acting as a mediator to promote EU-EAEU-China dialogue.

Another last but not least point is current political changes happening in Kazakhstan. The transition of power which is happening in the country puts the foreign policy of Kazakhstan on hold. The country currently is awaiting the outcome to be able to evaluate if the foreign policy discourse will be similar to Nazarbayev's.

Thus, taking into consideration the current geopolitical realm this master thesis aims to explore the importance of the EU-Kazakhstan bilateral relation. For this study will to take the form of exploring the rationales behind prioritizing the certain field in each stage of cooperation throughout the two decades of cooperation. This approach is done in order to depict the legitimacy to apparent determining factors and possible gaps which vary from the actual formulation. Thus, this analysis is based on discourse to find out how it started and has that been changed over time.

The **research question 1** that the master thesis seeks to address is:

What were the driving motives in the bilateral cooperation of the EU and Kazakhstan and how have they been changing over the time? How those motives might change in future?

Further, the thesis will try to answer to the **research question 2**:

What have been the commitments of Kazakhstan to have more enhanced cooperation with the EU?

In order to answer the second research question master thesis aims to build a theoretical and content analysis of the growth or changes of the policies of Kazakhstan for better cooperation. Master thesis doesn't evaluate or measure Kazakhstan's commitment to actual internal political discourse, but rather analyze how the thin form of *Europeanization*¹ has been promoted by the government to the population. By that author refers to the promotion of European values in the country's agenda.

¹Flenfly, P., Mannin, M. (2018). European Union and its eastern Neighborhood, Europeanization and its twenty-first-century contradictions, Manchester University Press, 11

Hypothesis:

1. The relationship between Kazakhstan and the EU remains to have the economic and energy field in the main agenda. Kazakhstan is interested in growing economic ties with the EU via bilateral cooperation through EPCA and with the new regional Strategy between the EU and Central Asia.
2. Kazakhstan's internal political changes, its participation in Eurasian Economic Union, as well as participation in China's economic project called "Silk Road Economic Belt" need strengthening of good governance and rule of law. Kazakhstan is in need of better functioning institutions which will assist the country to maximize its economic initiatives and defend its interests.

Author put the following **tasks** to achieve the main goal of current master thesis:

1. To scrutinize the historical development of the bilateral relations between European Union and Kazakhstan since 1990s;
2. To identify the main research area in bilateral cooperation of two sides;
3. To investigate the theoretical framework on which the partnership is built;
4. To identify factors which assisted/hindered to the further development of relationship of interested sides;
5. To identify the role of external factors in the interaction of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the European Union;
6. To analyze the prospects of the future cooperation grounding on the results completed of comprehensive analysis.

Research methods

For this master thesis author used analysis of scientific publications and previous research results and combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. To conduct the qualitative research author used methods as documents study, comparative analysis, analysis of previously conducted researches as well as an expert survey. During the study of the documents, the author covered the agreements, official documents, publications of official meetings of the EU and Kazakhstan, addresses to the nations and internal speeches of the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The master thesis contains a content data analysis where the author focused on analyzing the country's agenda toward European values. For that, there were taken 118 samples of internal speeches (from 2004 to 2018) and 20 samples of address to the nation (from 1997 to 2018) of the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan. World Governance Indicators (WGI) was taken as a theoretical basis in order to develop the codes that better relate to European values as democracy, human rights, accountability, etc. The master thesis also covers an expert survey where were used descriptive statistics.

As for quantitative analysis, there was conducted statistical data in order to substantiate the claims raised by the author. Most of the statistical data were used in analyzing the economic and energy field of bilateral cooperation as well as comparing the trade relations of the neighboring countries of Central Asia and the Eurasian Economic Union.

Structure of the Master Thesis

Materials included in the first chapter aim to analyze the theoretical framework of the EU-Kazakhstan relations. Saying this, the author will discuss the theory of *intergovernmentalism* and analyze why EU-Kazakhstan relation needs to be discussed in the framework of the mentioned theory. Further, the author also reflects the theory of *pragmatism* which also has a great input in bilateral cooperation of two parties. Further, in master thesis are included results of author's research results on the theoretical framework of Kazakhstan's foreign policy separately, and later about EU-Kazakhstan partnership.

In chapter **two** the author analyses aspects of the historical development of the relations of the European Union and Kazakhstan. Here author depicts the main research area by highlighting the political, economic and energy sector. The other dimensions of bilateral cooperation as security, cultural cooperation is covered superficially.

The **third** chapter of the thesis reveals the main point of the work. Here the author analyse the legal frameworks of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and investigate the main motives and outcomes of the agreement. Further, the study focuses on the EPCA to find out its main agenda and motives. These two sections also include the content data analysis focusing to analyze Kazakhstan's commitments toward having more enhanced relations with the EU. The next subchapters of the work are devoted to broad picture of the current state of the art of the

bilateral relation. Here the author analyzes how the EU's strategy to Central Asia influences bilateral relation. Also, work questions on what scale the Eurasian Economic Union and Chinese new economic initiatives may affect the relations of Brussels and Nur-Sultan (former Astana).

The **fourth** chapter discusses the short forecasting to the mutual cooperation for the upcoming year and further concentrates on an expert survey conducted from university professors, Kazakhstani diplomats in Latvia as well as Diplomats, Political Journalists, Associated Professors from Kazakhstan. The last point is dedicated to assessing the whole research work and come up with a conclusion.

The work is parted into four chapters containing 81 pages. It includes 10 tables, 19 figures. The thesis also comprises 81 references and 2 Annexes. In the end, there come conclusion and recommendation.

CHAPTER I. THEORETICAL FRAMEOWRK OF EU-KAZAKHSTANI RELATIONSHIP

The topic of the actual thesis is the analysis of EU-Kazakhstani relation. In this chapter, the author will focus on identifying the theoretical framework which will help to understand the nature of the cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan. The author particularly interested in discussing the intergovernmentalism and pragmatism theories as this literature will give a conceptual picture of the master thesis. The researcher will first talk about the nature of the “intergovernmentalism”, further, discuss the pragmatism and later analyze these tendencies in EU-Kazakhstan bilateral relation.

1. Theoretical framework

Looking at the EU-Kazakhstan bilateral relation several theories could give a broad framework to understand the nature of the relationship, what influences its development and how it could further integrate. To assess these relations, the Author has chosen the following IR theories as intergovernmentalism and pragmatism.

According to the intergovernmentalism theory in European Integration process states are in a privileged position. The theory claims that “European integration is driven by the interests and actions of nation states”². It takes its root from classical IR theories as realism or neorealism of inter-state bargaining. These theories are close to intergovernmentalism; however, they don’t exactly define the EU’s characteristic.

For intense, realism sees that the only instance of power and a key player in international politics is stated which self-interested, unitary, rational and there is no other global authority which secures the order. Thus, all relations in the international arena are done by national governments.³

² Hix, S. (1999), Political system of the European Union, The European Union Series, Red Globe Press, volume 58: 15.

³ Morgenthau, H., Thompson, K. (1985). Politics among nations: the struggle for power and peace, McGraw-Hill Education, edition 6: 65.

As for neo-realism, it also defines the state as the main actor which co-exist in an anarchical system.⁴ But neo-realism understands that there might exist international cooperation which still prioritizes the role of states in its system. However, it claims that as each state is individual and each has its own difficulties, in the end, it will lead to difficulties within the organization.⁵

When we discuss European cooperation, intergovernmentalists⁶ say that the main aim of this cooperation is the protection of the interests of member states. They claim that the EU is founded on rational conduct of governments, yet it is highly institutionalized. Intergovernmentalism also accepts the fact that European cooperation may involve function transfer from the state to the union. They say that it's in the interest of nation states to hand over some functions which will help integration to work effectively.⁷ Thus, the author has stressed that the theory of intergovernmentalism focuses on positive-sum game and it delivers more positive outcome from mutual cooperation within organizations or bilateral talks.

As one of the concepts of this work the author also defines the word 'interest'. Interests of states, organizations need to be defined by economic, security as well as political priorities and not focus on norms. Researcher Richard Youngs has underlined that the foreign policy of the EU is built on mostly its strategic interests but not on its normative basis.⁸ That could also be seen from the following speech of Donald Tusk⁹, the European Council President where he criticizes that "EU is confronting reality with all kinds of utopias. A utopia of Europe without nation states, a utopia of Europe without conflicting interests and ambitions, a utopia of Europe imposing its own values on the external world".

Further, author focuses on the theory of pragmatism. Cambridge dictionary defines the pragmatism as "the quality which deals with a problem in a sensible way that suits the conditions

⁴ Rosamond, B. (2000), *Theories of European Integration*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan: 131

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ McCormick, J. (2002). *Understanding the European Union*, Palgrave Macmillan, 4, 1-252.

⁷ Cini, M. (2006), *Palgrave advanced in European Union Studies*: 90

⁸ Youngs, R. (2004), Normative dynamics and strategic interests in the EU's external identity, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 42, 415-435

⁹ Council of the European Union (2016). Speech by President Donald Tusk at the event marking the 40th anniversary of European People Party (EPP), <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/sv/press/press-releases/2016/05/30/pec-speech-epp/>. Accessed 28.04.2019

that really exist, rather than following fixed theories, ideas, or rules".¹⁰ Pragmatism provides an alternative to relativist and absolutist views of reality and it calls to fight to many interests at once.¹¹ However, it does not refer to the fact that the EU aspirations on the promotion of democracy and human rights are enshrined but simply seeks to find an alternative win-win outcome for both sides.

One of the success stories of the EU's foreign policy based on pragmatism could be seen from foreign policy built toward Central Asian countries which were more successful compared to the approach taken in the framework of European Neighborhood Policy countries. The foreign policy approach under ENP framework was based on transformation paradigm. This approach used the experience of the enlargement context and took specific instruments as enhanced monitoring and action plans with a demanding approach.¹² But this relationship did not promise any further perspectives on membership. This led to misunderstandings and countries asked for more pragmatic relation based on interests instead.

Due to the geographical as well as culturally distance from each other the EU could not act as a Normative power in the country as well as in the region. Thus, the policy toward Central Asian countries, including Kazakhstan was based on a more pragmatic approach. Also, the EU had to craft the approach carefully so that it doesn't touch Russia's political aspiration in the region.¹³ The Union built a double approach to countries of the Central Asia, one through bilateral cooperation taking into consideration each country's intention to commit on economic diversification, promotion of EU values and other directions as culture and education¹⁴ while in the regional level the EU tries to link all regional aspiration together and promote programs in education, environment as well as water and border control fields.¹⁵

¹⁰ Cambridge Dictionary (2019). <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/pragmatism>, Accessed 28.04.2019

¹¹ Sidney. H (2008, originally published in 1927). The Metaphysics of Pragmatism, Transactions of the Charles S Peirce Society, 33(3), 799-808.

¹² Lavenex, S., Schimmelfenning, F. (2006). Relations with the Wider Europe, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 44, 137-154.

¹³ Kavalski, E., Young, C.C. (2018). The European Union in Central Eurasia: still searching for strategy, *Asia Europe Journal*, 16, 51–63.

¹⁴ Council of the European Union (2007). The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership, 6.

¹⁵ Ibid, 6

The bilateral cooperation with Kazakhstan started in the late 1990s. Further, the relationship grew to sign the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement in 1995 which entered into force in 1999.

The EU's Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with all third countries in nature are similar, with slight differences, and contain the components which include:

1. provision a framework for political dialogue;
2. support efforts to consolidate democracy;
3. promotion of trade and investment based on the WTO principles;
4. creation of the conditions for the future establishment of an FTA;
5. establishment of cooperation in economic, social, financial, technological and cultural fields.¹⁶

The PCA became the start for a comprehensive relationship between the EU and Kazakhstan. The EU accepted Kazakhstan as a sovereign, independent state and started cooperation based on equal interests. This so-called "pragmatic modernization" approach from the EU side meant a mix of political engagement, aid, economic cooperation and at the same building a dialogue on democracy and human right.¹⁷

As pragmatic approach does not fully make it possible for the EU to act as a normative power in relation to Kazakhstan the thesis will discuss the Europeanization concept. This concept reflects the third countries' behavior toward European values during the interaction of the Union.¹⁸ The term in general used to describe the adoption of European ideas as human rights, democracy and other norms among the countries. Scholar classifies the types of Europeanization as "Membership Europeanization, Accession Europeanization and Neighborhood Europeanization".¹⁹ Along with that scholar Flockhart defines the other two forms of Europeanization as thick and thin. By thick form scholar means the full adoption of European

¹⁶ European Commission, Overview of FTA and other trade negotiations, http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/december/tradoc_118238.pdf. Accessed 01.05.2019

¹⁷ Gutek, G. (2014). *Philosophical, Ideological, and Theoretical Perspectives on Education*, Pearson: 76

¹⁸ Moumoutzis, K. (2011). Still Fashionable yet Useless? Addressing Problems with Research on the Europeanization of Foreign Policy, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 3, 607-629.

¹⁹ Gawrich, A., Melnykovska I., Schweickert R. (2010). Neighbourhood Europeanization through ENP: The Case of Ukraine, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 48, 1209-1235.

practices and values while thin form defines only the change in agenda of the country.²⁰ The author will use this theory in order to assess if Kazakhstani agenda has shifted toward Europeanization.

The following two sections will analyze first, Kazakhstan's further EU-Kazakhstan relation based on the above-mentioned theories and contribute to understanding the current state of the art of bilateral integration.

1.1 Kazakhstan's foreign policy direction

The main characteristic of Kazakhstan's foreign policy direction after its independence was the prioritization of economy. This strong and dedicated approach to economic modernization of the country could be seen from addresses and speeches of the president where the phrase "first economy, politics later" became as a logo. In his address to the nation in 1999, president highlights that in open economy integration with powerful economic countries and organizations is the only way of survival for the state and nation.²¹

Mentioned economic prioritization was mostly promoted through Kazakhstan's multi-vector policy in cooperation with the world. The geographical location of the country allows building divergent political and economic relations. Thus, President Nazarbayev has been defining Kazakhstan as a "Eurasian" nation which is located between East and West and serves as a "bridge" for Europe and Asia to build better international cooperation.²²

Maxat Kassen in his work proves this idea by analyzing Kazakhstan's foreign policy via the lens of its position as the largest transcontinental and landlocked country in the world. He states that Kazakhstan was able to play with its geographical location and built the policy of diversification. Researcher finds Kazakhstan's multi-vectored approach as a success story since the country could position itself as a hub between Europe and Asia. Scholar also says that the

²⁰ Flockart, T. (2010). Europeanization or EU-ization? The Transfer of European Norms across Time and Space, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 48, 787-810.

²¹ Nazarbayev, N. (1999). Poslanie Prezidenta Respubliki Kazahstan N.A. Nazarbaeva narodu Kazahstana, http://www.akorda.kz/ru/addresses/addresses_of_president/poslanie-prezidenta-respubliki-kazahstan-na-nazarbaeva-narodu-kazahstana-sentyabr-1999-g_1342416713. Accessed 04.05.2019

²² Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, (1997). <http://www.akorda.kz/en/addresses>. Accessed 11.05.2019

country's proactive approach toward regional integrational processes provides the country with a reputation of a reliable international partner.²³

Such scholars as Bolekbaeva and Selivanova²⁴ depict that Kazakhstan's distant location from the world's main economies and its landlocked geographical position pushed the country to have tight relationships with neighboring countries. Thus, from the first years of its independence, Kazakhstan aimed at joining the world community as a subject of international law. Further, the country started building a tight connection with neighboring Post-Soviet states. One of the main ones of these events were joining the UN as a full member, the agreement defining the priority areas of long-term cooperation of Kazakhstan with other CIS countries and many far-abroad countries.²⁵

Scholar Nurgaliyeva²⁶ in her work stresses that Kazakhstan's pragmatic policy toward economy prioritization could be seen in cooperation with Eurasian Economic Union. She shows that Kazakhstan throughout 1994, 2004 and 2011 Nazarbayev has been suggesting to base the group on the idea of economic pragmatism, voluntary membership and equality of its members. By that Kazakhstan aimed to keep tight cooperation with Russia and create a soft balance against it through collaboration with other post-Soviet countries.

Golam Mustafa²⁷ analyzes Kazakhstan's *Eurasianism* policy and discusses that Kazakhstan's *Eurasianism* policy aims to maintain friendly relations with all neighboring states and organizations.²⁸ To date, Kazakhstan is clearly focusing on following this agenda and not involving itself in the so-called "New Great Game" taking place in Eurasia.²⁹ Thus, Kazakhstan doesn't support and contest Russia's attempts to change the Union's agenda to a political

²³ Kassen, M. (2018). Understanding foreign policy strategies of Kazakhstan: a case study of the landlocked and transcontinental country, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 31(3-4), 314-343.

²⁴ Bolekbaeva, D., Selivanova., I. (2015). Osnovnye napravlenija vneshnej politiki Kazahstana (1991–2015 gg.) Institute of Economics of the Russian Academy of Sciences: 210.

²⁵ Tokayev, K.Z. (2010). Diplomacy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Astana: El Orda, 552: 43

²⁶ Nurgaliyeva, L. (2016). Kazakhstan's economic soft balancing policy vis-à-vis Russia: From the Eurasian Union to the Economic Cooperation with Turkey, *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 7, 92-105.

²⁷ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. (2015). <https://www.rferl.org/a/kazakhstanrussia-sanctions-us-eu-nazarbaev/26841705.html>. Accessed 05.05.2019

²⁸ Mostafa, G. (2013), The concept of 'Eurasia': Kazakhstan's Eurasian Policy and its implication, *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 4, 160-170.

²⁹ Idirissov, E. (2015). The Great Gain not Great Game: How Kazakhstan is charting its own course in the world, *The Astana Times*, <https://astanatimes.com/2015/11/the-great-gain-ot-the-great-game-how-kazakhstan-is-charting-its-own-course-in-the-world/>

dimension. At the same time, president Nazarbayev in one of his speeches criticized the US for prioritizing political issues as well as security against economic. He claimed that this situation not only hinders Russia but also cause a big issue to Kazakhstan's economy.

When we talk about China, Kazakhstan's approach is largely motivated by economic reason. The country finds China's fast-growing market as a unique opportunity to enhance mutual cooperation. Kazakhstan is also interested in increasing the investment of China in the country. One of them is "The Silk Road Economic Belt" which aimed to stimulate infrastructural development in the Eurasian continent.³⁰

Kazakhstan's foreign multi-vector policy also could be seen toward a relationship with the EU. In the following section could found a more detailed analysis.

1.2 EU-Kazakhstan relation on theory

Relationship between Kazakhstan and the EU was built on rational approach focusing on developing mutually productive and beneficial cooperation rather than utilizing the ideological impact of the EU countries.

Joint cooperation was developed by working on mutually agreed fields which where economic as well as the energy sector were in high priority. Both sides also agreed on maintaining the political talk on European values like human rights and democracy. Also, they were building communication on security, education in other fields simultaneously.

