

EU-Central Asia academic cooperation through Erasmus+:

What is Erasmus+ ?

Erasmus+ is the European Union (EU) programme for education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014-2020. Erasmus+ funds academic and youth mobility and cooperation between Europe and other regions in the world, including Asia

Erasmus+ supports activities that are closely matched with the EU's priorities for cooperation policy with these regions.

Asian countries can take part in Erasmus+ as Partner Countries in four types of projects in the higher education sector, and in youth cooperation projects. This brochure looks at the involvement of five Central Asian countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

These opportunities are set to continue on the new Erasmus+ programme, 2021-2027.

International Credit Mobility

Since 1987, students and staff have moved between European universities in the Erasmus programme. Since 2015, Erasmus+ has also allowed short-term mobility between Europe and other parts of the world for students, researchers, and staff, known as 'International Credit Mobility' (ICM for short). This two-way mobility allows students to study in a foreign university for **3-12 months** (2-12 months in case of traineeships) and obtain credits which are then recognised at the sending institution as part of their degree. A grant for staff mobility is also possible for **5-60 days**.

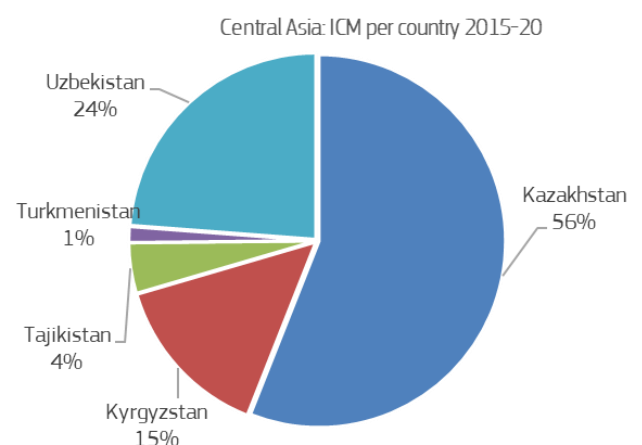
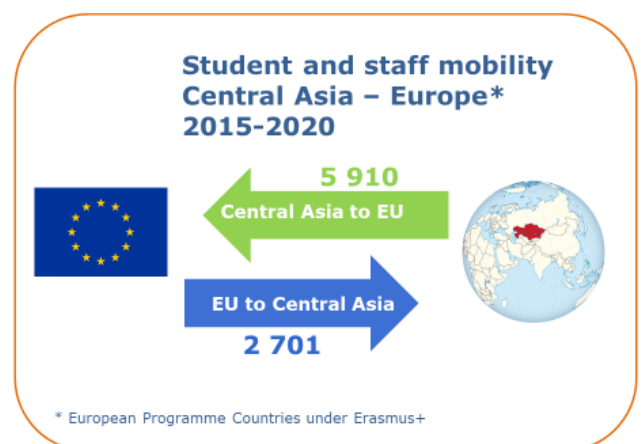
There are distinct budgets for different regions of the world that are divided between all the European countries. European institutions make up bilateral partnerships with Central Asian universities and apply on behalf of their partners.

The budget for Central Asia makes up **almost 4% of the entire international mobility budget** and so far has allowed establishing over 1 450 projects for bilateral partnerships that organise **mobility for 8 611 students, researchers, and staff**.

Among its ICM agreements, the **Czech University of Life Sciences** focuses on the exchange of academic staff with the **Namangan Engineering Pedagogical Institute in Uzbekistan**. This enriches teaching in bachelor programmes and develops professional competences of the teachers involved. Together this improves the quality of teaching through the integration of new experiences and knowledge.

Erasmus+ student and staff mobility between Europe and Central Asia countries: 1 450 projects, some 8 600 people moving (2015-2020)

Central Asia – mobility per country (2015-2020):



Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees

Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMDs) award full-degree scholarships to Master students from around the world covering tuition, travel, and a living allowance. The programmes last from one to two years during which students study in at least two different European countries. Upon graduation, they are awarded a joint or double degree, or multiple degrees.

