

Comprehensive agreement between the EU and Kyrgyzstan. Recommendation to the Council, the Commission and the EEAS

2018/2118(INI) - 15/01/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on a European Parliament recommendation to the Council, Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the comprehensive agreement between the EU and the Kyrgyz Republic.

In December 2017, the EU and Kyrgyzstan launched negotiations on a comprehensive agreement, which would replace the current EU-Kyrgyzstan PCA, with the aim of enhancing and deepening cooperation in areas of mutual interest, based on the shared values of democracy, the rule of law and good governance, within a new legal framework.

The following recommendations were made to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy:

General principles

Parliament stressed the need to:

- identify strategic short- and long-term perspectives in the comprehensive agreement and to establish a number of well-identified and structured goals for cooperation with Kyrgyzstan;
- put in additional efforts and to deepen the relationship in order to make the EU more visible and more effective in the country and in the region;
- ensure a firm engagement from both sides to respect and advance democratic principles, human rights and the rule of law in full respect of the criteria required for the GSP+ status granted to the Kyrgyz Republic;

foster the market economy by delivering tangible social and economic benefits for the citizens of both sides;

Political dialogue and international cooperation

- strengthen political dialogue and sectoral cooperation, and step up cooperation in crisis management, conflict prevention, countering terrorism and organised crime, cyber-crime, the prevention of violent radicalisation and integrated border management;
- enhance EU-Kyrgyz economic and trade relations further with regard to GSP+ status, and to call on Kyrgyzstan to implement the international commitments stemming from this status;
- improve coordination between the positions of the EU and Kyrgyzstan in international forums;
- step up the interparliamentary dialogue between Kyrgyzstan and the European Parliament;

Institutional provisions

Parliament asked, *inter alia*, that reinforced interparliamentary scrutiny within an empowered PCC should be elaborated in the new agreement, particularly in the areas of democracy, the rule of law and the fight against corruption. It also stressed the need to:

- ensure the transmission of the negotiating directives to the European Parliament, subject to confidentiality rules, to enable proper scrutiny by Parliament of the negotiating process;
- involve civil society both during the negotiations and the implementation phase of the agreement;
- ensure the inclusion of terms on the potential suspension of cooperation in the event of the breach of essential elements by either party, including a role for consultation of Parliament in such cases;
- allocate, both at EU and Member State level, adequate resources for the implementation of the comprehensive agreement, so as to ensure the achievement of all the ambitious objectives set during the negotiations.

Common concerns and interests related to the areas of cooperation addressed by the agreement

Members underlined the importance of the following, *inter alia*:

- pursuing efforts to consolidate a functioning parliamentary democracy with a genuine multi-party system and constitutional checks and balances, as well as to ensure parliamentary oversight of the executive branch, as one of the pilot countries for EU democracy support;
- reaffirming the importance of working systematically to promote the values of democracy and human rights;
- ensuring that Kyrgyzstan allows banned foreign human rights workers and journalists to enter the country and continue their work without interference;
- urging Kyrgyzstan to reverse any negative authoritarian trends such as the political instrumentalisation of the administration of justice, unfair and non-transparent trials, interference in media freedom, the impunity of law enforcement agents and the alleged ill-treatment and torture of those held in custody;
- encouraging Kyrgyzstan to diversify its economy with a view to reducing its significant political dependence on China and Russia and ensuring that countering the propaganda spread by Russian media in the country is significantly enhanced;
- strengthening the regional cooperation with Central Asian countries in relation to the fight against jihadist movements and transnational crime.