Kazakhstan's main cooperation aim with the EU could also be described as "instrumental". Country's aspirations toward the EU mainly concentrated on economic modernization and further regime legitimation, which corresponds to Kazakhstan's policy of multi-vectorism. One of the vivid examples of this discourse was the national program "Path to Europe" for years 2009-2011 which aimed to use "positive European experience" across multiple above-mentioned spheres³¹.

³⁰ Ghiasy, R., Zhou, J. (2017). The Silk Road Economic Belt. Considering the security implications and EU-China cooperation prospect, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 20.

³¹ Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2008). <http://www.akorda.kz/en>. Accessed 11.05.2019.

Also, the success story of bilateral relations is also defined by Kazakhstan's pro-European position. Its pragmatism is also defined by its openness to the world and active involvement in international organizations and conducting continuous and foreseeable policy. As for the EU's approach to Kazakhstan, it also concentrated on pragmatic instrumentality. However, this approach has been changed after the 9/11 attack due to geographical location and a potential threat coming from Afghanistan through the Central Asian region. Palatakh shares with the thoughts of Konopelko³² who proposes the EU to take more action on promoting and demanding progress in democracy and human right field in Kazakhstan. Hug³³ points out that the EU has leverage over Kazakhstan, as Nur-Sultan (formerly Astana) is interested in keeping its international image. Scholars Boostra and Tsertsvadze³⁴ say that Kazakhstan's interest in economic cooperation will force it to accept the EU's demands. If it rejects Kazakhstan will lose the main trade partner and stay cooperation only with EAEU. He explains that the EU's pragmatic approach of limiting pressure on Kazakhstan is due to Kazakhstan's location and friendship with Russian and China.

Alina Jasina in points out that this pragmatic approach is preventing successful cooperation in the fields of human rights and democracy. Scholar Jasina supposes that the EU didn't really consider geopolitical realities of the region which might be an obstacle to further increase of engagement with Central Asian states. As the main cause of this obstacle, the author depicts the misconception of aspirations. The EU's attempt to pluralism is faced with resistance from the Kazakh side as this is considered as an interference into internal affairs. However, she sums up her work with a suggestion that the EU should reconsider its policy which has been based on pragmatism.³⁵

Luca Anceschi in his work "Tyranny of Pragmatism: EU-Kazakhstani relations" stresses that pragmatism needs to be viewed as an essential glue of whole the EU-Kazakhstan relations. He says that only these pragmatic interests established by both parts could embark some essential

³² Konopelko, A. (2017). Eurasian economic union: A challenge for EU policy towards Kazakhstan. *Asia-Europe Journal*, 16, 1-17.

³³ Hug, A. (2009). Kazakhstan at a crossroads: Human rights and democracy. The Foreign Policy Centre: 1-17

³⁴ European Parliament (2016). Implementation and review of the European Union-Central Asia strategy: Recommendations for EU action,

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2016/535019/EXPO_IDA\(2016\)535019_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2016/535019/EXPO_IDA(2016)535019_EN.pdf). Accessed 07.05.2019.

³⁵ Jasina, A. (2015). EU-Kazakhstan Relations: Pragmatism after all? , Center for EU Enlargement Studies, volume 3, 1-16.

cooperation by overcoming “diametrically opposite - and virtually irreconcilable - international outlooks” which were chosen by political representatives of the EU and Kazakhstan.³⁶

Scholar Konopelko discusses the EU-Kazakhstan relations through the prism of the Eurasian Economic Union. Author highlights that Kazakhstan’s main aspirations toward EAEU are based on economic interests. Country, unlike Russia, treats this Eurasian Union as an economic project and tries to avoid cases as in Georgia and Ukraine. Thus, Kazakhstan is contesting Russia’s attempt to increase the customs duty to non-union countries. President Nazarbayev understands that it will bring to disintegration with other economies which against his multi-vector policy. As for Europe, it is an obvious fact that for Kazakhstan European Union is a key foreign partner in trade and there is a mutual interest to deepen the cooperation in the economic field.

Scholar Konopelko suggested the following approach in order to reach a new level in bilateral relation. First, the EU should take an individual approach with particular countries in Central Asia as it was in the Eastern Partnership project to South Caucasus and Eastern Europe. She also thinks that the strengthening of the partnership beyond the economic field would make Kazakhstan a leading partner in the promotion of EU values in Central Asia.³⁷

Michiel S. de Vries and Iwona Sobis³⁸ criticized Kazakhstani government in the inconsistency of its politics promising considerable changes but in fact resulting in nominal reforms, not making any changes. They also argue the international reaction to this poor change record and accuse it of being hypocritical from both parts. Authors give as an example the case with the chairmanship of “Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe” (OSCE).

Looking at Kazakhstan’s foreign policy direction it could be seen that reforms toward democracy and human rights never have been privileged by the government. As an example, authors give the speech of the former Kazakh Foreign Ministry spokesman Roman Vasilenko, who wrote: “The two principles of Kazakhstan's approach are: ‘Economics first, politics second’ and ‘Evolution, not revolution’... As we have seen, these sane and justified principles have

³⁶ Anceschi, L. (2014). Tyranny of Pragmatism: EU-Kazakhstani Relations, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 66(1), 1-24.

³⁷ Konopelko, A. (2017). Eurasian Economic Union: a challenge for EU policy towards Kazakhstan, *Asia European Journal*, 16, 1–17.

³⁸ Vries, M., Sobis, I. (2012). Reluctant Reforms: Case of Kazakhstan, *Public Organizations Review*, 14, 139–157.

ensured our country's stability and economic growth”³⁹. Notwithstanding with this fact international actors and OSCE members gave a possibility to Kazakhstan to chair the organization in 2010. Authors criticize both Kazakhstan as well as the world for following a pragmatic approach and imitating the progress in the fields where the actual changes are taking place.

Scholar Kurmanguzhin⁴⁰ has pointed out in his work that Kazakhstan’s prioritization of economy in mutual dialogue doesn’t reject its attempt for improving other dimensions of cooperation. He also depicts that the Kazakhstani government sees democratization as a long-term goal which needs to be achieved gradually. This could be supported by the address of the president in 2005 where he notes that “the experience of other countries shows that democracy is a fairly long process. Even advanced countries following liberal traditions for hundreds of years have not reached their peak. We started from scratch and this will take time to fully transform the country into a fully democratic state.”

Overall outcomes of this study show that the European Union and Kazakhstan mainly build their mutual cooperation on economic interests. The European Union’s primary interest is to use this bilateral relation with Kazakhstan because of its energy potentials and secondly because of its geolocation between Russia and China. These two countries are key actors in the current EU’s foreign policy and Kazakhstan with its pro-European position may assist the EU to build better cooperation in Eurasia. Kazakhstan is mutually interested as the EU is the country’s main trade partner. The main critiques of this bilateral relation were about democracy and human right issues. Some authors accused both parts not putting sufficient resources to strengthen democracy in the country.

³⁹ Reuters News (2010). Fanfare, criticism before Kazakhstan's OSCE summit, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-kazakhstan-osce-idUSTRE6AP1JR20101126>. Accessed 06.05.2019.

⁴⁰ Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, (2005). <http://www.akorda.kz/en/addresses>. Accessed 11.05.2019

CHPATER II. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS

The chapter is dedicated to discussing historical developments in cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan. To do so, author has analysed the historical development of EU-Kazakhstani relationship separately analyzing political, economic and energy fields.

2. Analysis of the establishment of bilateral relations

For almost three decades EU and Kazakhstan have built tight mutually beneficial connections. During this period the European Union has become Kazakhstan's main source of FDI and the largest trade partner. As per EU External, Action data EU provides more than a third of Kazakhstan's foreign trade and over half of its FDI. Accordingly, Kazakhstan has also become the EU's main partner in Central Asia, since most of EU's trade concentrated in the region is focused in Kazakhstan⁴¹.

However, this connection took time to rich its current level. Thus, before going to analyze the main fields of bilateral relations between the EU and Kazakhstan author summarize the development stages of two parties to provide more insights.

In examining EU – Kazakhstan relationship, it should be considered that there is no real history of interaction between the European Union and Kazakhstan until the disintegration of the Soviet Union in late 1991. The diplomatic relations between parties was established only after Kazakhstan declared its independence.

According to scholar Isaev⁴², there were three main stages in cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan. The first stage captures years 1992-1995. These years were marked with the official establishment of political and diplomatic relations. Further, this rather weak relationship strengthened in the second stage of a relationship, when in 1995 there was signed Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA). The agreement provided a broad framework for political

⁴¹ European Union External Action (2017). <https://eeas.europa.eu>. Accessed 27.04.2019

⁴² Isaev, K. (2007). Respublika Kazakhstan I Evropeikiy Soyuz: Osnovnie Etapy Sotrudnichestva 15 let nezavisimosti Kazakhstana, Almaty, KISI institute

dialogue, economics, encouragement of trade and investment, culture, education, and research as well as legislative norms⁴³. This period was remarkable with the strengthening of relationship in trade and investment, expansion of cooperation in oil and gas, telecommunications, logistics industries.

In 2001 there started the third stage of cooperation and during this period bilateral relations enjoyed the full impact of the PCA. The third stage of EU – Kazakhstan cooperation started in 1998. It was the time when European discussed the need of impetus to the regional strategy of the European Union in Central Asia⁴⁴. Due to this positive shift of EU's policy both regional as well as bilateral relationships matured. PCA which was initiated in the mid of 1990s came into force in 1999 and it allowed Kazakhstan to enjoy its full impact in the economy of the country. One of them was the signing of agreements which tolerated avoidance of double taxation for the business. The share of 15 EU countries in 2000 accounted for 21.7% of Kazakhstan's foreign trade (the main foreign trade partners of Kazakhstan in 2000 were Russia - 30.2%) and 23% of the volume of foreign investment in the state economy⁴⁵. Share of bilateral trade showed a dramatic increase between 2000 and 2005 (from \$3.5 billion to \$15.3 billion respectively). EU also increased the amount of technical assistance by supporting areas as ecology, customs, and border control.

EU and Kazakhstan took the relationship to another phase in 2007. This year was remarkable with the adoption of Strategy for a New Partnership with Central Asian States of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. This Partnership promised to Central Asia tight connections with the EU as the European Union was very committed to its European Neighborhood Policy towards Eastern Neighbors. In comparison to PCA, in the Strategy for a New Partnership EU showed its willingness to prioritize EU's key foreign policy objectives such as the promotion of good governance and human rights, counteraction of common security challenges, support of democracy and the rule of law in all the Central Asian

⁴³ EUR-Lex. (1999). Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs): Russia, Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=LEGISSUM:r17002&from=EN>. Accessed 30.04.2019

⁴⁴ Yun, S.M. (2007). The policy of the European Union in Central Asia in 1992–2001: author. dis. cand. of hist. sciences: 07.00.03 / Tom. state un-t Tomsk, p. 18

⁴⁵ Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Statistics (2001). Item number 4. - Access Mode: http://www.stat.gov.kz/publishing/Pages/Archives_2001.aspx

republics⁴⁶. Kazakhstan's main discourse during that time was to utilize Union's experience. One of the vivid examples of this discourse was the national program "Path to Europe" for years 2009-2011 which aimed to use "positive European experience" across multiple above-mentioned spheres⁴⁷.

In 2015 Kazakhstan and EU concluded an Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. This document marked a qualitatively new stage in bilateral relations and significantly expanded the legal framework for cooperation in many areas. It should be noted that Kazakhstan became the first country in Central Asia to sign such an agreement with the EU. The document was aimed at providing favorable conditions for trade, economic and investment cooperation, as well as expanding political dialogue and dialogue in the field of human rights⁴⁸.

Besides, since 1991 Kazakhstan receives support from the EU in various areas. This started with the launch of the Technical Aid to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS). Further, starting in 2007, Kazakhstan has been receiving development support from the EU through the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI). Between 1991 until 2014 Kazakhstan received support in areas like justice, environment, health, education, and public administration. There were held more than 350 projects with the amount to €180 million. Kazakhstan also participates in a regional program of the Central Asia DCI for 2014-2020. As part of this program, Kazakhstan takes part as the Erasmus+ program, the Border Management Central Asia (BOMCA) and Central Asia Drugs Action Program (CADAP). Kazakhstan also participates in the EU Central Asia policy dialogue Platforms in the areas of Education (EU-Central Asia Education Platform), Rule of Law (EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Platform and Environment, Climate Change and Water (EU-Central Asia Environment and Water Cooperation Platform)⁴⁹.

Following this analysis of mutual relation, the author will elaborate on bilateral relations in different fields of cooperation. For this reason, the author is going to evaluate partnership areas as politics, economics, and energy sector in order to have a deeper understanding of mutual partnership.

⁴⁶ Council of the European Union. The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership. – Access Mode: https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/st_10113_2007_init_en.pdf

⁴⁷ Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2008) <http://www.akorda.kz/en>. Accessed 11.05.2019.

⁴⁸ Official webpage of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan <http://mfa.gov.kz>. Accessed 11.05.2019.

⁴⁹ European Commission, International Cooperation and Development. <https://ec.europa.eu>, Accessed: 30.04.2019.

2.1 Political dimension of bilateral relationship

From 2007 there were two main positive shifts towards the promotion of democracy in Kazakhstan. First, the EU adopted the Strategy for a New Partnership⁵⁰ which started putting the greatest attention on non-economic issues such as support of democracy, rule of law, and human rights in all the Central Asian states. This new strategy was also complemented by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), a grant program that allocates €1,000,000 per year to Kazakhstan to support the goals listed in the strategy.⁵¹

Secondly, Kazakhstan adopted the “Road to Europe” (Put’ v Evropu) state program which contained reforms in the country’s electoral legislation, thanks to which, inter alia, the national parliament was transformed into a multi-party one⁵².

Moreover, the EU supported Kazakhstan’s presidency in the OSCE in 2010. With this Union hoped to deepen the values of democracy. However, Kazakhstan didn’t demonstrate any positive shifts. Instead, analysis of the 2010 OSCE chairmanship showed that Kazakhstan shifted the focus from democracy and human rights to other issues as security, environmental security, interethnic and interreligious relations, illegal labor migration, etc.⁵³

The scholar Kurmanguzhin states in his work that democratization for Kazakhstani government is considered as a long-term plan which needs to be achieved with time and without the active involvement of external parties⁵⁴.

However, this statement could be argued looking at Kazakhstan’s current political situation in various international rankings. One of them is the EIU Democracy Index, which shows that over the last 10 years Kazakhstan has become even more authoritarian. According to the data,

⁵⁰ Council of the European Union (2007). The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership, 10113/07

⁵¹ Delegation of the European Union to Kazakhstan (2016). Kazakhstan and the EU.

https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kazakhstan/1367/kazakhstan-and-eu_en. Accessed 06.05.2019

⁵² Kurmanguzhin, R. (2016). Kazakhstan and the EU: From cooperation strategy to the new agreement on the advanced partnership, *Comparative Politics Russia*, 1(22), p.113.

⁵³ Faizova, R. (2011). Kazakhstan between east and west: OSCE Kazakhstan chairmanship in 2010, *Vestnik RUDN, International Relations*, 1, 32–37.

⁵⁴ Kurmanguzhin, R. (2016). Kazakhstan and the EU: From cooperation strategy to the new agreement on the advanced partnership, *Comparative Politics Russia*. 1(22), p.106.

the country's score decreased from 3.45 in 2008 to 2.94 in 2018. This number puts Kazakhstan to the 144th place in the ranking and classifies the country as “authoritarian”.

Table 1. Democracy Index 2018, Eastern Europe

Country name	Overall score	Global Rank	Regional Rank	I Electoral process and pluralism	II Functioning of government	III Political participation	IV Political culture	V Civil liberties	Regime types
Ukraine	5.69	84	17	6.17	3.21	6.67	6.25	6.18	Hybrid regime
Georgia	5.5	89	18	7.83	3.57	6.11	4.38	5.59	Hybrid regime
Kyrgyz Republic	5.11	98=	19	6.58	2.93	6.67	4.38	5	Hybrid regime
Kazakhstan	2.94	144=	23=	0.5	2.14	4.44	4.38	3.24	Authoritarian
Russia	2.94	144=	23=	2.17	1.79	5	2.5	3.24	Authoritarian
Azerbaijan	2.65	149	25	0.5	2.14	3.33	3.75	3.53	Authoritarian
Uzbekistan	2.01	156	26	0.08	1.86	2.22	5	0.88	Authoritarian
Tajikistan	1.93	159=	27	0.08	0.79	1.67	6.25	0.88	Authoritarian
Turkmenistan	1.72	162	28	0	0.79	2.22	5	0.59	Authoritarian

Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit, <https://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index>. Accessed 28.04.2019

Freedom House also shows a decrease in freedom score in Kazakhstan which was worsened from 5.5/7 in 2010⁵⁵ to 6/7 in 2018⁵⁶. Press freedom score in the country also demonstrated drawback by shrinking from 78/100 in 2010⁵⁷ to 85/100 in 2017⁵⁸.

While some scholars accuse the Kazakhstani government not meeting the norms of democratization, others claim the EU's rather less intention on the promotion of democracy and human rights in the region. As a proof, researchers point out that different EU documents on Central Asia as the 2007 Strategy Program, the PCA from 1999, and the new EPCA don't really contain a call for action concerning democracy and human rights and fail to clarify conditions which links EU assistance to compliance with democratic norms⁵⁹. Thus, in the current state the one of the topical questions which arises in European-Kazakhstani relation whether this situation will take another path.

⁵⁵ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2010: Kazakhstan. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2010/kazakhstan>. Accessed 28.04.2019

⁵⁶ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2018: Kazakhstan. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/kazakhstan>. Accessed 28.04.2019

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Tsertsvadze, T., Axyonova V. (2013). Trading values with Kazakhstan. *EUCAM Policy Brief*, 32, 1-4.

2.2 Economic dimension of bilateral relationship

Current legal basis for cooperation of two parties is the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA) between Kazakhstan and the EU, as well as the EU Strategy for Central Asia. The provisions of the EPCA on trade and entrepreneurship is the main document which is contributing to the development of trade and investment relations. This is being achieved by strengthening cooperation and improving the regulatory environment for European and Kazakhstan companies in such areas as:

- trade in services
- company formation and management
- capital flow
- raw materials and energy
- state procurements
- intellectual property rights⁶⁰.

In the following paragraphs, the author will analyze the main indicators of economic development of EU-Kazakhstan economic relations by giving statistical data.

According to Table 2 and Table 3, it could be seen that the trade balance between the European Union and Kazakhstan are comparatively high. For Kazakhstan, the EU is the main trading partner. That could be seen from 2018 statistics: 51.1% of Kazakhstan exporting goods are delivered to the EU.

