

KAZAKHSTAN-EU AGREEMENT (EPCA) IN A NUTSHELL



“Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement” - a new generation of agreements.

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First and, so far, only agreement signed between the EU and a Central Asian partner, as well as with a Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) member.

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The 150-page EPCA was signed in Astana on 21 December 2015. Its provisional application started on 1 May 2016.

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EPCA is ‘WTO-Plus’, as its chapter on government procurement mirrors the equivalent WTO chapter (GPA), in essence.

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EPCA includes a chapter focused on strengthening cooperation in the regulation of technical barriers to trade and ensuring transparency.

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A separate chapter of EPCA is devoted to free competition, and compliance with its principles.

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EPCA brings Kazakhstan’s public procurement cooperation with the EU to a more integrated level.

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The customs cooperation chapter includes collaboration in establishing advanced customs procedures, and improving customs legislation and customs operations in accordance with international standards.

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EPCA sets the legal framework for cooperation in areas such as security in space, countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, combating terrorism, civil service cooperation, climate change, healthcare, public finance management, and taxation, among others.

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EPCA puts strong emphasis on democracy and the rule of law, human rights, fundamental freedoms as well as civil society cooperation.

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So far 19 member states have ratified EPCA.

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The European Parliament overwhelmingly ratified EPCA on 12 December with 511 votes in favour, 115 against and 28 abstentions.

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