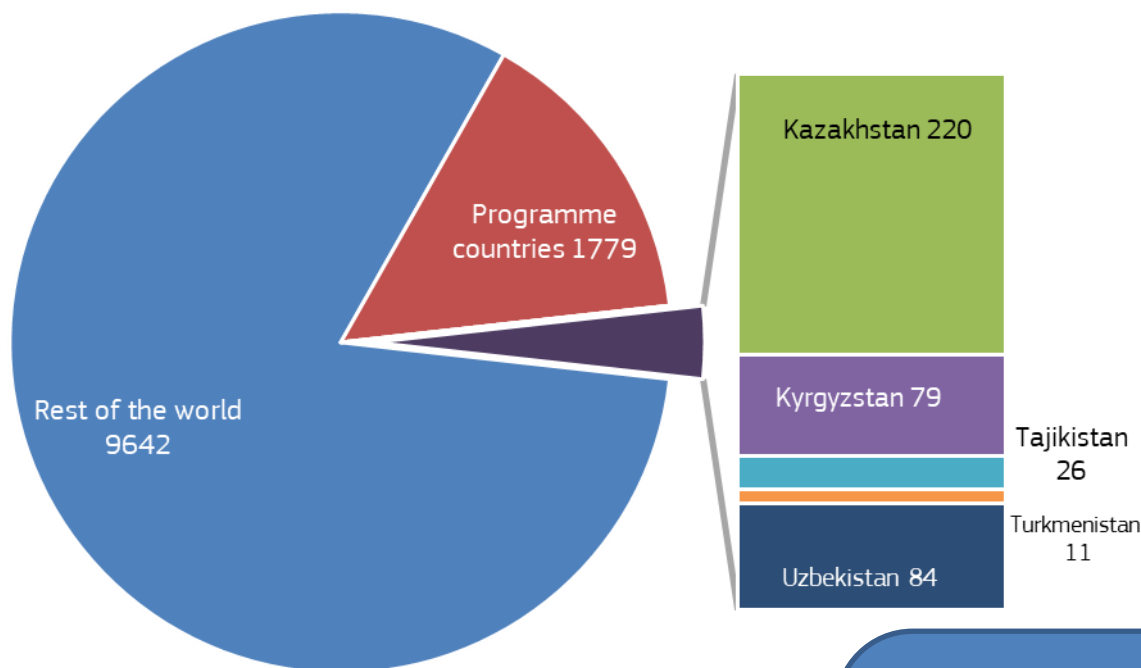
Students can apply to these programmes even if the university where they studied is not involved in any of them. They have to look for the available programmes in the EMJMD Catalogue and apply directly to the programme coordinator: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/library/emjmd-catalogue_en

Asian institutions can also be part of the consortia that deliver these programmes, as Full Partners, which means they officially award degrees, or as Associated Partners, where they participate in the programme in some kind of capacity, but do not award the actual joint degree.

Central Asian partners

From 2014 to 2020, there have been **26 cases of institutions from Central Asian countries taking part in 16 EMJMDs**. KIMEP University from Kazakhstan took part as a full partner in CEERES (see box below). The other 19 instances were organisations from all five countries taking part as associates: five of these were involved in CEERES.

Erasmus Mundus scholarships awarded to Master students, 2014-2020



International Master in Central and East European, Russian and Eurasian Studies (CEERES)

The IM in Central and East European, Russian and Eurasian Studies (CEERES) is a two-year master degree, delivered by 8 partner universities, amongst which the KIMEP University (KIMEP) in Almaty in Kazakhstan. Disciplines employed throughout the CEERES curriculum include Politics, IR, History, Sociology, Economics, and Geography. CEERES is articulated around a rational journey of specialisation, in which the acquisition of familiarity with a regional language plays a particularly central role. Through further coursework, placements, and dissertation research students increase their linguistic proficiency and enhance their research skills, while acquiring invaluable experiences of life, study, and work in Eastern Europe, Russia, and Eurasia.

Erasmus Mundus and Central Asia, 2014-2020



420 scholarships for Central Asian Master students

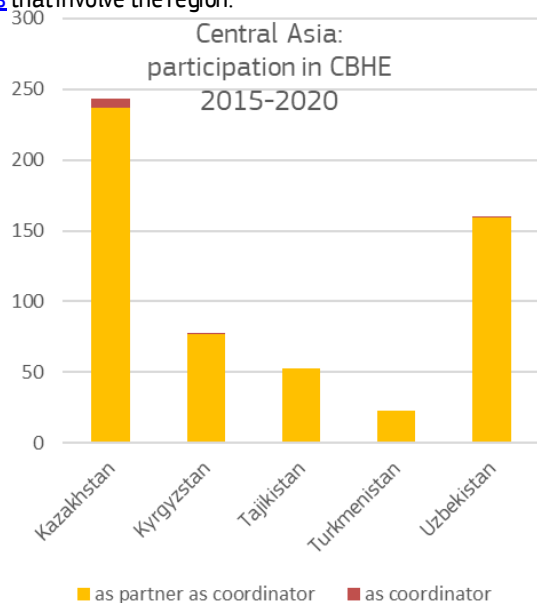


1 full partner from Central Asia involved

Capacity Building in Higher Education

There are two types of Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) projects, which all last from two to three years. Joint projects are aimed at modernising and reforming higher education institutions, developing new curricula, improving governance, and building relationships between higher education institutions and enterprises. Structural projects can also tackle policy topics and issues, preparing the ground for higher education reform, in cooperation with national authorities.