Table 2. Total goods: Kazakhstan's Top trading partners, 2018

⁶⁰ European Representation in the Republic of Kazakhstan. <https://eeas.europa.eu>. Accessed 01.05.2019.

Imports			Exports			Total trade		
Partner	Value Mio €	% World	Partner	Value Mio €	% World	Partner	Value Mio €	% World
World	28,331	100.0	World	50,048	100.0	World	78,380	100.0
1 Russia	10,336	36.5	1 EU 28	25,566	51.1	1 EU 28	31,432	40.1
2 EU 28	5,866	20.7	2 China	5,452	10.9	2 Russia	14,528	18.5
3 China	4,692	16.6	3 Russia	4,192	8.4	3 China	10,144	12.9
4 USA	1,304	4.6	4 Switzerland	2,483	5.0	4 South Korea	3,093	3.9
5 South Korea	1,018	3.6	5 South Korea	2,074	4.1	5 Switzerland	2,640	3.4
6 Uzbekistan	720	2.5	6 Uzbekistan	1,383	2.8	6 Uzbekistan	2,102	2.7
7 Turkey	575	2.0	7 Japan	1,133	2.3	7 USA	2,073	2.6
8 Belarus	514	1.8	8 Turkey	1,081	2.2	8 Turkey	1,656	2.1
9 Japan	427	1.5	9 Ukraine	879	1.8	9 Japan	1,559	2.0
10 Ukraine	349	1.2	10 India	813	1.6	10 Ukraine	1,228	1.6
2 EU 28	5,866	20.7	1 EU 28	25,566	51.1	1 EU 28	31,432	40.1

Source: IMF (2018), World Economic Outlook. Accessed 30.04.2019

The volume of exports from the EU to Kazakhstan in the same year amounted to 5.8 billion euro, while imports from Kazakhstan was 20.8 billion euro.

Table 3. Total goods: EU's Top trading partners, 2018

Imports			Exports			Total trade		
Partner	Value Mio €	% Extra-EU	Partner	Value Mio €	% Extra-EU	Partner	Value Mio €	% Extra-EU
World	1,980,361	100.0	World	1,955,746	100.0	World	3,936,107	100.0
1 China	394,698	19.9	1 USA	406,372	20.8	1 USA	673,642	17.1
2 USA	267,270	13.5	2 China	209,906	10.7	2 China	604,604	15.4
3 Russia	168,280	8.5	3 Switzerland	156,484	8.0	3 Switzerland	265,464	6.7
4 Switzerland	108,980	5.5	4 Russia	85,263	4.4	4 Russia	253,542	6.4
5 Norway	83,837	4.2	5 Turkey	77,270	4.0	5 Turkey	153,409	3.9
6 Turkey	76,139	3.8	6 Japan	64,754	3.3	6 Norway	137,704	3.5
7 Japan	70,471	3.6	7 Norway	53,867	2.8	7 Japan	135,225	3.4
8 South Korea	51,089	2.6	8 South Korea	49,250	2.5	8 South Korea	100,339	2.5
9 India	45,827	2.3	9 India	45,702	2.3	9 India	91,528	2.3
10 Vietnam	38,157	1.9	10 Canada	41,355	2.1	10 Canada	72,343	1.8
22 Kazakhstan	20,825	1.1	43 Kazakhstan	5,822	0.3	30 Kazakhstan	26,647	0.7

Source: Eurostat Comext - Statistical regime 4.

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/isdb_results/factsheets/country/details_kazakhstan_en.pdf. Accessed 29.04.2019

Data included in table 3 depicts that main imported products from Kazakhstan to the EU countries are dominated by energy products as minerals and fuel (89.5% in 2018). The main export share of the EU countries to Kazakhstan is machinery and transport equipment, other industrial goods and chemical products.

Table 4. European Union, Trade with Kazakhstan. Trade flows by SITC section 2018

	Import			Export		
	Value Mio €	% Total	% Extra-EU	Value Mio €	% Total	% Extra-EU
Total	20,825	100	1.1	5,822	100	0.3
Food and live animals	163	0.8	0.2	219	3.8	0.3
Beverages and tobacco	0	0	0	63	1.1	0.2
Crude materials, inedible, except fuels	156	0.8	0.2	66	1.1	0.2
Mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials	18,646	89.5	4.5	48	0.8	0
Animal and vegetable oils, fats and waxes	0	0	0	3	0.1	0.1
Chemicals and related prod, n.e.s.	304	1.5	0.2	1,051	18.1	0.3
Manufactured goods classified chiefly by material	983	4.7	0.5	621	10.7	0.3
Machinery and transport equipment	71	0.3	0	3,002	51.6	0.4
Miscellaneous manufactured articles	9	0	0	678	11.6	0.3
Commodities and transactions n.c.e.	59	0.3	0.1	21	0.4	0
Other	432	2.1	n.a	50	0.9	n.a

Source: Source Eurostat Comext - Statistical regime 4.

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/isdb_results/factsheets/country/details/kazakhstan/en.pdf. Accessed 29.04.2019

Table 4 and Figure 1 demonstrate that the EU's import from Kazakhstan is almost 4 times higher than its export to the country. We can also note the intensive trade relationship tendency between EU and Kazakhstan during 2011-2014.

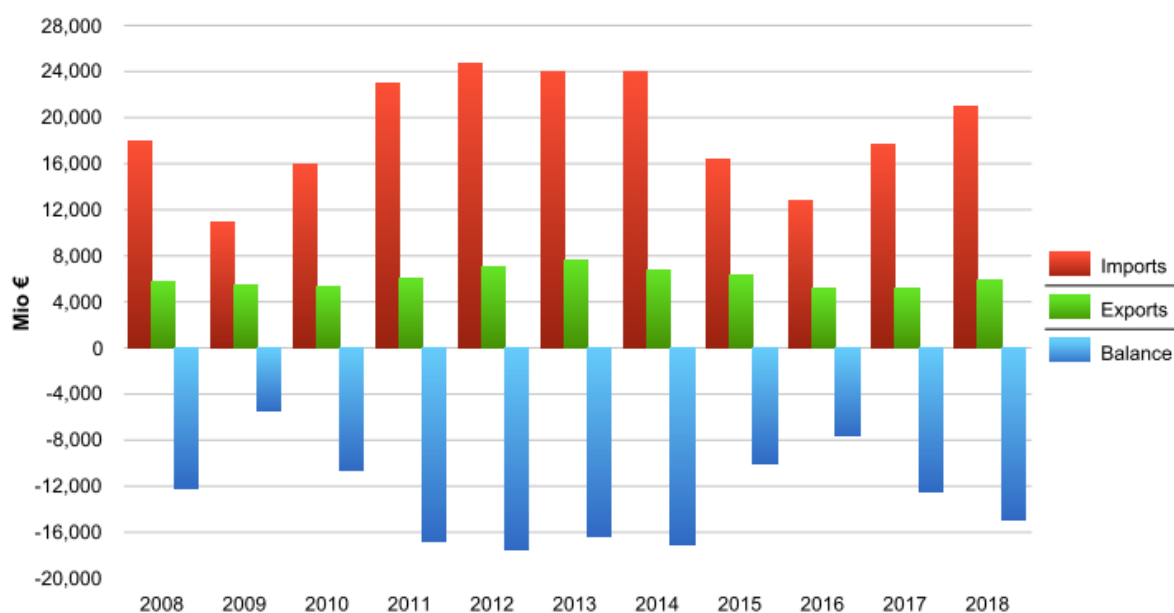


Figure 1. Total goods: EU Trade flows and balance, annual data 2008 – 2018

Source: Source Eurostat Comext - Statistical regime 4.

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/isdb_results/factsheets/country/details_kazakhstan_en.pdf. Accessed 29.04.2019

Following the next 2 years show drawback which was caused by increased tension between EU and Russian Federation. Starting from 2017 the trade relationship between parties are showing a positive trend.

Table 5. EU Merchandise trade with Kazakhstan, 2014-2018

Indicators	Unit	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Export	Billions of euros	23.9	16.2	12.8	17.6	20.8
Import	Billions of euros	6.8	6.2	5.1	5.1	5.8
Balance	Billions of euros	-17.1	-10.1	-7.7	-12.5	-15.0

Source: European Commission, Directorate-General for Trade, European Union, Trade in goods with Kazakhstan. https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/isdb_results/factsheets/country/overview_kazakhstan_en.pdf. Accessed 29.04.2019

One of the central places in the economic relations of Kazakhstan and the EU is cooperation in the financial and investment sphere. Currently, European countries occupy leading positions in the list of investment partners of Kazakhstan. For the period from 1991 to the first quarter of 2014, the inflow of direct investments from the EU countries into the economy of Kazakhstan amounted to about 92.7 billion US dollars (out of 189.7 billion dollars of all attracted).

In 2017 Hungarian company Exum bank distributed \$290.5 million in order to sponsor projects of small and medium businesses. The European Investment Bank allocated \$227.8 million to develop the national agribusiness. The EBRD financed 17 projects in the country worth \$500 million. Another important direction of bilateral cooperation lies in transit opportunities which Kazakhstan has. Under China's Belt and Road project there has been established transport routes which connect Europe and China, these are: Urumqi (China) – Altynkol (Kazakhstan) – Riga (Latvia) – Rotterdam (the Netherlands) and Kouvola (Finland) – Buslovskaya (Russia) – Altynkol (Kazakhstan) – Xian (China).⁶¹

⁶¹ The Astana Times, Cooperation with EU is source of development for Kazakhstan. <https://astanatimes.com/2018/08/cooperation-with-eu-is-source-of-development-for-kazakhstan/>. Accessed 30.04.2019

The main investors from the EU are the Netherlands, the UK, Italy, France⁶². Also, the same countries are taking the leading role in trade with Kazakhstan. This could be seen in Figure 2.

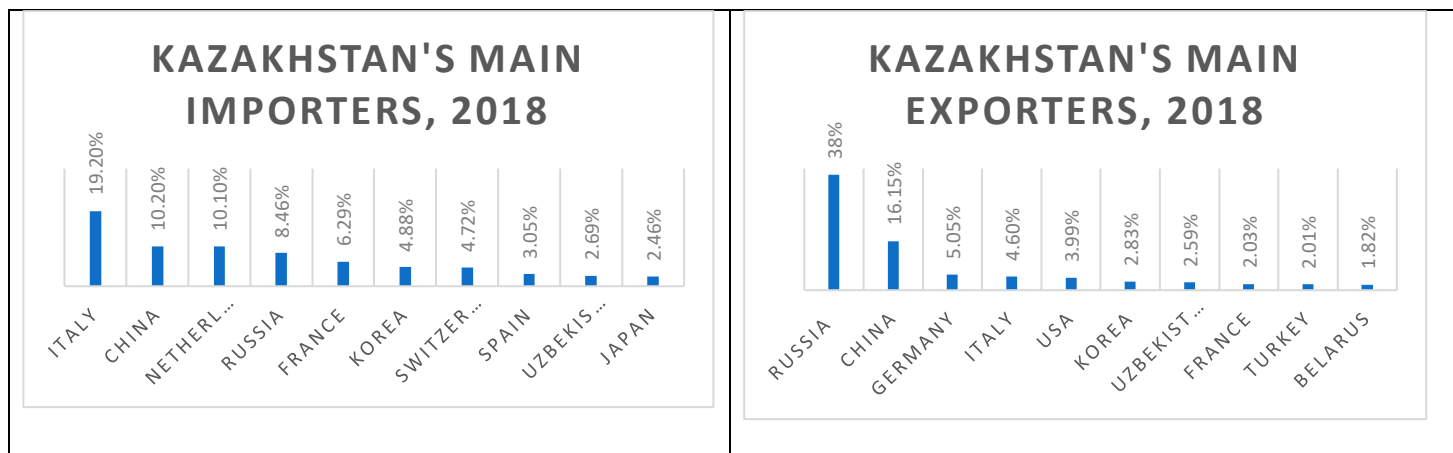


Figure 2. Kazakhstan's main trade partners, 2018

Source: Comtrade, 2018,

https://trendeconomy.com/data/h2/Kazakhstan?time_period=2018,2017,2016,2015,2014,2013,2012,2011,2010,2009,2008,2007

The case of economic and trade relations of Kazakhstan and Italy is special as Italy has been Kazakhstan's main importer during the last 4 years. The economic relationship of the sides is based on the Declaration on economic cooperation between the Italian Republic and the Republic of Kazakhstan and considers principles of equality, respect, and mutual benefit. Italy is the third trading partner of Kazakhstan. The total volume of trade between Kazakhstan and Italy reached 13 billion USD, while the Foreign direct investment in Italy reached 6 billion USD.⁶³ According to the UN database, Italy was the first importer with a total export of 19.2% and with the total import of 4.6%, which makes Italy the third biggest trading partner after Russia and China.

Figure 3 demonstrates that throughout the period of 2006-2018 Italy was mainly an importing partner.

⁶² Ministry of Industry and Infrastructural development of the RK, <http://invest.miid.gov.kz>. Accessed 30.04.2019

⁶³ Ministry of Industry and Infrastructural development of the RK, <http://invest.miid.gov.kz>. Accessed 30.04.2019

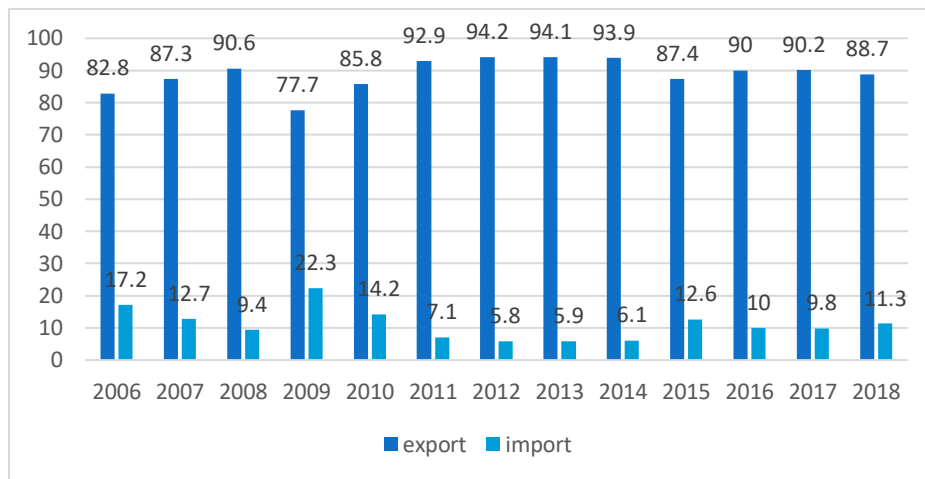


Figure 3. Kazakhstan’s export-import to Italy, 2006-2018

Source: Comtrade, 2018,

https://trendeconomy.com/data/h2/Kazakhstan?time_period=2018,2017,2016,2015,2014,2013,2012,2011,2010,2009,2008,2007

The main imported product by Italy is fuel oil, crude oil and gas condensate, zinc, gold, copper and ferrous alloys. Kazakhstan in its turn imports consumer products, machinery, and equipment. Italy is also considered as one of the largest investors of Kazakhstan.⁶⁴ As one of the important points in bilateral cooperation in trade and economic field it should be mentioned about Kazakh-Italian Intergovernmental Working Group on Industrial and Economic Cooperation and exchange (IWG).

2.3 Energy dimension of bilateral relationship

The economy of Kazakhstan relies mainly on the oil sector, as well as on the extraction of coal and uranium and other important raw materials. Over the last two decades, Kazakhstan and the EU have developed strong and mutually beneficial relations in the field of energy. EU finds Kazakhstan as a vital partner due to its well-balanced multi-vector foreign and energy policy, which has strengthened its role in the region as a ‘bridge’ between Europe and Asia, as well as beyond.

⁶⁴ Official webpage of the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Kazakhstan. <http://mfa.gov.kz/en/content-view/kazakhstan-italian-bilateral-cooperation>. Accessed 30.04.2019

In following paragraphs, the author will discuss the main agreements between the EU and Kazakhstan in the energy sector to prove the above-mentioned statement. Also, there will be analyses of main Kazakhstan's supplying energy products to the EU and their historical development. Another discussion will be about the main obstacles which might be caused between the EU and Kazakhstan.

One of the first and the most practical aspects of relations between the EU and Kazakhstan in the field of energy were addressed in the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Energy which was signed in 2006. The memorandum covered such issues as energy security and investment; increased supply security, demand predictability; construction/modernization of transport infrastructure of mutual interest, promotion of industrial cooperation, etc.⁶⁵

Further cooperation of the EU and Kazakhstan in energy sector experienced significant growth when in 2007 the “Strategy for a New Partnership with Central Asia” was introduced. It is worth mentioning about the period of the Global Financial Crisis and its effect on the EU–Kazakhstani energy trade. Overall, it could be said that the EU and Kazakhstan energy sector survived the crisis with the positive outcome. The share of Kazakhstani crude oil exports steadily increased from 5.18% (December 2007) to 6.25% (March 2011) in the EU energy market. During the same time frame, the price paid by EU customers for a barrel of Kazakhstani crude oil reached US\$103, increasing by almost 50% on the 2007 baseline⁶⁶.

Table 5 demonstrates that Kazakhstan has been EU's one of the main suppliers of crude oil and has been showing the steady growth in crude oil trade during the period of 2010-2016.

⁶⁵ Delegation of EU to Kazakhstan, (2017). Memorandum of Understanding of Co-Operation in the Field of Energy between the European Union and the Republic of Kazakhstan
https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/memorandum_of_understanding_on_co-operation_in_the_field_of_energy_between_the_european_union_and_the_republic_of_kazakhstan_en.pdf. Accessed 1.05.2019

⁶⁶ Directorate-General for Energy of the European Commission (2011). Registration of Crude Oil Imports and Deliveries in the European Union (EU27), 2007-2011 edition.
http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/oil/import_export_en.htm. Accessed 30.04.2019.

