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**Kazakhstan-EU Relations in the Realities of the Russo-Ukrainian War: Textual Analysis Before
and After the Start of the War**

**Thesis submitted for
the degree of Bachelor in
6B03103 International Relations**

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Astana 2024

Abstract

Global security concerns have contributed to both the domestic and foreign policy directions of international actors. The Russo-Ukrainian war, as an instance of an unexpected and significant military crisis, affected relations between Kazakhstan and political players, particularly the European Union. This research aims to answer how the Russo-Ukrainian war impacted the dynamics of Kazakhstan's relations with the EU. The previous description of Kazakhstan's partnership with the EU includes democratisation initiatives and energy trade. Moreover, the majority of studies highlight inefficient attempts to propagate foundations of democratic governance and significant interest in Kazakhstan's energy potential. This study is concentrated on Kazakhstan-EU relations after the beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian war. It consists of two studies: an analysis of press materials and a qualitative content analysis with some quantitative approach. It focuses on the 191 press materials from the European External Action Service from 2018-2021 and 2022-2024 for the first part of the study, and 2018-2021, 2022, and 2023-2024. Ultimately, the intensification of Kazakhstan-EU relations in the energy sector was identified as a result of geopolitical realities. The content analysis demonstrates the active engagement of the EU in cooperation with Kazakhstan during 2022, particularly in areas of energy, economy and democratisation. This year also marked a crucial development in cooperation in the renewable energy sector.

Keywords: Kazakhstan, the European Union, cooperation, the Russo-Ukrainian war, energy, democratisation, economy

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Introduction

The Russo-Ukrainian War has significantly influenced the geopolitical landscape in the region and the world in general. Europe was cut off from energy sources such as gas previously supplied through Russian channels. It has been a long since the goal of carbon neutrality was set for the EU. In search of alternative energy sources, the Union decided to pave the way to Kazakhstan, its rare earth elements and uranium.

Few studies examining the EU's relations with Kazakhstan were carried out following the invasion in 2022. Forecasting the effect of war on economic cooperation, Muratova et al. (2023) assume the geopolitical situation presents Central Asian nations with a chance to advance their economies beyond those reliant on natural resources since the Union expresses interest in the region through numerous economic activities. As for the issue of democratisation, the two studies provide contrasting views (Mukasheva & Akhmedyanova, 2023; Winn & Gänzle, 2023). The first suggests that the EU paid greater attention to human rights issues in its new Enhanced Partnership Cooperation Agreement (EPCA), compared to its predecessor PCA, while the second study claims that for the EU, economic and political competition with Russia and China as well as defence, security, and economic ties with the region are more substantial than promoting democracy. As for energy cooperation, the EU faces challenges in diversifying its energy resources away from Russian dependence, whereas its efforts to cooperate with Kazakhstan are mainly through initiatives such as the Global Gateway and Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR). However, the country encounters a decline in interest from the European side due to insufficient volumes of resources (Moisé & Sorbello, 2022; Martínez-García et al. 2023; Muratova et al., 2023).

Taking into account the new geopolitical circumstances, a question regarding the topic of Kazakhstan-EU relations in light of the realities of the Russo-Ukrainian war was posed: How has the Russo-Ukrainian war impacted the dynamics of Kazakhstan's relations with the EU?

This research consists of two parts: the analysis of the dynamics of the partnership between the EU and Kazakhstan in three distinctive areas - Economic Prospects, Energy Sector, Democratisation and

Development and the content analysis of all press materials published by the European External Action Service in Kazakhstan from 2018 to 2024.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore and understand the influence of the Russo-Ukrainian War on the Kazakhstan-EU relationship. A thorough review and content analysis of the published materials throughout 2018-2024 regarding the Kazakhstan-EU collaboration serve as the basis of the research question and contribute to the study, interpretation, and analysis of the cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan.

Literature Review

1. The Kazakhstan-EU Relations

In 2024, Kazakhstan and the European Union will celebrate 33 years of partnership that have been established since the country's independence in 1991. The EU is the most crucial trading partner for Kazakhstan, as it accounts for 40% of the latter's external trade. It is worth mentioning that the EU holds the title of the first foreign investor in Kazakhstan, contributing to half of the overall gross FDI flows in 2018 (*EEAS*, 2023). These numbers are promising, but Kazakhstan-EU cooperation goes beyond the economy, covering such fields as justice and internal affairs, environmental questions, transport and energy, as well as culture, science and education. Kazakhstan made the very first step in promoting useful cooperation between the EU and the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEU) in the mid-1990s. However, the EU's interest in Kazakhstan struck 14 years later with the unravelling of events in Ukraine and has seen a rise since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 (Kurmanguzhin, 2016). Considering these particular occurrences, this study is interested in how the Russo-Ukrainian war has impacted the dynamics of Kazakhstan's relations with the EU. Numerous studies were made on this cooperation before the war, but only a few after.