Capacity building projects can be addressed to a group of Asian countries or a single country and they can also be cross-regional and include partners both from different Asian regions. So far, institutions from Central Asia take part on 557 occasions in [114 projects](#) that involve the region.



Capacity-building projects for higher education 2014-2020



114 projects



557 instances of participation

from Central Asia

Furthering the Quality of Doctoral Education at Higher Education Institutions in Uzbekistan.

This structural [project](#) accompanies ongoing reforms to Uzbekistan's style of doctoral education, which is moving away from a Soviet-style system to one more in line with the European higher education area. The Uzbek ministry joins six Uzbek and four European HEIs in a project that tackles four critical reform issues: institutional support, quality assurance, human resources and links with business and industry.

MODERNISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN CENTRAL ASIA THROUGH NEW TECHNOLOGIES

In order to respond to the: Digital Transformation of Industries (Industry 4.0) which requires DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF EDUCATION with overtaking pace, the consortium will develop Concepts of adapting the educational system to the digital generation considering the specific conditions of each of the Central Asian countries. The [project](#), involving 9 participating countries, will benefit from the involvement of different stakeholders in education, amongst which the Kyrgyz Ministry of Education, 3 HEIs in Kyrgyzstan and 3 in Kazakhstan. The project will help to turn the partner HEIs into innovative universities and to improve the quality of the trained specialists needed to perform the Digital Transformation of Industries.

Jean Monnet Activities

Jean Monnet (JM) activities aim to develop EU studies worldwide. For over 25 years they have been supporting Modules, Chairs, and Centres of Excellence to promote excellence in teaching and research on the European integration process at higher education level. The programme also supports policy debate with the academic world and a number of associations in the domain of EU studies.

Central Asia

Out of a total of 1,862 successful applications to Jean Monnet between 2014 and 2020, **13 are Central Asian projects, with partner institutions from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan:** nine modules, three chairs and a centre of excellence.

EUROPEAN DIPLOMACY (EURODIP) Jean Monnet Chair

The [project](#) is coordinated by the LN. GUMILYOV EURASIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY (Kazakhstan) and aims at providing academic assistance to disseminate and promote European values, European integration ideas, European diplomacy in the Eurasian space, specifically, in Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries. EURODIP JM Chair will give the opportunity to concentrate on a systematic, purposeful work on the study, the dissemination of European knowledge, ideas among students, academicians and the general public on national level. The implementation of the JM "EURODIP" project will further foster the student-oriented approach to the educational process and principles of problem education in the university. The development of academic disciplines will give impetus to the improvement of employment opportunities, career prospects for graduates of the Faculty of International Relations.

Capacity Building in the Field of Youth

Capacity Building projects in the Field of Youth cover a range of activities that encourage cooperation between organisations active in youth empowerment, education of youth, youth training, and other relevant socioeconomic sectors in Programme and Partner Countries from different regions of the world. The projects aim to recognize and improve youth work, non-formal learning, and volunteering, and consequently link this to education systems and the labour market.

“Democratic governance depends on YOUth”

Central Asian partners from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan

This twelve month [project](#) aims at partner youth organizations' activation in promoting democratic youth participation in policy-making for better employability. Partner youth organisations and student councils from the UK, Lithuania, Latvia, USA, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan working on the development of youth employability policies will research, exchange practices, implement capacity-building activities, and work together on encouraging youth participation in decision-making/ governing bodies. They will also produce an Action Plan for local Peer Campaigners to ensure understanding of the important processes that go in hand with accessing youth to decision-making by wider networks of youth organizations and young people.

During the selection periods between 2014 and 2020, **17 projects have included 25 full partners from Central Asia:** nine from Kazakhstan, eight from Kyrgyzstan, seven from Uzbekistan and one from Tajikistan. Projects are varied in subject-matter, ranging from topics like **human rights to social inclusion, gender equality, sustainable development, leadership, entrepreneurship and technology.**

Youth Capacity Building projects for Central Asia, 2014-2019



17 projects



25 organisations

“Peers for Equality - Developing capacities for tackling gender based discrimination”

Central Asian partner: Kyrgyzstan

Through youth mobilities and on-field activities with young peer educators from Central Asia, East and West Europe, the [project](#) aims at developing the capacities of platforms and NGOs working with peer education of responding to the needs existing in European and Central Asian societies for reducing gender based discrimination. To achieve this, two international peer training networks: the European Peer Training Organisation and Y-Peer cooperate to develop a new educational programme. This is done by exchanging, adapting and creating non-formal methods and tools that will help future peer trainers change the mentality of people with respect to gender-based discrimination.

More information:

Erasmus+ website: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en

Erasmus+ projects & results: <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/>

Erasmus+ funding opportunities: http://eace.aec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding_en

Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association: www.em-a.eu

Study in Europe: <http://ec.europa.eu/education/study-in-europe/>