Table 6. Crude oil imports by country of origin, EU-28, 2000-2016

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Russia	119.5	137.5	156.0	171.0	186.0	189.8	192.1	189.0	181.9	176.6	181.7	177.9	176.7	168.0	150.3	153.2	166.0
Norway	114.9	107.1	101.8	104.6	106.9	97.0	87.5	83.8	85.6	79.3	71.6	63.7	58.9	58.6	64.8	63.4	64.2
Iraq	31.3	20.4	16.0	8.5	12.6	12.3	16.6	19.1	18.9	19.9	16.9	18.2	21.5	18.2	22.6	40.3	43.0
Saudi Arabia	65.1	57.5	53.1	61.6	64.5	60.7	51.2	40.2	38.9	29.9	30.8	41.1	46.2	43.3	44.2	41.7	40.5
Kazakhstan	9.7	8.6	12.8	14.5	19.1	25.6	26.0	25.9	27.3	28.0	28.7	29.2	26.8	28.6	31.7	34.6	35.3
Nigeria	22.5	25.7	18.4	23.2	14.9	18.6	20.3	15.2	22.7	23.6	21.7	31.1	42.8	40.5	45.2	44.2	29.7
Azerbaijan	3.7	4.6	5.3	5.7	5.2	7.3	12.7	16.6	18.1	21.2	22.9	25.0	20.2	23.7	21.9	27.3	23.6
Iran	35.5	31.4	25.9	34.7	35.9	34.7	35.1	34.6	30.5	24.6	29.7	29.5	6.6	0.0	0.4	0.0	15.0
Algeria	16.7	14.7	14.2	16.2	19.1	20.2	14.4	10.4	14.6	8.5	6.5	13.1	15.0	19.4	20.6	22.3	14.3
Mexico	9.8	9.3	9.7	8.7	8.8	10.6	8.7	8.6	8.8	6.0	6.8	7.2	9.1	9.3	10.9	13.0	13.5
Angola	3.9	6.7	7.3	4.3	3.4	7.1	4.3	11.4	14.8	14.1	8.5	10.9	10.6	14.7	16.5	22.0	13.2
Other countries	165.8	175.0	165.8	149.2	147.4	138.4	146.2	150.5	148.7	128.5	134.5	95.7	120.4	101.6	91.6	91.6	87.6
Total	598.4	598.5	586.3	602.2	623.7	622.2	614.9	605.2	610.6	560.0	560.3	542.7	555.0	525.8	520.7	553.7	545.9

Source: Eurostat (online data code: nrg_123a).

http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=nrg_123a&lang=en. Accessed 1.05.2019

Currently, about 70% of the total volume of exported Kazakhstani oil falls on the EU countries, which corresponds to about 8% of the total EU oil imports.

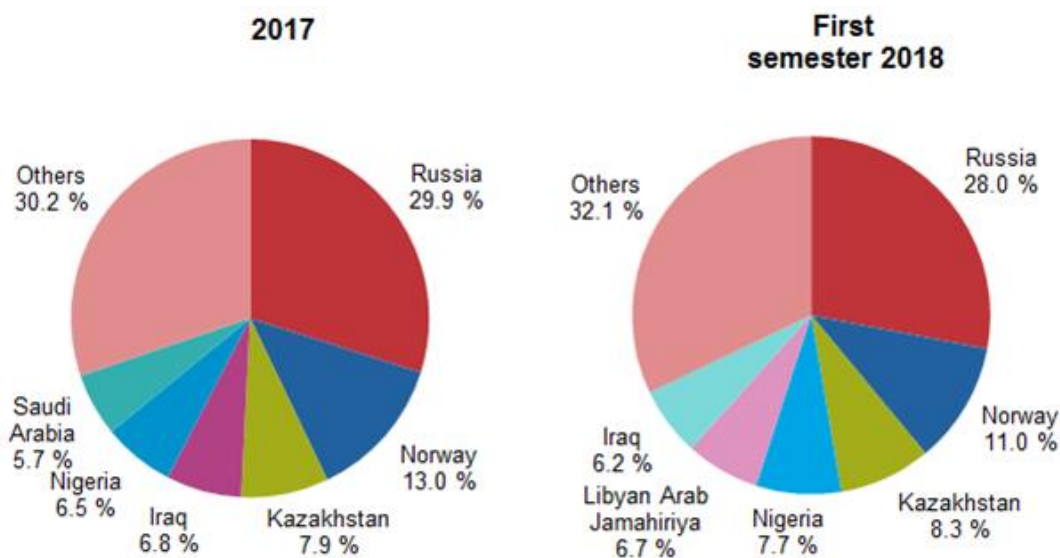


Figure 4. Extra-EU imports of petroleum oil from main trading partners, 2017 and first semester 2018, (share (%) of trade in value)

Source: Eurostat database (Comext) and Eurostat estimates. [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Extra-EU_imports_of_petroleum_oil_from_main_trading_partners,_2017_and_first_semester_2018_\(share_\(%25\)_of_trade_in_value\).png](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=File:Extra-EU_imports_of_petroleum_oil_from_main_trading_partners,_2017_and_first_semester_2018_(share_(%25)_of_trade_in_value).png). Accessed 1.05.2019

Further, Kazakhstan and the EU relationship in energy sector grew its competence by the established legal and institutional framework for bilateral cooperation in the field of energy in

the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Kazakhstan which was signed in 2015. This agreement recognizes the need for expanded, sustainable and effective cooperation in the field of energy to ensure energy security based on the principles of mutual interest, reciprocity, transparency, and predictability. The Agreement contains provisions on mutual investments, scientific and technical cooperation and exchange of information on energy efficient and environmentally sustainable technologies, joint educational programs in the energy sector, etc.⁶⁷

There are also several agreements on cooperation in the field of nuclear energy have been signed. There were considered general aspects of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes as well as aspects of nuclear safety and nuclear fusion⁶⁸.

The EU also provided high-level political support and substantial financial support for the creation of a Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) Bank in Kazakhstan, which is owned and controlled by the International Atomic Energy Agency. The Government of Kazakhstan is managing the Bank in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan, standards and IAEA Safety Guide⁶⁹.

Kazakhstan has large reserves of uranium and ranks first in the world in the production and its one of the largest suppliers for the EU nuclear industry (1/5 of imports). This could be seen from Figure 6 which demonstrates that Kazakhstan has been the 5th largest supplier of uranium to the EU market between 2008-2017.

⁶⁷ Official Journal of the European Union (2016).

https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/enhanced_partnership_and_cooperation_agreement.pdf. Accessed 1.05.2019

⁶⁸ Official Journal of the European Union L 143/28 (2005).

https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/agreement_euratom_kz_fusion.pdf. Accessed 1.05.2019

⁶⁹ International Atomic Energy Agency press center (2017). <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/pressreleases/iaea-leu-bank-reaches-milestone-with-storage-facility-inauguration-in-kazakhstan>. Accessed 1.05.2019

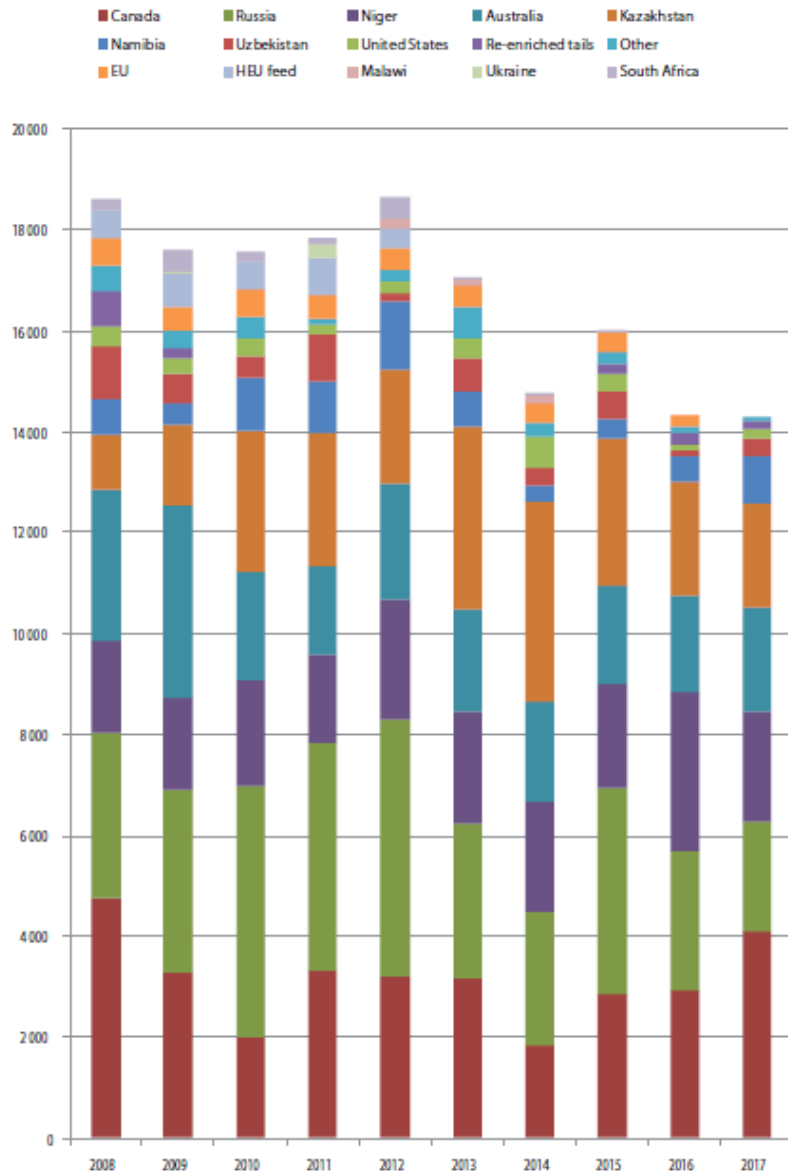


Figure 5. Purchases of natural uranium by EU utilities, by origin, 2008-2017 (tU)

Source: European Commission, EUROATOM Supply agency Annual report 2017, <http://ec.europa.eu/euratom/ar/last.pdf>. Accessed 1.05.2019

The EU and Kazakhstan are partners in the Energy Charter. Kazakhstan was the first signatory to the European Energy Charter on 17th December 1991 and after to the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) on 17th December 1994.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ International Energy Charter. <https://energycharter.org/process/european-energy-charter-1991/>. Accessed 1.05.2019



Figure 6. INOGATE Partner countries

Source: INOGATE official webpage, <http://www.inogate.org/?lang=en>. Accessed 1.05.2019

Kazakhstan was also the beneficiary of the Interstate Oil and Gas Transportation to Europe (INOGATE) - technical assistance program to create competitive energy markets, develop renewable energy sources. The country has been an INOGATE Partner Country since 1996 and has benefited from 41 of INOGATE's 69 projects⁷¹.

To sum up, it could be concluded that during the last 25 years of bilateral cooperation Kazakhstan and the EU were able to establish mutually beneficial and tight economic and political relations.

⁷¹ INOGATE official webpage, <http://www.inogate.org/?lang=en>. Accessed 1.05.2019

CHAPTER III. ANALYSIS OF BILATERAL COOPERATION AT CURRENT GEOPOLITICS

The chapter reveals the main point of the work. Here the author talks about the legal frameworks of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and highlights the main motives and outcomes of the agreement. Further, the study focuses on the EPCA to find out its main agenda and motives. Also, the author covers the other regional aspects that directly influence the construction of the EU-Kazakhstan cooperation.

3.1 Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

PCA which was initiated in the mid of 1990s came into force in 1999. It should be mentioned that the EU signed PCAs with almost all the post-Soviet states. The aim was to build a political dialogue and through that strengthen states' democracies and economies.

The PCA became the basis to adopt the following additional memorandums that assist to comprehensive cooperation, these are Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of energy (2006)⁷² and Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of transport (2009)⁷³. This agreement was concluded for the primary period of 10 years and planned to renew year-by-year.

In Article 1⁷⁴ of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Kazakhstan, both parts distinguished the main objectives as:

- ensuring an appropriate framework for the political dialogue between the Parties allowing the development of political relations,
- promoting trade and investment and harmonious economic relations between the Parties and so to foster their sustainable economic development,

⁷² Delegation of EU to Kazakhstan, (2017). Memorandum of Understanding of Co-Operation in the Field of Energy between the European Union and the Republic of Kazakhstan
https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/memorandum_of_understanding_on_co-operation_in_the_field_of_energy_between_the_european_union_and_the_republic_of_kazakhstan_en.pdf. Accessed 1.05.2019

⁷³ Council of the European Union (2009). 11th Cooperation Council EU - Kazakhstan Joint statement, 16175/09 (Presse 338): 2

⁷⁴ *Official Journal of the European Communities* (1999). L 196/3, http://www.euroskop.cz/gallery/5/1706-021a6d5f_9381_46aa_a93c_dfa4d169b386.pdf. Accessed 06.05.2019

- providing a basis for legislative, economic, social, financial, civil, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation,
- supporting Kazakh efforts to consolidate its democracy and to develop its economy and to complete the transition into a market economy.

On the first point of conducting a political dialogue within the framework of *Article 5*⁷⁵ and *Article 7*⁷⁶, there was created an institutional scope which includes the Cooperation Council, the Cooperation Committee and the Parliamentary cooperation committee. These are the meetings held at ministerial level (members of the Council of the European Union and European from EU side and members of the Government of Kazakhstan⁷⁷) and at parliamentary level (members of EU Parliament and Kazakhstani Parliament⁷⁸) in order to discuss issues occurring on bilateral/international level, provide recommendations, exchange views on cooperation, etc.

The political partnership of current agreement was based on the principles of International Law of United Nations Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, Charter of Paris for a New Europe, as well as OSCE.⁷⁹ Here, it could be distinguished two priority areas in this field of partnership, these are cooperation related to peace and security and boosting European values as democracy, human rights and rule of law. The first area of political dialogue could be evaluated as successful due to the following reasons. During the period of bilateral cooperation, Kazakhstan became the member of North Atlantic Cooperation Council (current Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council) and participant of the Partnership for Peace program.⁸⁰ Also, Kazakhstan was a chair of the OSCE in 2010.⁸¹

However, the promotion of the EU values was not as successful. Kazakhstan made some progress in ratification of International human conventions, signing a memorandum of the execution of the death penalty. In 2004 there was also an agreement to cooperate with Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.⁸² Further, in 2008 under EU's "Strategy for a

⁷⁵ *Official Journal of the European Communities* (1999), L 196/6, http://www.euroskop.cz/gallery/5/1706-021a6d5f_9381_46aa_a93c_dfa4d169b386.pdf. Accessed 12.05.2019

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, Art 7: L 196/6

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, Art 76,77, L 196/22

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, Art 81, 88: L 196/22

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, Art 2: L 196/5

⁸⁰ Official webpage of NATO, <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/51288.htm>. Accessed 12.05.2019

⁸¹ Official webpage of OSCE, <https://www.osce.org/cio/51810>. Accessed 12.05.2019

⁸² Official webpage of PACE, <https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-DocDetails-EN.asp?FileID=24238&lang=EN>, Accessed 12.05.2019

New Partnership with Central Asia” there was launched “Rule of Initiative” and “Dialogue on Human Right” for Central Asian states.⁸³ Yet, there were still concerns on human right issues, restrictions on political oppositions, media, civil society organizations.

In light of these facts, the author conducted a content data analysis to evaluate how Kazakhstan started adjusting its political agenda on promoting the above-mentioned values. For that, the author analyzed the addresses to the nation and internal speeches of the president Nazarbayev. Taking into account Kazakhstan’s political background and its authoritarian governance structure the author understands the impossibility of analyzing the actual changes in the political discourse of the country. Thus, the work put afford on analysis of documents following Flockhart’s *thin Europeanization* theory. Thus, the author aims to examine the level of Europeanization of agendas of the country. To this analysis, there were used 32 internal speeches (the ones which were in the president’s official webpage are only from 2004. The author used the Russian version of speeches) and 12 addresses to the nation during the time frame of 1999-2010.

During the analysis author created codes (list of words) which relate to European values. The selection of codes was based on World Governance Indicators (WGI) and it identifies five main dimensions of good governance as voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence/terrorism, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption. Based on these dimensions the author selected the following 13 codes: accountability, democracy, transparency, security, stability, tolerance, modernization, success, productivity, law, rule of law, judicial, and corruption.

Table 7. Content analysis on thin Europeanization of Kazakhstan’s agenda, 1999-2010

	Voice and accountability	Political stability and absence of violence/terrorism	Government effectiveness	Rule of law	Control of corruption
1999	Accountability: 0 Democracy: 2 Transparency: 0	Security: 12 Stability: 4 Tolerance: 0	Modernization: 0 Success: 0 Productivity: 0	Law: 0 Rule of law: 0 Judicial: 1	Corruption: 0
2000	Accountability: 0 Democracy: 18 Transparency: 1	Security: 28 Stability: 6 Tolerance: 0	Modernization: 4 Success: 0 Productivity: 1	Law: 19 Rule of law: 1 Judicial: 1	Corruption: 1
2001	Accountability: 0 Democracy: 5 Transparency: 4	Security: 9 Stability: 4 Tolerance: 0	Modernization: 2 Success: 5 Productivity: 0	Law: 22 Rule of law: 0 Judicial: 0	Corruption: 1
2002	Accountability: 0 Democracy: 4	Security: 2 Stability: 4	Modernization: 0 Success: 0	Law: 19 Rule of law: 0	Corruption: 1

⁸³ European Communities (2009). The European Union and Central Asia: The New Partnership in action, 11

	Transparency: 1	Tolerance 0	Productivity: 0	Judicial: 0	
2003	Accountability: 0 Democracy: 4 Transparency: 1	Security:2 Stability 4 Tolerance 0	Modernization: 0 Success: 0 Productivity: 1	Law: 19 Rule of law: 0 Judicial: 0	Corruption: 1
2004+ Internal speeches	Accountability: 0 Democracy: 4 Transparency: 3	Security: 3 Stability: 7 Tolerance 0	Modernization: 5 Success: 6 Productivity 0	Law 17 Rule of law: 0 Judicial: 2	Corruption: 1
2005	Accountability: 0 Democracy: 27 Transparency: 4	Security: 2 Stability 8 Tolerance: 2	Modernization 7 Success 12 Productivity: 0	Law 28 Rule of law: 1 Judicial: 2	Corruption: 4
2006	Accountability: 0 Democracy: 11 Transparency: 9	Security: 31 Stability: 21 Tolerance: 1	Modernization: 13 Success: 20 Productivity: 1	Law: 36 Rule of law: 0 Judicial: 0	Corruption: 4
2007	Accountability: 4 Democracy: 27 Transparency: 11	Security: 23 Stability: 20 Tolerance: 6	Modernization: 19 Success: 11 Productivity: 1	Law: 69 Rule of law: 0 Judicial 5	Corruption: 20
2008	Accountability: 2 Democracy: 2 Transparency: 5	Security: 15 Stability: 15 Tolerance: 0	Modernization: 6 Success: 1 Productivity: 0	Law: 42 Rule of law: 0 Judicial: 0	Corruption: 69
2009	Accountability: 0 Democracy: 0 Transparency: 0	Security: 5 Stability: 2 Tolerance: 1	Modernization: 4 Success: 2 Productivity 0	Law: 5 Rule of law: 0 Judicial: 0	Corruption: 1
2010	Accountability: 1 Democracy: 4 Transparency: 1	Security: 22 Stability: 17 Tolerance: 17	Modernization 8 Success: 28 Productivity: 0	Law: 48 Rule of law: 0 Judicial: 4	Corruption: 1

Source: Own data gathered from the official website of the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The internal speeches of the president were available only from the year 2004. It could be seen from the data that during 1999-2003 the table does not show any progress in the use of codes. The author takes into account that only address to the nation was used for that period of time. Yet, significant changes on the usage of coded words were in the category “Political stability and absence of violence/terrorism” and “Rule of Law”. That could be explained with the transition period of the country after its independence. The category “Voice and Accountability” showed increase starting from the year 2005 which is the closest code to European values. The rest didn’t demonstrate any significant changes in the given time frame. Thus, this period of the cooperation demonstrates that the direction of European values was a priority in the country’s agenda.