1.1 Economic Prospects

When it comes to economic ties, Konopelko (2017) states that Kazakhstan and the European Union are cooperating mainly in the fields of investment and trade diversification. She also points out

that, despite being the main trade partner for Kazakhstan, the EU is behind China and Russia as regards smaller budgets and financial commitments in general. Drieniková and Zubalova (2021) and Kembayev (2016; 2021) also identify some barriers to economic cooperation within the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA). The violation of human rights, the absence of common borders, taking part in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), and lacking a compelling strategy for long-term investments are only a few of them. To confront these obstacles and ensure a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and energy supply stability, the EU and EEU should forge a strategic partnership, such as in the context of the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB), which became unfeasible in the current Russo-Ukrainian war realities. Another study agrees on the importance of strategic partnership and notes the importance of Kazakhstan as an energy provider and a transit for Chinese products to the EU (Kaš'áková & Barinková, 2019). Muratova et al. (2023) suggest that the present geopolitical situation is an opportunity for Central Asian countries to move beyond resource-dependent economies because of the EU's strong interest in the region and its programmes, which aim to strengthen cooperation and craft a shared agenda for regional development. As observed from the literature, Kazakhstan is important to the EU's trade, and despite having some barriers, the future of relations seems to be prospective.

1.2 Democratisation

Regardless of accelerating cooperation in trade, the process of democratisation through transparency promotion remains resistant. The following study by Konopelko (2017) emphasizes the need for considerable effort to enhance liberal values by supporting civil society. She relates the unchanging situation in Kazakhstan to a consolidated authoritarian political regime. Kembayev (2016) mentions the violation of human rights as a challenge to the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA) and proposes the "Wider Europe" approach that will involve all post-Soviet countries, build shared values, and enhance democratic institutions and the rule of law. His other study also draws attention to human rights records as a barrier for the EPCA (2021). When the EPCA was compared to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) via content analysis by Mukasheva and Akhmedyanova (2023), it turned out that the EU paid greater attention to the agenda on human rights in

the EPCA compared to the PCA, implying a changing degree of the EU's priorities towards Kazakhstan. According to Yesdauletov et al. (2017), Kazakhstan's leadership is moving towards Europeanization, a conclusion that was drawn from the Five Institutional Reforms initiative. However, again, the authoritarian character of the government, which violates human rights and freedom of speech, is the main limit to this process. Despite this, Nazarbayev was able to receive \$10 billion in investment agreements from the UK and France by expressing enthusiasm to follow institutional reforms with deeper democratisation. Yesdauletov et al. (2017) conducted a content analysis of Nazarbayev's speeches from 2010 to 2015, where the topics of transparency, rule of law, and accountability were raised more often in comparison with previous periods, showing that democracy is becoming a more prominent issue on the country's agenda.

Overall, residents of both the EU and Kazakhstan could be harmed in the long term if the development of partnerships in the fields of economy and energy excludes concurrent work on corruption issues, political restructuring, and engagement in civic affairs. Thus, liberal institutions such as the EU and OSCE must emphasise the necessity for extensive democratic changes in Kazakhstan (Bhavna, 2007).

However, the most recent research made by Winn and Gänzle (2023) questions the significance of democratisation as the EU's top priority in Central Asia. According to them, since 2019, the EU has switched its focus from promoting democracy to "principled pragmatism" and resilience, considering the geopolitical situation and powerful neighbours in the faces of Russia and China. Now, the European Union is more concerned about economic and political competition with major powers and aims to develop defence, security, and economic bonds with Central Asian states that will align with the 2016 European Union Global Strategy (EUGS).

1.3 Energy Sector

According to the European Council, with the acceptance of the Versailles Declaration in March 2022, the countries of the EU agreed to cease the dependence they have on the energy resources of Russia promptly. The process is rather hard because the increase in oil and gas prices leads to higher

inflation and issues with transportation, making a negative impact on sectors of services and industry, showing just how much the EU members are dependent on Russian supplies (Martínez-García et al., 2023). The Council is taking measures to guarantee the phase-out of dependence; it adopted a regulation targeting a 15% decrease in demand for gas and ensured that members of the Union have enough gas supply ready for cold seasons (*European Council*). Collins and Bekenova (2016) claim that Kazakhstan adhered to a similar strategy after the Crimean crisis by weakening its reliance on Russian policy and broadening energy channels.

Many researchers agree that the relationship between Central Asia and the European Union is mainly determined by shared interests in the energy sector. Thus, Adnan and Fatima (2016) claim that the EU's approach to cooperation with Kazakhstan is primarily driven by its energy prospects. Similarly, Anceschi (2014) highlights the thriving energy ties of Kazakhstan with the EU during the Nazarbayev regime but agrees that there were no improvements in domestic governance. According to Mantel (2015), Kazakhstan's position as a transit country for pipeline exports makes it attractive for the EU, which intends to reduce Russia's oil and gas exports, but again, human rights and democracy are the main challenges. Other obstacles are associated with expensive transit, the longevity of transportation, and regular and unforeseeable changes in tariffs, which affect investors.

