

Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union, of the one part, and the Republic of Uzbekistan, of the other part

2024/0260M(NLE) - 20/05/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 423 votes to 16, with 208 abstentions, a non-legislative resolution on the [draft Council decision](#) on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Uzbekistan, of the other part.

EU-Uzbekistan relations

Parliament welcomed the conclusion of the EU-Uzbekistan EPCA, which establishes **a new, modern, and ambitious framework** for deepening bilateral relations. It called for the full implementation of the core elements of the EPRA, such as respect for democratic principles, human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. It hopes that the implementation of the core elements of the agreement will be **assessed within three years** and that the Commission will present the results of these assessments to Parliament.

Members believe that Parliament's consent to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) is **a strategic investment** in the EU-Uzbekistan partnership and should be seen as a tool to foster long-term engagement, stability, and cooperation.

They stressed that Central Asia, including Uzbekistan, is of strategic importance to the EU in areas such as security, energy diversification and critical raw materials, transport, and digital connectivity. The EU-Central Asia Summit, held in Samarkand in April 2025, represents a strategic turning point in this regard.

Parliament welcomed the significant improvement in the national business environment and the continued influx of foreign investment, but believes that the legal protection of businesses in regulatory frameworks and business environments needs to be improved.

The resolution encouraged the **continuation of reforms outlined in the 'Uzbekistan 2030' strategy**, particularly in the areas of governance, the rule of law, and public consultation. However, Members regretted that Uzbekistan's **human rights** record has deteriorated in certain areas since the start of the EPCA negotiations and urged the authorities to improve the situation regarding human rights, civil society, and the media.

Parliament stressed the need to foster a **more diverse political environment** in Uzbekistan, one that better reflects citizen's views. It called for the inclusion of independent and opposition candidates in the upcoming parliamentary elections and encouraged Uzbekistan to continue its efforts to attract and support women in politics.

Regional cooperation and global issues

Parliament welcomed the fact that relations between the EU and Central Asia have been upgraded to the level of a strategic partnership. It called for the momentum of this progress to be maintained by implementing the Joint Roadmap for Deepening Ties between the EU and Central Asia.

While reiterating that the leaders of the EU and Central Asian states have agreed on the importance of achieving, as soon as possible, a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, Members regretted, nevertheless, that Uzbekistan has not condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine and has increased its political, economic and energy cooperation with Russia. They noted, however, that Uzbekistan does not recognise the annexation of Ukrainian territories by Russia and welcomed support for Ukrainian children affected by the war.

Members called on the Uzbek authorities to continue to **enhance compliance with EU sanctions** and fight against circumventions of sanctions against the Russian regime, and to refrain from any action that could directly or indirectly contribute to Russia's military capabilities.

The resolution underlined Uzbekistan's strategic role as a regional hub for **connectivity** and cooperation. It welcomed the contribution of the EU-funded Global Gateway initiative to digital transformation, specifically its support for expanding secure internet access across the region. Members also called on the EU to intensify its efforts to support the development of regional coordination on water and energy management in Uzbekistan in light of climate change.

Lastly, Uzbekistan and other Central Asian partners are urged to continue improving their resilience to **information manipulation** and foreign interference aimed at undermining regional stability and their partnerships with the Union.

Human rights, democracy and the rule of law

Parliament reiterated that the governments of Central Asian countries should take concrete and sustainable measures to **improve the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms**, including respect for freedom of religion and the rights of religious minorities, while addressing concerns about radicalisation and stigmatisation, and strengthening democratic governance, ensuring gender equality and the full enjoyment of women's rights, guaranteeing the rights and protection of LGBTIQ+ people and defending fair working conditions and workers' rights, in accordance with international standards and commitments.

Uzbekistan is invited, *inter alia*, to:

- end the persecution of human rights defenders, journalists and activists, and to immediately and unconditionally release all those imprisoned for peacefully exercising their fundamental rights;
- end harassment and persecution of human rights activists;
- put an end to the practice of punitive psychiatric detention in the Uzbek legal system;
- ease administrative and legislative restrictions and burdens in order to enable a wider range of NGO activities;
- reform the legal framework governing the media in order to integrate international standards;
- guarantee the operational independence of anti-corruption bodies;

- fully implement the 27 United Nations and International Labour Organization conventions and to respect the reporting obligations, in accordance with the commitments made by Uzbekistan under the SPG+ scheme;
- reform the agriculture sector and upholding agriculture workers' and farmers' rights to organise;
- ensure that climate cooperation supports a just transition globally and protects workers affected by decarbonisation.