Under the economic partnership, there can be distinguished next main provisions while examining the PCA. First, trade relations of the EU and Kazakhstan on WTO principles as

principles of non-discrimination, most-favored-nation treatment.⁸⁴ Moreover, there were set a free transit of goods, no quantitative restriction on goods, regulation on the market price.

Thus, Kazakhstan and the EU were able to build an intensive trade relation. Figure 8 demonstrates clearly that during the period of the PCA bilateral trade rose dramatically. In 2012 the EU was the leading partner in trade of the country with a share of 48,1 % from total trade.

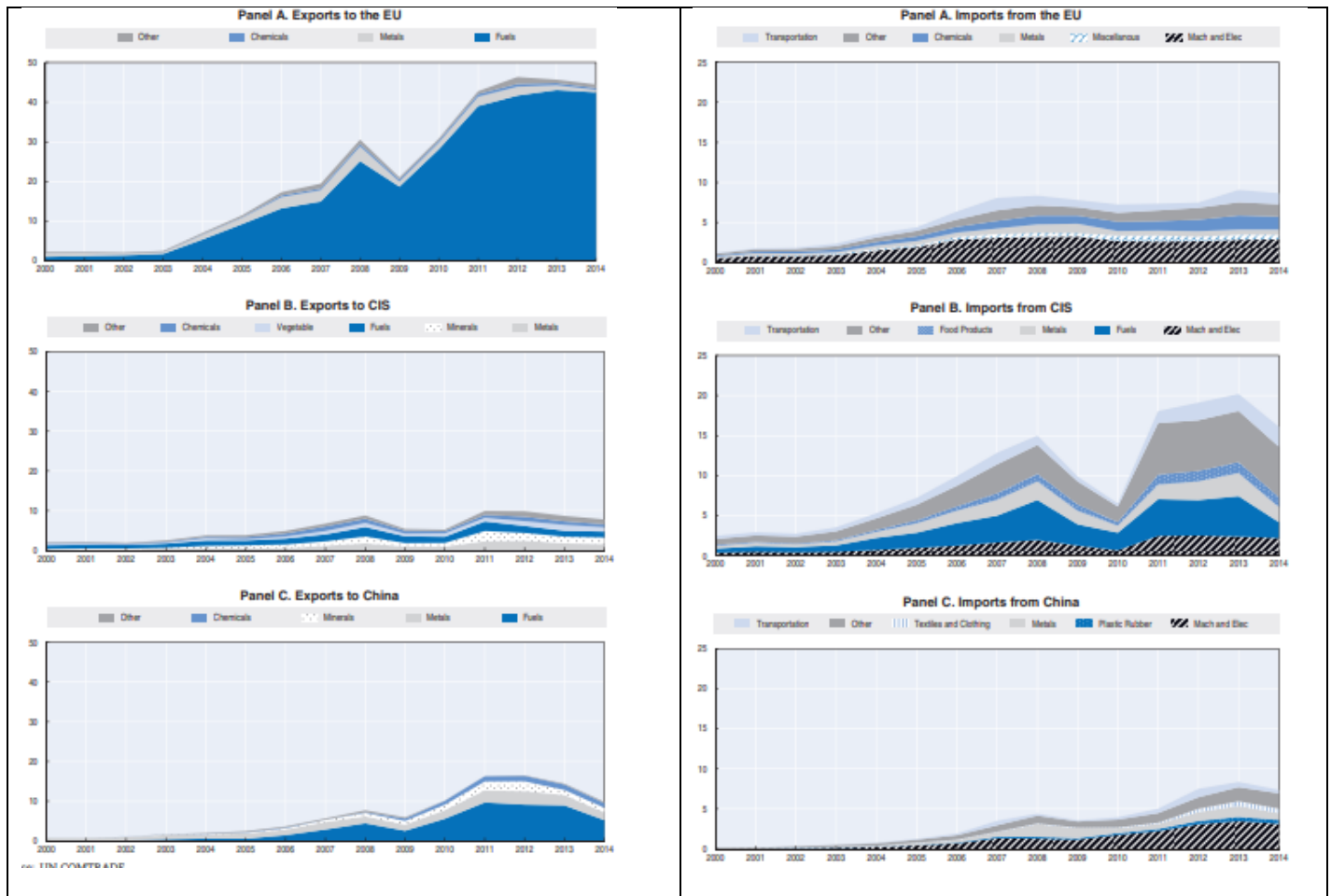


Figure 7. Kazakhstan’s export-import structure with main trading partners, 2000 – 2014

Source: OECD Investment Policy Review: Kazakhstan, 2017 (referred to UN COMTRADE)

Another point is the creation of favorable investment client as better conditions for investment protection, condition for accessible information about investment opportunities,

⁸⁴ *Official Journal of the European Communities*, (1999): L 196/6, http://www.euroskop.cz/gallery/5/1706-021a6d5f_9381_46aa_a93c_dfa4d169b386.pdf. Accessed 12.05.2019

avoidance on double taxation between members states of the EU and Kazakhstan.⁸⁵ This condition provided the opportunity to both parties, and during 2000-2011 the EU was the largest investor with the amount of \$68billion of gross investment.

In an energy sector, PCA proclaimed that both parties expected to commit to the European Energy Charter and cooperate based on market economy principles.⁸⁶ Kazakhstan signed the European Energy Charter in 1995.

Additionally, adoption of the Strategy for a New Partnership with Central Asia provided states with the support on accession for WTO, removal of trade barriers within the region, creation of better access for regional products to the European market, finding of oil and gas resources, renovation of new energy infrastructure.

Overall, the PCA⁸⁷ showed a positive tendency of bilateral cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan. Yet, with the changing political and economic environment need reconsidered Cooperation Agreement for further development of bilateral talk.

3.2 Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

Several reasons made Kazakhstan require substantial adjustments in the bilateral agreement with the EU. One of them was the implementation of the “Path to Europe”⁸⁸ program in 2009–2011 which clearly showed Kazakhstan’s intention to follow the European direction of development. Another point is the country’s desire to join the WTO. The third point was the formation of the Customs, and then the Eurasian Economic Union. Also, Kazakhstan was interested in making the cooperation more substantive in the field of regional and international security, economy, trade, social and cultural interaction.

Thus, as a result, in 2011 talks about the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement started in Brussels. Further, the European Parliament approved the resolution in 2012 to start

⁸⁵ *Official Journal of the European Communities*, (1999), Article 46: L 196/15, http://www.euroskop.cz/gallery/5/1706-021a6d5f_9381_46aa_a93c_dfa4d169b386.pdf. Accessed 12.05.2019

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* Art 53: L 196/16

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ The Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, official website, <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/negotiations-and-agreements/>

official negotiations. It should be noted that in the recommendations provided human rights have gained weight. There were various recommendations where 20 points of them were on human rights issues while 21 were on economic cooperation.⁸⁹ On December 21, 2015, The European Union and the Republic of Kazakhstan signed the new Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. The current stage of the EPCA is that some provisions are applied, however, it is still under ratification to be able to go into force. The document covers 29 key areas as energy, transport, environment and climate change, economic and financial cooperation, employment and social affairs, democracy and human right, education, and research as well as culture.⁹⁰ As Kazakhstan is a member of the Eurasian Economic Union EPCA cannot be considered as a free trade agreement.

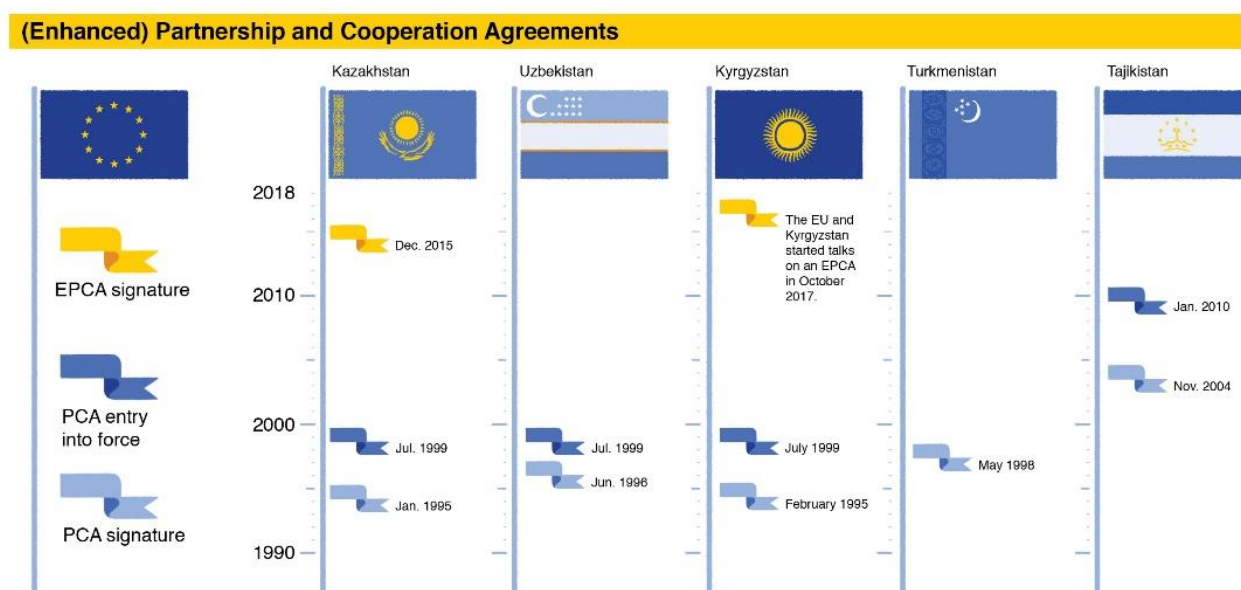


Figure 8. Map EU-Central Asian bilateral cooperation, 1990-2018

Source: <https://voicesoncentralasia.org/three-reasons-why-the-eu-matters-to-central-asia/>

The promotion of democracy and human rights still was a topical question for bilateral relations. However, the EU understood that democratization process for Kazakhstan will be a long-term approach. Kazakhstan is interested in meeting the EU's expectation of democracy due

⁸⁹ Official webpage of Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Right and Rule of Law, [https://bureau.kz/en/monitoring/international_reports_on_kazakhstan/eu-kazakhstan_enhanced_partnership_and_cooperation_agreement_\(resolution\)/](https://bureau.kz/en/monitoring/international_reports_on_kazakhstan/eu-kazakhstan_enhanced_partnership_and_cooperation_agreement_(resolution)/), Accessed 13.05.2019

⁹⁰ *Official Journal of the European Union* (2016): L 29/3, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2016:029:FULL&from=en>. Accessed 12.05.2019

to the following reasons. The decline in oil price in the 2009 crisis had a huge impact on Kazakhstan's economy. Previous high prices on oil attracted many investors notwithstanding institution development of the country. After the crisis, the oil industry became not very attractive, thus in order to keep attracting other investors country had to offer a better business environment with better regulations and the rule of law. Another reason was the tension between the EU and Russia happened after Ukraine crisis.

All these situations made it clear to Kazakhstan that it needs to make changes in government approach on governance and regulations to offer European investors better cooperation platform. Thus, Kazakhstan made several commitments in order to drastically improve accountability of government structures and rule of law. One of them was the launch of the program Five institutional reforms⁹¹ in 2015 with the following five main objectives as:

- Creation of a modern and professional civil service
- Ensuring the rule of law
- Industrialization and economic growth
- A unified nation for the future
- Transparency and accountability of the state

Here it could be seen that aims of reforms toward judicial development were more comprehensive as only one of the objectives was dedicated to economic modernization and second to identity building.

Later, the president explained the further implementation of the five instructional reforms through 100 Concrete Steps program. Many of the points directly refer to European norms. For instance, here is Step 49⁹² where it states:

*...“Replacing old and obsolete construction standards and rules used since the Soviet period with the **eurocodes system**...”*

This shift toward Europeanization direction Kazakhstan started since 2009 when there was started the first talk on reconsidering the PCA. Thus, the author continued (the first part is in section 2.1) a content analysis of the addresses to the nation and speeches of the president

⁹¹ Official webpage of the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan, <http://www.akorda.kz/ru/events/>

⁹² Ibid.

Nazarbayev to see how Kazakhstan was committed to following the European values as democracy and human rights. As in previous analysis in section 2.1 author followed the structure of Flockhart on *thin Europeanization* (no more than a change of rhetoric and agenda about European values). In order to analyze Kazakhstan’s agenda on the way to Europeanization.

For the analysis on this conception, the author took the period of 2011-2016 as the first talks on Enhanced Partnership started in 2011. Further, the author collected the data from internal speeches and addresses to the nation of the president. Available data for the given time frame is following: 104 internal speeches and 5 addresses to the nations from the official webpage of the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan. As the focus of this analysis was to see how European values were being delivered to the citizens' author focused only on internal speeches. There were used the same 13 codes as in section 2.1. based on World Governance Indicators. As the focus of this given research is European values author did exclude analysis of other fields as economy, energy, etc.

Table 8. Content analysis on thin Europeanization of Kazakhstan’s agenda, 2011-2015

	Voice and accountability	Political stability and absence of violence/terrorism	Government effectiveness	Rule of law	Control of corruption
2011	Accountability: 2 Democracy: 13 Transparency: 1	Security: 20 Stability 35 Tolerance 10	Modernization: 33 Success: 34 Productivity: 2	Law: 66 Rule of law: 0 Judicial: 1	Corruption: 15
2012	Accountability: 1 Democracy: 11 Transparency: 5	Security: 72 Stability: 47 Tolerance: 17	Modernization: 82 Success: 51 Productivity: 3	Law: 81 Rule of law: 2 Judicial: 4	Corruption: 17
2013	Accountability: 0 Democracy: 10 Transparency: 6	Security: 11 Stability: 17 Tolerance: 14	Modernization: 20 Success: 11 Productivity: 2	Law: 71 Rule of law: 0 Judicial: 3	Corruption: 6
2014	Accountability: 2 Democracy: 2 Transparency: 7	Security: 16 Stability: 27 Tolerance: 8	Modernization: 10 Success: 11 Productivity: 2	Law: 46 Rule of law: 2 Judicial: 3	Corruption: 10
2015	Accountability: 8 Democracy: 20 Transparency: 8	Security: 15 Stability: 35 Tolerance: 16	Modernization: 19 Success: 21 Productivity: 0	Law: 27 Rule of law: 5 Judicial: 2	Corruption: 9
2016	Accountability: 6 Democracy: 1 Transparency: 6	Security: 33 Stability: 15 Tolerance: 1	Modernization: 13 Success: 5 Productivity: 2	Law: 29 Rule of law: 11 Judicial: 6	Corruption: 5

Source: Own data gathered from the official website of the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Overall, findings of the current content analysis support the author's initial statement that during 2011-2016 Kazakhstan's commitment towards European values was significant. The content analysis findings show that three closest to the Europeanization directions had a positive increase in the government's agenda. Moreover, the above-mentioned reforms in the institutional sector also justify the author's initial hypothesis about Europeanization of the country's agenda is supported.

Also, findings show that one of the highest priorities over the time from the 1990s for the country were sectors as "political stability and absence of violence" and "government effectiveness". There several economic, as well as political reasons for Kazakhstan make to keep these sectors in priority.

3.3 EU-Kazakhstan cooperation in the regional framework

Several geopolitical changes need to be considered while analyzing the current state of art of the EU-Kazakhstan bilateral cooperation. Since independence, Kazakhstan's foreign policy took a direction of Multi-vector policy meaning deepening its cooperation with close and far neighbors. Thus, the country became part of many regional and international organizations.

3.3.1 Eurasian Economic Union

The Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) was established in 2015 as the final step of the three-stage process of a Customs Union in 2010 and a Single Economic Space in 2012. The EAEU consists of 3 founding members – Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia – and regular members as Armenia and Kyrgyzstan. Yet, the Union defines itself as "an open project" which aims to build its cooperation beyond post-Soviet space⁹³.

Table 9. Basic information and data on the member states, (as of December 2017)

⁹³ Putin, V (2011) "New integration project for Eurasia - the future that is born today". Izvestia. <http://izvestia.ru/news/502761>. Accessed 2.05.2019

	Territory (square km)	Population		GDP		GDP per capita
		Million	% of EEU	USD billion	% of EEU	USD
Russia	17,075,400	143.4	80%	1,268	87%	8,838
Kazakhstan	2,724,900	17.9	10%	128	9%	7,138
Belarus	207,600	9.5	5%	48	3%	5,092
Armenia	29,743	3.0	2%	11	1%	3,596
Kyrgyzstan	199,900	6.1	3%	6	0%	956

Source: World Bank Report (2018)

The organization structure of the Union is similar to the EU. Unlike previous regional initiatives, the EAEU is a potentially powerful supranational body that is authorized to make decisions in agreed areas of trade policy that are above national interests. There is the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council, the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council, the supranational body as Eurasian Economic Commission, the Court of the Eurasian Economic Union, Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) and the Eurasian Stabilization and Development Fund (ESDF).

The EEU provides freedom of movement of goods, services, capital and labor in sectors determined within the Union. The Treaty also determines three main areas on harmonization of macroeconomic policies as a state debt limit of 50% of GDP, strict liabilities on budget deficits with a threshold of 3% of GDP and inflation not to exceed 5%.

The initial creation of the Customs Union coincided with the boom of intraregional trade, which in 2011 grew by 32.1% and reached \$62 billion, and in 2012 it grew by another 7.5%. Since then, however, only steady downward trends have been observed, with a fall of 5.5% in 2013, 11% in 2014 and 25.8% in 2015. By 2015, the volume of mutual trade between members of the EAEU fell to \$45 billion. Yet, the increase of the internal trade demonstrated in the next 3 years increasing the amount to 9.2% in 2018.⁹⁴

However, the author argues about the future of the organization taking into account the different motives of member countries by being a member in it. In order to further integrate

⁹⁴ Official statistics of EEU, www.eurasiancommission.org.
http://www.eurasiancommission.org/ru/act/integr_i_makroec/dep_stat/tradestat/analytics/Documents/2018/Analytics_I_201812.pdf. Accessed 12.04.2019

member states' goal and vision about the future of the Union need to be resembling or not confronting each other. Looking at the Union it could obviously be seen that the main motives of the member states quite oppose the vision of the other. It could be seen from the national discourse of Russia that the state's genuine motives are rather geopolitical than economic integration. The scholar Cadier gives a strong argument. He states that even if the very idea of the Eurasian Integration started in 1994, Russia was not an active supporter of this initiative until the EU launched the Eastern Partnership in 2009. This pushed the Russian government to confront and keep its "zone of influence".⁹⁵ This approach of putting geopolitics ahead development is explained by Moscow's attempt to widen the Union not considering newcomers' economic potentials and their territorial connection to the region.

Kazakhstan is a country with a multi-vector foreign policy from the very establishment of Eurasian Union Kazakhstan perceived the direction of pure economic pragmatism. The country was the advocate of voluntary participation, the absence of ideology, equality and a consensus among all member countries⁹⁶. These economic motives of Kazakhstan could be seen during its chairmanship of the Union in 2016 when the annual program was announced as "The year for deepening economic relations of the Union with third countries and key integration unions."⁹⁷ Kazakhstan also aims to promote its *Eurasianism* idea of becoming a bridge between Europe and Asia. Its pragmatic approach oriented on the modernization of the domestic economy and building a positive geopolitical relationship with the West very much differ from Russia. This attempt of a multi-vector policy of pursuing international recognition rather than building a tight connection with particular countries. This could be seen from the fact that Kazakhstan didn't recognize annexation of Crimea.⁹⁸

Even if Belarus has some geopolitical points in its belongings either Russian allied country or European state it still puts the economy in priority rather than geopolitics. Rationales of Armenia

⁹⁵ Cadier, D. (2014). Eastern Partnership vs Eurasian Union? The EU-Russia Competition in the Shared Neighborhood and the Ukraine Crisis. *Global Policy* 5(1), 76–85.

⁹⁶ Mostafa, G. (2013). The concept of 'Eurasia': Kazakhstan's Eurasian policy and its implications. *Journal of Eurasian Studies*,4,164–165.

⁹⁷ The Astana Times (2016). <https://astanatimes.com/2016/05/is-kazakhstan-able-to-bring-together-eaeu-and-eu/>. Accessed 10.05.2019

⁹⁸ Engvall, J., Cornell, S.E. (2015). Asserting Statehood: Kazakhstan's Role in International Organizations, *Washington: Central Asia - Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program*, 67-72

and Kyrgyzstan joining the Eurasian Union could be explained only by their pure pragmatic interest of geopolitics.

Looking at these diverging motives of being a part of the organization can bring to the next points. The different interests of countries as political (In case of Russia, Armenia, and Kyrgyzstan) and economic (Belarus and Kazakhstan) may cause one or another to reconsider its membership in the Union should it not meet its expectations in the long run. Also, the absence of having political criteria prior to accession as in the EU will end up having democratic and authoritarian countries which will in future effect in building the mutual identity within the Union. The last point is that the Eurasian Union itself is mostly consolidated around the Russian Federation. The rest member states are not integrating within themselves but aiming to be closer to Russia. In fact, having a leading country in any organization is a normal practice. However, the unification of all power in one state causes danger as it will lead to dependence of Union's goal to be determined by leading state's will.

The relationship of the EEU and EU are far complicated. There are several reasons which hold closer ties of two sides. First is a disagreement on the status of the Crimea and the conflict situation in Ukraine's east side. Another causing fact is that Russia is objecting the decisions of Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia on political association and economic integration with the EU. Also, members of the EEU, except Russia, would like to maintain and expand bilateral relations with the EU, instead of negotiating through the EEU, although some argue that it would be useful to combine both channels. Finally, there are expected difficulties to harmonize the standards of the EEU and the EU.

Despite all these problems, ideas of dialogue with the EAEU are circulating in Europe, not least because the new organization is likely to play an ever-increasing role in the alignment of forces in the region and potentially in trade. Former president of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev⁹⁹ has been an active initiator of the tighter connection of the integration of two organizations. Thus, in one of his speeches he assured that close economic collaboration of the EU and EEU will give a great opportunity to develop the Greater Eurasia.

⁹⁹ The Astana Times (2016). <https://astanatimes.com/2016/06/president-nazarbayev-calls-for-further-integration-and-international-cooperation/>. Accessed 13.04.2019

3.3.2 EU - Central Asia

The EU started building the path to regional cooperation in Central Asia with signing the separate bilateral cooperation after five post-Soviet countries obtained their independence and delivering its assistance to the region under the Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) program which aimed for “encouraging democratization, strengthening the rule of law and the transition to a market economy in the New Independent States (NIS).”¹⁰⁰ Although the priority areas of cooperation were visible since 2007, when the EU developed a political strategy for cooperation, making bilateral relations in various fields closer. It is important to note that from time to time both the EU and Central Asian countries clearly showed their willingness to work on EU strategies and supported mutual cooperation.¹⁰¹

The course of the EU on building moderate bilateral economic partnership started with the program “The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership” which was intended for the 2007-2013 period. A strategy aimed to actively cooperate with the states of Central Asia in achieving these goals, as well as promoting peace and prosperity in neighboring countries. The reason for interest in the region was that Central Asia, as noted earlier, was far from the notion of democracy, human rights, and the frequent collision of the region with new and growing security problems, low level of education, lack of rule of law. But there is also a reverse side of the coin, which in this case shows the benefits of cooperation that can be extracted from the energy sectors, environmental management and problems related to water resources management, as well as trade and economic relations, which is seen as key sectors in which The EU and Central Asia have developed close cooperation. To sum up, these main areas were highlighted in the agreement:

The 2007–2013 strategy played a large role in improving the EU-region attitude and was able to cover all the important and lame sectors and not only. The main component of the strategy was directions that can be classed into several major ones. The very first task to mark is security. The agenda also includes a significant place in the fight against organized crime, like the drug

¹⁰⁰ European Commission, TACIS programme (1991). http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-92-54_en.htm

¹⁰¹ Kurmanguzhin, R. (2016). Kazakhstan and the EU: From cooperation strategy to the new agreement on the advanced partnership, *Comparative Politics Russia*, 1(22), 106.

trade. Another security topic relates to a possible conflict between countries in the region regarding shared water resources.¹⁰²

Along with the security field, the Partnership agreement covered the sectors as promotion of democratic values, environmental protection, increasing the human rights and good governance, economic and trade investment was also in priority.¹⁰³ All these directions of the strategy can be understood as a guide for establishing regional integration, contributing to the countries of the region separately on the basis of bilateral relations because regional integration is possible only in the case of a stable economic, political and socio-cultural development of the participating countries.

In 2015 during the Latvian Council Presidency, there were started the analysis of the Partnership agreement, however, the draft of the new version was not done.¹⁰⁴ However, thanks to the Latvian government the Central Asian region were put to the political agenda of the EU.

Currently, the new program is under review. The main point that the EU is taking into account during it revision is in order to increase the efficiency of the EU's policy in the region it is suggested to reduce the priorities and make a stronger focus in individual countries. The European Union and EEAS identified the following priorities in Table 9 in each country.¹⁰⁵

Table 10. Overview of the Priority Areas in the Indicative Programs

Regional	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan
Sustainable development Education Regional security and development Reforms (institutions, administration, law business)	Rural development Education rule of law	Rural development Education health	education	rural development

Source: own data from Multiannual Indicative Programme

¹⁰² *Official Journal of the European Communities* (1999). Article 46: L 196/15

¹⁰³ Council of the European Union (2007). The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership, 10113/07

¹⁰⁴ Apokins, I. (2015, Reviewing the EU Strategy for Central Asia: Results and Future Prospects, *L'Europe en formation*, 375, 10-19.

¹⁰⁵ European External Action Service/European Commission, Multiannual Indicative Programme. Regional Central Asia 2014-2020, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/8269/regional-central-asia-multiannual-indicative-programme_ru. Accessed 13.04.2019

This approach of assigning key priorities to each country and then to the region as a whole also raised a question among the delegates to the EEAS. The reason is that this implementation would require the time to deeper reconsideration. But the union is planning to connect the Strategy to a multiannual financial framework of the Union to 2021-2027 to which both sides need to agree on the final deal by the end of 2020.

The New Strategy is also important due to the geopolitical contest which is happening in the Central Asian region. One of them is China's "One Belt One Road" project which started in 2013 and aims to develop trade routes to Europe through all five Central Asian countries. Another case is building a relationship with the region where Russia's influence is getting even stronger. This is particularly related to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan's case where they are part of EEU. Last but not least is the liberalization policy represented by Uzbekistan brings to the life the hope for Central Asian regional cooperation. This new vector of development in the country gives hope.

3.3.3 One Belt One Road

The project "One Belt One Road" which was first presented in 2013 in Kazakhstan aims to expand Euro-Asian connection by deepening economic ties and cooperation. This initiative is focused on the development of sea and land transport corridors which will connect China with Europe. The overland corridor is planned to go through Central Asian countries.

China is increasingly taking a leading position in the foreign policy of Central Asian countries. The annual trade turnover between the PRC and the five Central Asian states in 25 years of cooperation has grown from \$500 million to an impressive \$30 billion a year.¹⁰⁶ The highest rates were recorded in 2013, reaching \$50 billion. Today, China imports not only gas and oil from Central Asia but also increased imports of metals. Turkmen gas is mainly directed to China via the Turkmenistan-China gas pipeline as an opportunity to repay the loans received. Chinese campaigns have access to a quarter of Kazakhstan's oil through a pipeline of 20 million tons per year, and Kazakhstan exports uranium and covers 75% of China's demand. China has significantly stepped up its activities in the states of Central Asia in recent years as an investor,

¹⁰⁶ International Information Agency KAZINFORM, https://www.inform.kz/ru/za-25-let-tovarooborot-kitaya-so-stranami-central-noy-azii-vyros-v-60-raz_a2987699. Accessed 14.05.2019

creditor and trading partner of all five republics, pushing Russia to the second, and even third positions.

However, there are both optimistic and pessimistic views about the prospects for the implementation of this Initiative. In the optimistic side, this initiative is able to provide not only China but also the states along the route with new opportunities, thanks to infrastructure logistics and trade opportunities. This aspect of the initiative is the most attractive for the states of Central Asia, in conditions of outdated Soviet infrastructure and the search for alternative trade routes. Regimes of states in the region, using Chinese investment, can legitimize their management, providing new opportunities to their citizens.

The pessimistic side of it connected to the difficult geographic conditions for creating infrastructure communications; issues of sinophobia, especially in the states of Central Asia; geopolitical contradictions between Russia, China, India, and the United States. The Central Asian region in its geographical proximity to China can become a zone of active cooperation or a zone of hard competition not only between themselves, but also external actors determining the nature and dynamics of intraregional processes. The proposed Initiative is not just a model of economic integration. Today, this is the most ambitious idea that, if successfully implemented, can change the geopolitical and geo-economic rules of the game not only in the Eurasian and Pacific perimeter, but also implies a revision of the current world order.

The role of Kazakhstan in this project could be identified easily as president of China for the first time announced it in Kazakhstan while his visit. Three out five directions of this project pass involve Kazakhstan. Even though this initiative was welcomed by the government and businessmen local people showed their awareness on this deal. An example could be a protest of 2016 the proposal of the government to give permission to foreigners own the rural land.¹⁰⁷ This meant that companies from China would benefit from this law. However, the plan was suspended.

Thus, China's current strategy lies in "winning hearts and minds" of local people via soft power. For now, there have been opened several Confucius Institutes, centers for teaching the

¹⁰⁷ Kazakhstanskaya Pravda (2016). <https://www.kazpravda.kz/articles/eaes/zemelnaya-reforma--vo-bлаго-naroda1>. Accessed 13.05.2019

Chinese language, many scholarship programs also have been dedicated to students from Kazakhstan.

So, along with opportunities, the “Belt and Road” contains the risks that the Kazakhstani side needs to manage. Effective implementation of the project requires Kazakhstani politicians and experts to develop a strategy to popularize the “Belt and Road” initiative for Kazakhstani society. On the one hand, it will allow overcoming phobias and fears about the Chinese presence in the country. The strategy should include the task of widely familiarizing the population with the project itself. This is important for the suppression of various rumors and guesses, as well as possible anti-Chinese moods.

CHAPTER IV. ASSESSING THE EU-KAZAKHSTAN RELATION

4.1 Forecasting the bilateral cooperation

2019 is going to be an important year in the EU-Kazakhstan bilateral relation. There are several reasons to assume that. First, are the upcoming elections in the EU between 23rd-26th of May and the presidential election in Kazakhstan on 9th June 2019.

19 March 2019 president Nazarbayev announced about his resignation from the post of the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan. After 30 years of the rule of the country, this announcement of the former president was unexpected for everybody. Yet, Nazarbayev mentioned that he is not leaving the politics completely. The transit of power started a long time ago before with several main steps. One of them was the official title of the “First President” in 2000, further in 2010 title “Leader of the Nation”, and in 2017 “Elbasy” which in the Kazakh language mean “Head of the nation”. The former president keeps its ruling position in Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan as well as the Security Council, the position which privileges even the status of the de-facto president.¹⁰⁸

Nazarbayev’s multi-vector policy and successful use of the country’s natural resources made Kazakhstan attractive and reliable partner to not only to neighboring states but also to the world. Country’s direction on maintaining the balance and stability in the country, keeping an ethnic equilibrium and respect to the diversity assured foreign partners on the country’s predictable and balanced policy.

The current successor of Nazarbayev Kassym Jomart Tokayev is a long-lasting ally of the former president and current government system who keeps the same internal and foreign policy direction. However, the upcoming election on June 9th will decide whether he will stay in power and keep the same direction or there might be the other candidates which might bring changes to the current state of the art to the EU-Kazakhstani relation. The reason for such concern is rising protests among the population, young generation, civil activists as well as opposition.

Another reason is the expected full functioning of the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between sides. Signed in 2015 EPCA is currently under ratification stage. Currently,

¹⁰⁸ Project Syndicate, <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/kazakhstan-nazarbayev-resignation-impact-by-nargis-kassenova-2019-03/russian>. Accessed 14.05.2019

Italy is the only EU member state who needs to ratify the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. In the recent meetings of two sides on March 27-28, 2019 in Rome the Italian side assured that now Italian lawmakers are about to ratify the EPCA.¹⁰⁹ Once the agreement is signed the EPCA will be fully in power to proceed.

The sector which has a large potential for boosting the EU-Kazakhstan cooperation is transport and logistics. Kazakhstan with its ambition to be a “land bridge” between Europe and Asia already started to obtain more advanced technologies. The EU is currently assisting Kazakhstan in the diversification of its economy. Thus, another prospective area for cooperation would be an agricultural sector. There is also huge support provided for small and medium-sized business in Kazakhstan. This is to say that the future focus of the EPCA would capture mostly the private sector as well.

The third remarkable thing in the EU-Kazakhstan relations this year is the extension of the partnership between the EU and Central Asia. On 15 May 2019 the new “The EU and Central Asia: New Opportunities for a Stronger Partnership” was out. The new strategy will be focused on three main and interconnected priorities:

- Partnering for Resilience which aims to strengthen the capacity of the Central Asian states to overcome internal and external shocks;
- Partnering for Prosperity which focuses on the modernization of the economy and investing in youth
- Working Better Together which aims to assist Central Asia to build a regional cooperation.¹¹⁰

One of the most important points for all Central Asian states is the last point. In fact, the first summit of the Central Asian countries took place March 15th, 2018 in Kazakhstan. This positive shift in the region started due to Uzbekistan’s foreign policy changes toward a more friendly neighborhood and integration. Also, the EU plans to conclude the talks on similar EPCA

¹⁰⁹ Official webpage of the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Kazakhstan. <http://mfa.gov.kz/en/content-view/kazakhstan-italian-bilateral-cooperation>. Accessed 30.04.2019

¹¹⁰ European Commission (2019), Joint Communication to the Parliament and The Council, The EU and Central Asia: New Opportunities for a Stronger Partnership, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/joint_communication_-_the_eu_and_central_asia_-_new_opportunities_for_a_stronger_partnership.pdf. Accessed 16.05.2019

agreement with Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic. That would give an opportunity to boost the region even more.

From the analysis of the other regional powers and organizations, it could be concluded that the EU may not be able to be in major dominance in the political scene in the region and particularly in Kazakhstan as strong as Russia. Relations with Russia will still be one of the main directions of the Kazakhstani government due to objective reasons. First, in comparison to other post-Soviet states, Kazakhstan shares the longest border with the Russian Federation. Another reason is that both of them are part of several regional organizations, as well as Economic zone. Yet, their interests in each organization differ, they are allies. Also, one-third of the Kazakhstani population are ethnic Russians and the Russian language is one of the official languages in the country. However, there are some concerns on the Russian side about the bilateral cooperation between Russia and Kazakhstan in the post-Nazarbayev period. The former president was the initiator of the Eurasian Economic Union and the engine of what it is now called integration in the post-Soviet space. In the current situation, there is no equal politician who could keep the same path. Thus, Russian senator Igor Morozov in his interview to “Ria Novosti” said that neighboring countries must calculate the consequences of Nazarbayev’s resignation for the future development of both the EEU, the CSTO, and the SCO.¹¹¹

It is an obvious direction to Kazakhstan to have a tight economic bound with Europe. Thus, if there is an interest from the EU side this trajectory will definitely be a key direction for the country. Yet, in a political framework, it is doubtful to claim that EU’s aspiration will extend to Kazakhstan and Central Asian states. For the upcoming future, the EU’s priority will be Western Balkans and possibly the case of Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. The case of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Belarus will be the later priority to the Union.

4.2 Expert Survey Results

The author conducted the current survey (Annex B) with 12 experts from various fields dealing with International Relations. Due to confidentiality, only the occupation of experts will be mentioned during the analysis. The survey was filled by the following experts: Diplomat of

¹¹¹ Ria Novosti, The departure of Nazarbayev could have a negative impact on the development of the EEU, said the senator, <https://ria.ru/20190319/1551933920.html>. Accessed 14.05.2019

Kazakhstan in Latvia, Diplomat at the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, Political Journalist at Azattyq (Radio Liberty Kazakhstan), 2 Associate Professors at Kazakh National University, 2 Associated professors at Suleyman Demirel University, 3 Lecturers of the Faculty of IR at Eurasian National University, 2 Associated Professors at Karagandy State University.

The expert survey consists of 9 questions related to the evaluation of the current state of the EU-Kazakhstan relation and forecast future direction. There several types of questions as multiple choice questions, scale-based questions, as well as optional last question to leave the open question in regard to the topic. Results of the survey are analyzed in Excel software, and the further author provides explanations to each answer.

To the first question on **“At what level is the current cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan in each sector?”** respondents gave the following answers:

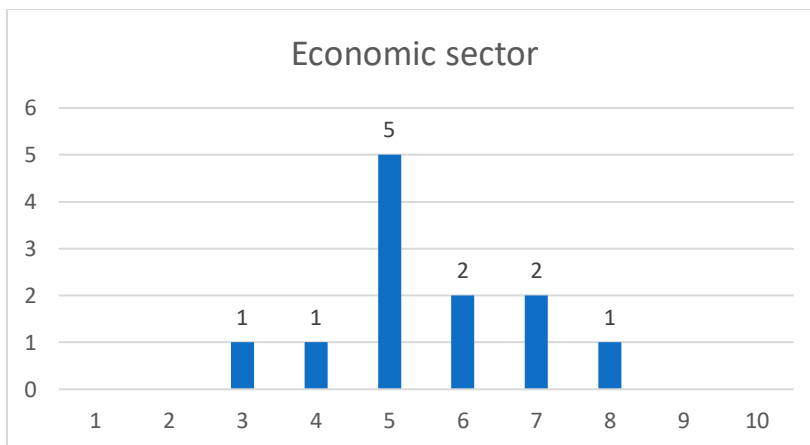


Figure 9. Distribution of expert evaluations on statement “At what level is the current cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan in economic sector?”

*Source: Expert survey results conducted by author in 2019;
Evaluation scale 1-10, where 1-the lowest level; 10 – the highest level*

As the figure 9 demonstrates 5 (41.7%) out of 12 respondents evaluated that current economic cooperation of Kazakhstan and the EU is in moderate level, while 3 respondents evaluate it for “6”. 2 out respondents evaluated that economic relations are higher than average “7”.

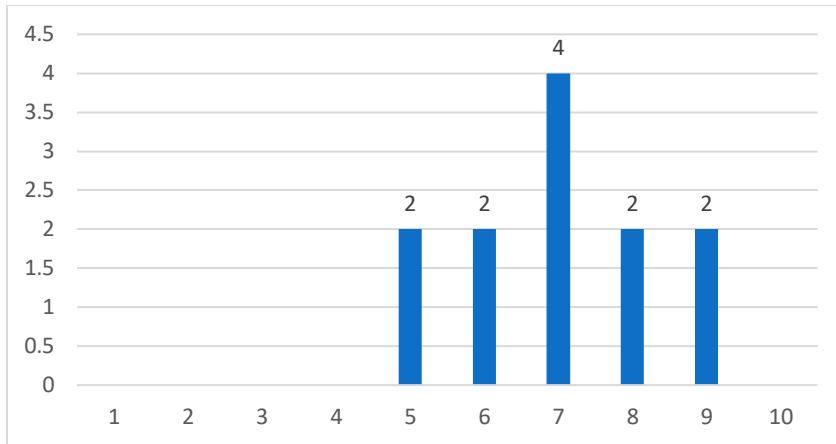


Figure 10. Distribution of expert evaluations on statement “At what level is the current cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan in energy sector?”

*Source: Expert survey results conducted by author in 2019;
Evaluation scale 1-10, where 1-the lowest level; 10 – the highest level*

Figure 10 demonstrates that all respondents evaluate cooperation in energy sector average and above. According to the figure, it could be seen that 4 out of 12 respondents (33,3%) evaluated that the energy sector between sides at scale 7.

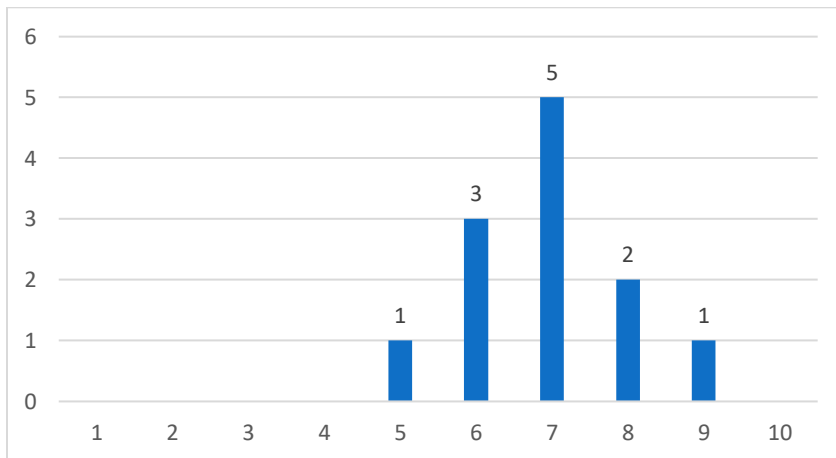


Figure 11. Distribution of expert evaluations on statement “At what level is the current cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan in cultural sector (education, cultural programs)?”

*Source: Expert survey results conducted by author in 2019;
Evaluation scale 1-10, where 1-the lowest level; 10 – the highest level*

The similar tendency could be seen in Figure 11, where respondents evaluated the cooperation in the cultural field higher than average. While 5 answerers evaluated it with 7th scale, 3 found it at 6th scale.

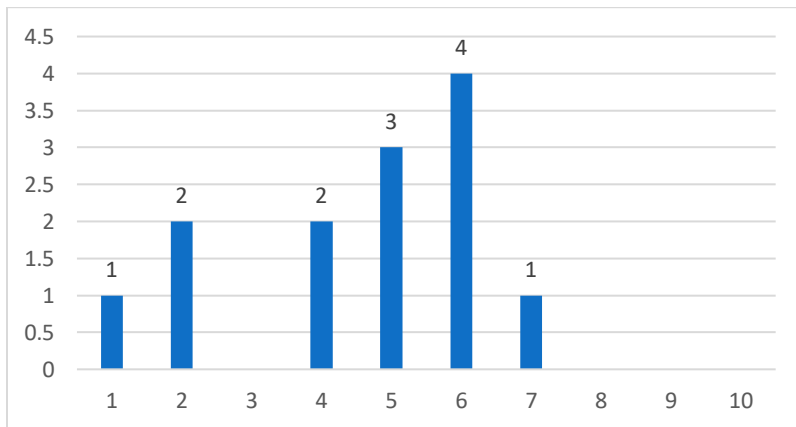


Figure 12. Distribution of expert evaluations on statement “At what level is the current cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan in political sector (democracy promotion, human right development)?”

*Source: Expert survey results conducted by author in 2019;
Evaluation scale 1-10, where 1-the lowest level; 10 – the highest level*

Evaluation of the political sector shows quite different opinions. In general, it could be seen that respondents evaluate it as average, with 3 votes at scale 5 and 4 votes at scale 6. However, 2 respondents find the bilateral cooperation in the political field at a very low level.

To sum up, the above-mentioned sector master thesis asked the question of how experts evaluate current cooperation between sides. The answers were as follow:

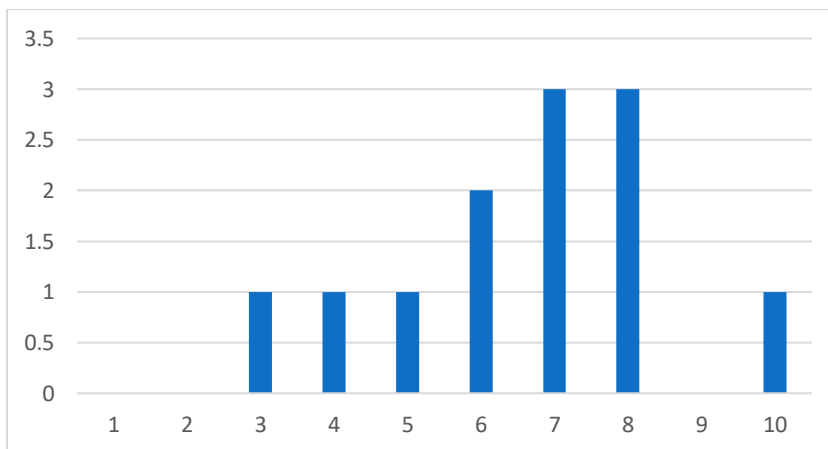


Figure 13. Distribution of expert evaluations on statement “How do you evaluate current EU-Kazakhstan bilateral relation?”

*Source: Expert survey results conducted by author in 2019;
Evaluation scale 1-10, where 1-the lowest level; 10 – the highest level*

General evaluation of the current bilateral cooperation shows that experts evaluated that Kazakhstan and the EU have dissent relations. In average the relationship level ranks at scale 6.5. This shows that above-mentioned concerns in the political level, as well as high evaluation of the energy sector in total, give us that current state of the art of the EU-Kazakhstan cooperation is above average.

Surprisingly enough the opinions of the experts have been divided equally on the question whether EU should consider Kazakhstan as part of the Eurasian bloc (EAEU) or as part of Central Asian bloc while building its political agenda. This could be explained with the dominant segment of a strong Eurasianism idea as well as the recent positive shifts happening among Central Asian states. Demonstrated in Figure 14.

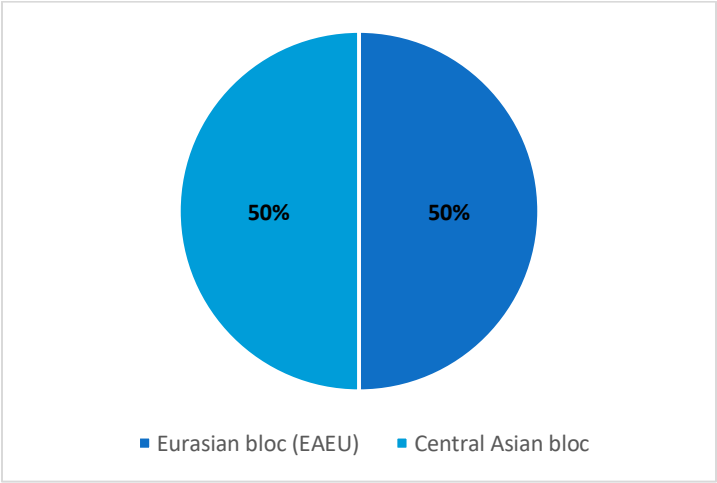


Figure 14. As a part of which regional bloc the EU should consider Kazakhstan and build its political agenda?

Source: Expert survey results conducted by author in 2019

The following questions author dedicated to the analysis of the future cooperation of to parties taking into account internal, regional as well as global changes that might affect bilateral relations of Kazakhstan and the EU directly or partially.

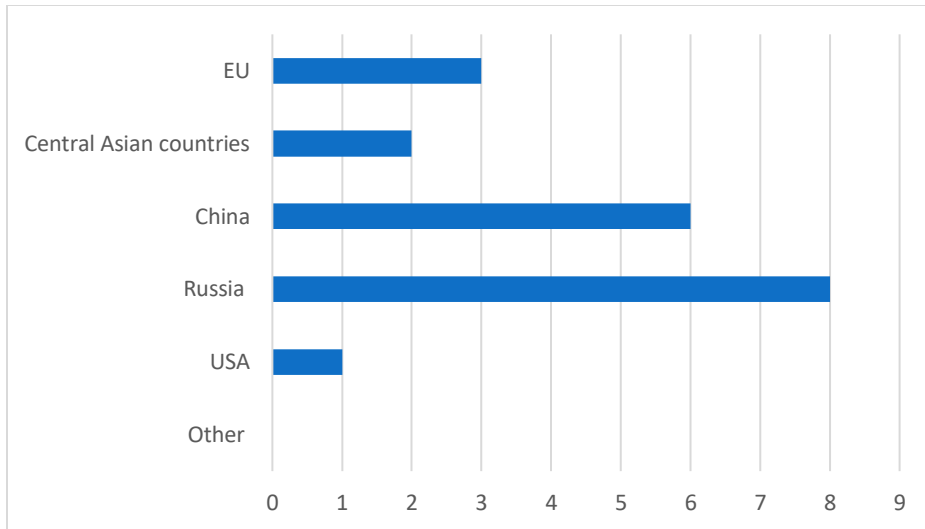


Figure 15. Who could become Kazakhstan’s key foreign policy partner in ten years period? (Maximum 2 answers are possible)

Source: Expert survey results conducted by author in 2019

Experts have evaluated that in the ten-year period Kazakhstan’s foreign policy will be focused on cooperation with Russia and China (8 and 6 scores accordingly). These two countries scored a very high proportion of experts’ responses. The EU comes as a third international actor with who Kazakhstan will be having a tight foreign policy. Surprisingly, the relationship with Central Asian countries scored fewer votes (only 2). Only 1 score was given to the USA.

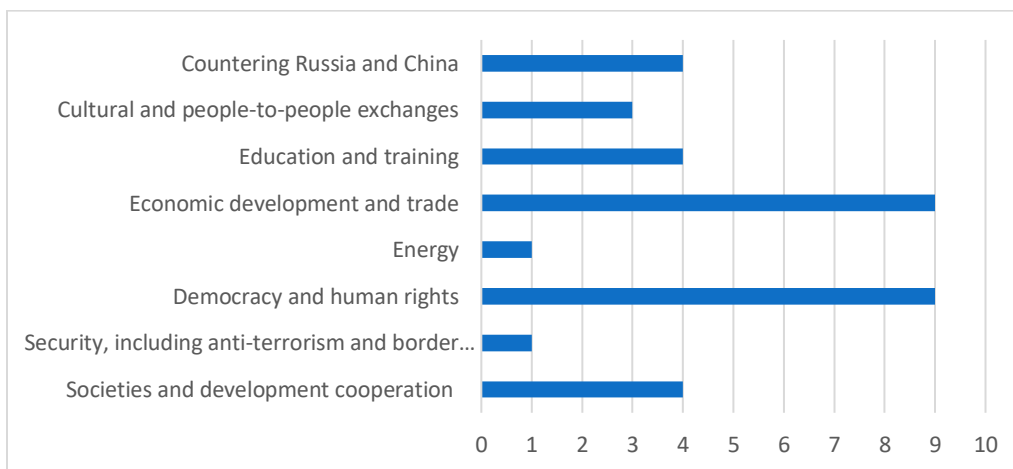


Figure 16. What 3 main issues should the EU tackle within the New Strategy with Central Asia?

Source: Expert survey results conducted by author in 2019

Experts depicted the main 2 fields that the EU should focus during the lately adopted “New Opportunities for Stronger Partnership” agreement, these are economic development and trade,

democracy and human rights. Experts' suggestion came along with the actual agreement where Democracy and human rights as a first priority area while economics came as a second. To directions as “countering Russia and China”, “Education and training” and “Societies and development cooperation” has been given equal attention and they were put as a second main priority. Following field that needs to be tackled as per expert, the survey is “Cultural and people-to-people exchange” question. As the last priority, there were depicted energy and security field. This is quite interesting as in fact from the EU’s perspective these two latter fields are considered as one of the main ones according to the recent partnership agreement.

Kazakhstan has been the actor which was an active initiator of regional cooperation and engagement among Central Asian states. Due to current positive changes in Uzbekistan, regional integration seems to be more active. Thus, the following question was about how likely Kazakhstan could become a mediator between Central Asia and the EU.

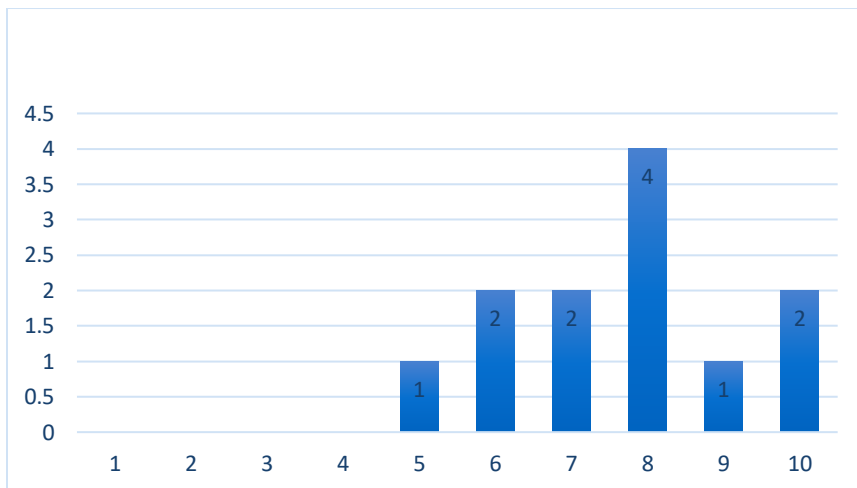


Figure 17. Distribution of expert evaluations on statement “How likely for Kazakhstan to become a mediator between Central Asia and the EU?”

*Source: Expert survey results conducted by author in 2019;
Evaluation scale 1-10, where 1-least likely; 10 – most likely*

Data in figure 17 show that all experts positively evaluate Kazakhstan’s possibility to act as a mediator between the cooperation of the EU and Central Asia. 4 out of 12 experts evaluated this possibility at scale 8/10. 2 of the respondents find that Kazakhstan will definitely be a facilitator of regional cooperation.

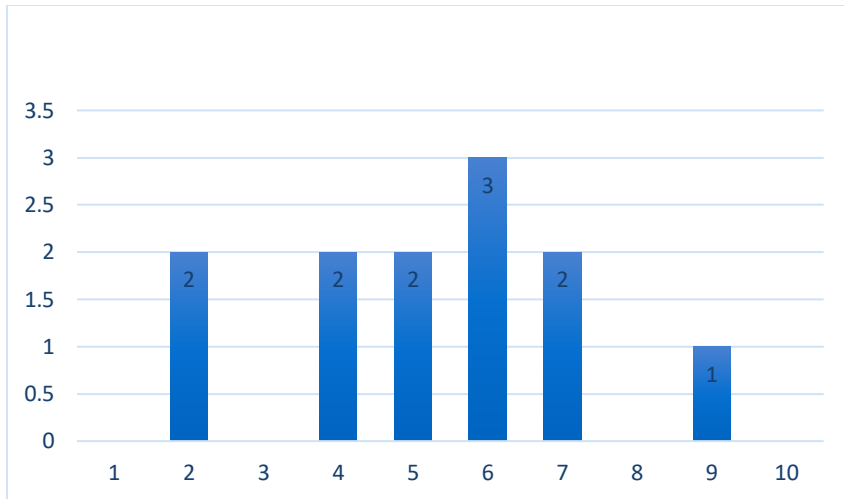


Figure 18. Distribution of expert evaluations on statement “How likely for the EU to become a regional partner in CA in the security area?”

Source: Expert survey results conducted by author in 2019; Evaluation scale 1-10, where 1-least likely; 10 – most likely

Opinions of the experts on the question regarding the possibility of the EU to become a CA’s regional partner in security area predicted as average. Only one respondent thinks that it is most likely (9/10), while others find this possibility around the scale of 4-7. 2 of respondents think that this case is least likely.

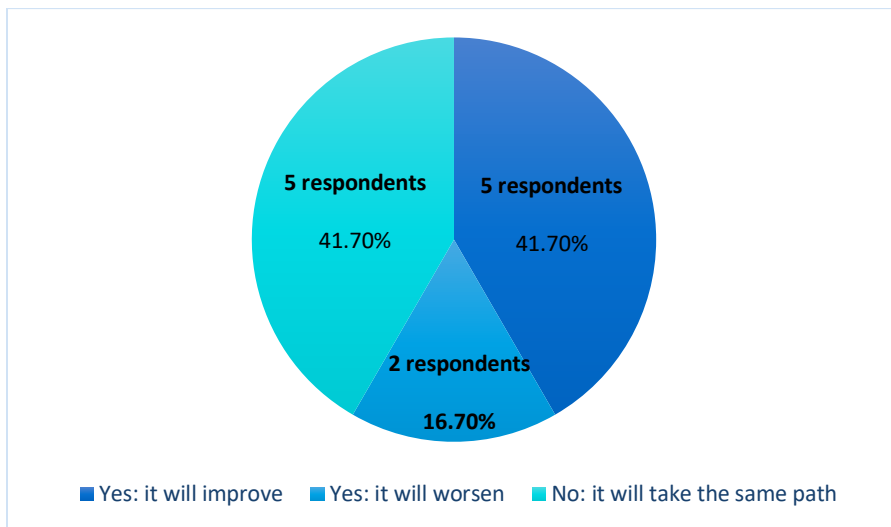


Figure 19. Will political changes in Kazakhstan effect bilateral relation with the EU?

Source: Expert survey results conducted by author in 2019

Recent power transition in Kazakhstan took the attention of many states in the world. Thus, the following question asked respondents to evaluate the changes what might happen in bilateral

relation of Kazakhstan and the EU in the midst of new political power in Kazakhstan. Figure 19 indicates that 5 of the respondents have evaluated that after the power transition the bilateral cooperation will improve for better side (41.70%). Meanwhile, another 5 exports predict that the relationship between two parties will not change and it will stay as it is currently. However, 2 respondents assume that political changes in Kazakhstan will affect the relationship with the EU negatively.

The last point of the survey asked to leave the open questions, an opinion that needs to be considered when discussing the bilateral cooperation of sides, the following topics have been raised. One of the respondents have evaluated that political changes still might not play a significant role in future bilateral relations as economic. Thus, expert suggests the two parties need to focus on developing cooperation in economic diversification as supporting middle-size business and services. Another expert also thinks that it is necessary to go for mutual trade concessions (reduction of customs duties and bureaucracy), simplify the procedure for obtaining work visas. Also, the expert highlights that the EU should increase the applicants entering the European educational institutions. On the part of Kazakhstan, he believes that the government should assist the EU residents in matters of commercial and public activities in Kazakhstan. There were opinions where expert mentioned that Kazakhstan is the partner of second importance for the EU business as there is no possibility for Kazakhstan's trade except hydrocarbon enter the EU market.

Another respondent raises the point connected to anti-western (cultural) rhetoric among Kazakh-speaking society and questions what actions could be taken from both sides to ease these prejudices. Several points were about the current level of political dialogue between sides. Some of the experts regret the fact that the EU is not taking enough attempt to the promotion of democracy and human rights. They invite sides to reconsider the priorities and already focus on EU values.

4.3 Discussion of the result and assessing the outcome

As it was analyzed in previous chapters, bilateral relation of the EU and Kazakhstan has been successful within the framework of the pragmatic modernization and intergovernmental

approaches as the very idea of the cooperation were based on equally beneficial and pragmatic interests. This could be concluded following the further priority areas.

The *economic connection* of the sides has been of a most priority since the beginning of the cooperation as the main driver of bilateral relationship were on energy interests (hydrocarbon) and the trade. Since the PCA agreement came into force in 1999 the trade relation between the EU and Kazakhstan has been increased from \$2.2 billion to almost \$30 billion in 2018.¹¹² Around 40% of the total external trade of Kazakhstan is going to the EU.¹¹³ Central Asia in particular Kazakhstan is being one of the important directions in the EU's energy diversification plan. Half of the FDI flow of Kazakhstan is coming from the EU.¹¹⁴

Moreover, the European Union supported Kazakhstan to integrate into a global economy and became a member of the WTO in 2015. Kazakhstan also became the first Central Asian country signing the Enhanced Partnership Agreement with the EU. This gives a clear vision to future committed economic ties from both sides. Taking into account Kazakhstan's membership in the Eurasian Economic Union, this bilateral cooperation may lead to the beneficial cooperation of the EU and EEU in the future. Also, along with this Kazakhstan is a member of such programs as INOGATE and TRACECA. The country also signed the Memorandum of Understanding in the energy field in 2006. During 25 years of mutual cooperation, the EU has been a reliable partner for Kazakhstan.

The *political cooperation* on the promotion of democracy, human rights and rule of law has shown little progress. Even if the political dialogue on normative goals has been put in both bilateral agreements (PCA¹¹⁵, EPCA) and in regional agreements (EUCAS¹¹⁶). Many researchers criticize the EU not being able to force Kazakhstan to follow the democratic values and calling bilateral cooperation as a "tyranny of pragmatism".¹¹⁷ Also, according to *Freedom House*

¹¹² The Astana Times, EU-Kazakhstan relations evolving cooperatively, providing a model for region, says European envoy, <https://astanatimes.com/2019/03/eu-kazakhstan-relations-evolving-cooperatively-providing-a-model-for-region-says-european-envoy/>. Accessed 15.05.2019

¹¹³ European Commission website, <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/kazakhstan/>. Accessed 15.05.2019

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ *Official Journal of the European Communities* (1999), L 196/5, http://www.euroskop.cz/gallery/5/1706-021a6d5f_9381_46aa_a93c_dfa4d169b386.pdf. Accessed 15.05.2019

¹¹⁶ Council of the European Union (2007), *The EU and Central Asia: Strategy for a New Partnership*, 10113/09

¹¹⁷ Anceschi, L. (2014). Tyranny of Pragmatism: EU-Kazakhstani Relations, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 66(1), 1-24.

Indicators, Kazakhstan is considered as “consolidated authoritarian country”. Yet, it should be taken into account that the motives of bilateral cooperation from its beginning were not about promoting normative values but building the pragmatic relation which considers the interests of sides in the economic field and along with this build the ground for long-term dialogue in the political side.

For instance, there have been significant improvements in the field of rule of law. Within the framework of New Strategy to Central Asia in 2007 Kazakhstan has become the part of the Rule of Law initiative which assists Central Asian states to build political dialogue and provide technical support on modernization and harmonization.¹¹⁸ Moreover, Kazakhstan entered the European Commission for Democracy through Law of the Council of Europe.¹¹⁹ The aim of this initiative is to follow the legal and the established harmonization according to the European standards.

Moreover, in 2015 Kazakhstan launched the program Five institutional reforms the aims which focused on judicial development. Later, these reforms planned to action through 100 Concrete Steps program where many of the points directly referred to European norms. Conducted content data analysis aimed to find out a *thin Europeanization* also showed that the notion and promotion of European values within the citizens of Kazakhstan has been steadily increasing during the period of cooperation.

In regards to cooperation in the human rights field, there could also be significant positive shift which built the platform for discussion of changes for a long-term period. Until now the EU and Kazakhstan have held nine Human Right Dialogue and the recent one happened in 2017 in Kazakhstan.¹²⁰ During these continuous dialogues between two sides, there have been released several civil and human rights activists. Taking the recommendation of the UN Universal

¹¹⁸ European Union External Action (2009). EU Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eu_rule_of_law_initiative_for_central_asia_0.pdf. Accessed 15.05.2019

¹¹⁹ Council of Europe, The Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/pages/?p=01_presentation. Accessed 15.05.2019

¹²⁰ European Union External Action (2017). EU and Kazakhstan hold Subcommittee on Justice and Home Affairs and the Human Rights Dialogue, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/36413/EU%20and%20Kazakhstan%20hold%20Subcommittee%20on%20Justice%20and%20Home%20Affairs%20and%20the%20Human%20Rights%20Dialogue. Accessed 16.05.2019

Periodic Review Kazakhstan government launched the “National Action Plan to 2020 on Human Rights”.¹²¹

As it could be concluded, the pragmatic approach of cooperation has shown its positive impact on the nature of bilateral relation between Kazakhstan and the EU. This pragmatic framework which has mostly focused on cooperation where economic interests were well balanced with norms. Thus, master thesis answers to the *first part of the research question* about what the driving motives of the bilateral cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan were. Also, it gives the answer to the *second research question* what Kazakhstan’s commitments were to have more enhanced cooperation with the European Union.

The conducted survey also proves the point that currently Kazakhstan and the EU have productive bilateral cooperation. Experts agree with the points that the main direction of bilateral cooperation at this stage is mostly in economic and energy cooperation, while political cooperation was evaluated as slightly below the average. According to cultural cooperation experts’ opinions come to the conclusion that in further cooperation two sides need to put more input.

Kazakhstan is the country which aims to be a regional leader and active international actor. This could be seen from its foreign-policy vector. The country participates in the various regional as well as international organizations as OSCE, SCO, EAEU, etc. It identifies itself as a Eurasian country and was the initiator of Eurasian Union in 1992. Also, Kazakhstan several times tried to develop regional cooperation within Central Asia. However, it is only now giving the sign of positive tendency. Thus, the researcher’s question as part of which regional bloc the EU should consider Kazakhstan and build its political agenda experts’ opinions was divided into 2 (50%/50%). Experts also have evaluated that Kazakhstan could become a mediator in the integration of relations between the EU and Kazakhstan.

Survey proved the point that future cooperation of sides needs to take into consideration the promotion of democracy and human rights. In the light of increasing cooperation with China, arising regional partnership among Central Asia planned support to Afghanistan, and tension between West and Russia Kazakhstan will need to adjust its regulations and meet international

¹²¹ UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/Issues/Business/Pages/NationalActionPlans.aspx>. Accessed 16.05.2019

standards in order to be able to protect its political as well as economic interests. Thus, the *second part of a research question* could be concluded with the point that in order to continue productive cooperation Kazakhstan and the EU need to slowly shift their bilateral relation agenda from “pragmatic modernization” to other alternative ways where the side will be able to respond current state of art of geopolitics.

The thesis also tested the hypothesis which was introduced at the beginning of the research. *The first hypothesis* of the thesis could be considered as confirmed. The relationship between Kazakhstan and the EU remains to prioritize the economic and energy field on the main agenda. Kazakhstan is interested in growing economic ties with the EU via bilateral cooperation through EPCA and with the new regional Strategy between the EU and Central Asia. Also, the new “One Road One Belt” project could make Kazakhstan a vital route to connect Europe and Asia. This will definitely increase the economic tight of the regions. Kazakhstan’s economy is mostly backed by its hydrocarbons knowing that Kazakhstan is currently trying to look for diversification of its economy with the support of the EU.

The second hypothesis could also be approved. In the last few years, Kazakhstan has experienced several waves of protests which were caused by economic as well as social complaints. Recent political changes also brought another wave of concerns to civil and political activists and opposition. Also, the 2014 economic crisis which affected the oil prices significantly hindered Kazakhstan’s economy. The case of sanctions against Russia, one of the biggest trade partner Kazakhstan also affected the country’s economy. These all urges the country to attract more foreign direct investments and trade partner. Thus, these situations make Kazakhstan prioritize the democratic values and human rights to the harmonization of the internal stable political system. This will help Kazakhstan to attract more international partners.

CONCLUSIONS

1. During the two decades of bilateral cooperation between Kazakhstan and the EU has demonstrated significant integration. The success of this mutual relationship is a great extent a positive stand of the EU and Kazakhstan's pro-European political direction. After the proclamation of independence, Kazakhstan built its foreign policy based on a multi-vector policy with prioritization of economy. This dedicated approach to economic modernization pushed the country to integrate and build a divergent political and economic relations with its near and far abroad. Thus, Kazakhstan build the new Eurasian identity and started making the way to serve as a bridge between Europe and Asia.

2. European Union was on the highest priority of Kazakhstan's foreign policy. Since the establishment of bilateral talk in 1995 direction of the talk between parties was based on pragmatic modernization and intergovernmental approach, putting interest off states above other and in the meantime builds a base for political dialogue in a long-term. This could be proven by two Partnership and Cooperation agreements held between the EU and Kazakhstan. Also, the country has become the first Central Asian country signing the second-generation agreement EPCA with the EU.

3. By analyzing the bilateral cooperation author depicted the following aspirations of Kazakhstan vis-a-vis the EU. First and foremost, its economic interest of the country in the EU. Europe is Kazakhstan's leading economic partner and investor which holds almost a half of whole foreign direct investment. Yet, Kazakhstan is eager to diversify its economy with the help of the new project called "Modernization 3.0" the aim of which is not only export oil and metals but to develop new industries focusing on green energy. Here author again claims that one of Kazakhstan's aspiration is described by its instrumental considerations to modernize its economy.

4. The EU has put an enormous effort to strengthen regional cooperation within Central Asian countries. Development and sustainability of the region has been an agenda of the EU' foreign policy agenda since 2007. The New Strategy to Central Asia which will enter into force from this year provides the EU with a position of a facilitator in regional harmonization considering its immense experience in regional integration. Along with support in Central Asian, the EU is being an important alternative and balance to Russian influence as well as growing

Chinese impact. 2014-2020 Kazakhstan's Foreign Policy Strategy puts in priority the cooperation in Central Asia and aims to lead the political as well as economic development of the region with the support of the EU. Positive political changes in Uzbekistan also give a reason to assume better cooperation for the sides.

5. Integration in the political dimension is still a hindering reason for the EU and Kazakhstan to not fully accomplish all potentials of bilateral cooperation. After the proclamation of its independence, Kazakhstan and other new independent post-Soviet states took the way for new market economy and democratization. However, most of the countries took a direction of "economy first" policy. During the first Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, the main aim of the country was to progress in the economy and get best-practices from the EU.

6. Current Kazakhstan's devotion to democratic values is margin. It was seen from the content data analysis which was conducted from the state-to-the-nation addresses and internal speeches of the former president Nazarbayev. The analysis demonstrated that the promotion of democratic values, human right, and rule of law to the people as a notion got positive yet only paper wise. A conducted expert survey also proved the point that the current cooperation of the EU and Kazakhstan needs to first concentrate on strengthening democratic values and human rights. Apart from economics, political and energy field on what author was mostly concentrating on this thesis experts suggest devoting more attention to the promotion of EU's soft power as education and cultural programs.

7. During the two decades of bilateral cooperation Kazakhstan and the EU were able to build a EU-Central Asia Environment and Water Cooperation Platform productive cooperation based on intergovernmental and pragmatic modernization approach. At the current geopolitical and changes priority needs to be inclined toward real action on building cooperation based on normative approaches.

Recommendations

The author finalizes the thesis with presenting a few recommendations on how to improve the bilateral cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan to further enhanced integration.

1. It is important for the European Commission and Kazakhstani government to follow the path of cooperation in economic field as it is a mutually beneficial project. Yet, the economic

relations should be diversified (apart from hydrocarbon). Current raise of cooperation in agriculture and green energy sectors should be further developed and integrated.

2. In the framework of new Enhanced Partnership, the EU and Kazakhstan should go for mutual trade concessions (reduction of customs duties and bureaucracy), simplify the procedure for obtaining work visas. On the part of Kazakhstan, the government should assist EU residents in matters of commercial and public activities in Kazakhstan.

3. The EU and Kazakhstan should reconsider their approach on promotion of democracy and human rights. The transition of power in Kazakhstan, as well as its membership in Eurasian Economic Union and participation in One Belt One Road program urges both sides to take more profound steps toward good governance, strengthening democratic values and following the rule of law. Kazakhstan finds the EU as a reliable partner which doesn't threaten to its domestic stability. Thus, at the current state of art Kazakhstani government would go for constructive dialogue.

4. The EU's economic and political engagement with Kazakhstan might not be as compatible as it will be with Russia and China in the future. Thus, apart from economic and political ties the European Union should exploit its soft power and cultural diplomacy through education, culture, people-to-people approach.

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Appendix A
Full List of Codes by Categories

Categories	Voice and accountability	Political stability and absence of violence/terrorism	Government effectiveness	Rule of law	Control of corruption
Codes	Accountability	Security	Modernization	Law	Corruption
	Democracy	Stability	Success	Rule of law	
	Transparency	Tolerance	Productivity	Judicial	

Annex B

Expert Survey Questionnaire:

Respected Sir/Madam,

Taking into account your experience and deep knowledge you are invited to take part in the expert survey on EU–Kazakhstan bilateral relation. The expert survey is conducted in research at the University of Latvia on the topic “The European Union-Kazakhstan bilateral relation: an analytical review on underlying motives”. All responses will be used only in an updated version and will be used in the preparation of suggestions on the possible improvement of EU–Kazakhstan bilateral relations.

Your participation in this survey will assist in conducting a suggestion on future cooperation of the EU and Kazakhstan.

Best regards,
Marzhan Anglamas

2-year Master degree student of "European Studies" program, University of Latvia

1. At what level is the current cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan in each sector?

Please, evaluate in scale 1-10, where 1 - the lowest level, 10 - the highest level

1. Economic sector	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2. Energy sector	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3. Cultural sector	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4. Political sector	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

2. How do you evaluate current EU-Kazakhstan bilateral relation?

Please, evaluate in scale 1-10, where 1 – very negative, 10 – very positive

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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3. As a part of which regional bloc the EU should consider Kazakhstan and build its political agenda?

1.Eurasian Bloc (EAEU)
2.Central Asian Bloc

4. Who could become Kazakhstan’s key foreign policy partner in ten years period?

Maximum 2 answers are possible

1. EU
2. Central Asian countries
3. China
4. Russia
5. USA
6. Other

5. What 3 main issues should the EU tackle within the New Strategy with Central Asia?

1. Countering Russia and China
2. Cultural and people-to-people exchanges
3. Education and training
4. Economic development and trade
5. Energy
6. Democracy and human rights
7. Security, including anti-terrorism and border control
8. Societies and development cooperation

6. How likely for Kazakhstan to become a mediator between Central Asia and the EU?

Please, evaluate in scale 1-10, where 1 – least likely, 10 – most likely

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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7. How likely for the EU to become a regional partner in CA in the security area?

Please, evaluate in scale 1-10, where 1 – least likely, 10 – most likely

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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8. Will political changes in Kazakhstan effect bilateral relation with the EU?

1. Yes: it will improve
2. Yes: it will worsen
3. No, it will keep the same path

9. Please, leave the open question that is needed to be taken into account in the further development of bilateral cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan.

Thank you!

Master thesis “The European Union and Kazakhstan bilateral relations: critical review on underlying motives.” elaborated in the Faculty of Economics and Management of the University of Latvia.

Herewith I confirm by putting my signature that the research has been conducted individually, as well as the fact that only the indicated sources of literature have been used in the paper and that the electronic copy of the paper corresponds to the printout.

Author: Marzhan Anglomas _____
(personal signature)

I recommend/do not recommend the paper for defense

Advisor: Biruta Sloka Dr.oec. _____

Opponent:

Paper submitted in the European Studies Master’s Programme on 20.05.2019.

Person authorized by the dean: secretary Astra Zaļkalne _____

Master thesis has been defended in the session of the Commission on Master’s Graduation Examination

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Secretary of the Commission: _____