Even considering the new context of the current war between Ukraine and Russia, the direction of the partnership between Kazakhstan and the EU remains focused on the energy sector via the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR) and the EU's "Global Gateway" initiatives (Muratova et al., 2023). However, Moisé and Sorbello (2022) put forth a different perspective, noticing that the EU's interest in the region's energy has decreased since the Central Asian republics were unable to provide a sufficient volume of resources to justify the investment. Moreover, there is an absence of effective collaboration between EU institutions and transnational corporations in pursuing energy security objectives in Central Asia, as limited competition among TNCs involved in exploiting oil resources in the region contradicts the EU's principles of promoting fair and open markets.

Energy trade is thought to be a decisive factor in cooperation, and the Ukrainian crisis only solidified it. Despite this, the authoritarian character of Kazakhstan remains the main obstacle, even in the energy sector.

1.4 Security and Geopolitics

Both Europe and Kazakhstan are interested in cooperation, not only in terms of energy but also in the promotion of peace and security in a wider area. Therefore, the provision of security, stability, and prosperity in the Central Asian region is also on the agenda (Kasteyeva, 2017; Kembayev, 2021). Several resources similarly consider the security management of the Central Asian region. Anghelescu (2018) claims that the EU, as an ambitious global player, pursues its geopolitical interests through Kazakhstan. The same concept of geopolitics is discussed by Cornell and Starr (2019) from a realism perspective, mentioning the fruitful advantage taken by the EU after strengthening its partnership with the leader of the Central Asian region. Along with the EU, the presence of great powers in the area, such as China and Russia, accelerates the EU's efforts in fostering partnership, even if the superiority is obvious (Muratova et al., 2023).

1.5 Role of the EU in Kazakhstan's Multivectorism and the Concept of Eurasianism

According to van der Togt et al. (2015), Kazakhstan is a valuable promoter of Eurasianism, a concept revolving around the building of a bridge between mainly China in the East and the EU in the West, as it has strong relationships with the EU, and the latter plays an integral part in Kazakhstan's multi-vector strategy. The multivector strategy was discussed by Gnedina (2015), implying manoeuvring and balancing between major powers to establish positive relations that countries in the EU–Russia common neighbourhood adhere to. It examines the case of Ukraine, stating that multivectorism may not always lead to desired results and giving an example of the Crimean crisis. Since Kazakhstan is the most strategically significant state in the Central Asian region, the transformation of its reforms to European-oriented ones would create a spill-over effect for positive changes not only in Kazakhstan but also in the whole neighbourhood, challenging the presidents of

Central Asia and other external actors (Melvin, 2007). In Melvin's other research conducted in 2009, he identifies that the EU is capable of creating a foundation for a society that adheres to pluralism and is more open by backing Kazakhstani endeavours to have socio-economic growth based on the European mode as outlined in the Path to Europe. Kurmanguzhin (2016) states that signing a bilateral Enhanced Partnership for Cooperation Agreement with the EU should not limit Kazakhstan's active participation in the advancement of Eurasian integration processes. Based on the research by Fawn et al. (2022), Kazakhstan is an essential testing ground for EU policies; however, the lack of research about the region's interaction with international organisations such as the EU complicates this process.

1.6 The EU's Interest after the Crimean Crisis

Some studies were written after the Crimean crisis, highlighting the EU's peaked interest in Kazakhstan. Nitoiu (2018) mentions that the crisis in Ukraine after the Russian invasion in 2014 was one of the key events influencing EU foreign policy decisions and its action plan towards post-Soviet Union states. He also refers to the 2015 EU Global Strategy, which states that the EU will continue to pursue democratic values despite the internal issues of partner states. Wagner and Anholt (2016) cite the Global Strategy as a message to prepare for international crises through the continuation of liberal value spread. It shows the connection between the armed conflict and future changes in EU policies and cooperation. After the Crimean crisis, the EU suggested a resilience strategy to strengthen domestic and international conditions to overcome future instability.

1.7 Focus of Current Study

The majority of reviewed literature is aimed at analysing obstacles and ways of cooperating, as well as reasoning about the European Union's interests in the partnership.

The international agenda has changed fundamentally since 2022 due to the outbreak of war in Ukraine. The armed conflict influenced the global economy as well as relations between states, mainly Russia and the Western world, as well as Russia and its neighbouring countries, including Kazakhstan. As a way of illustration, compared to the export and import volumes of 2021 between Russia and the

EU, approximately 50% of exports and 60% of imports are currently subject to sanctions (*European Council*). When it comes to Kazakhstan, the war led to the highest growth of inflation in 2022 (20%), spurring social unrest, but also resulted in an increase in exports from Kazakhstan to Russia, which accounted for 22% of the total in the same year. In addition, Kazakhstan's trade benefited from the rise in prices of oil and gas (Dumoulin, 2023).

This particular study focuses on changes in relations between the EU and Kazakhstan after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, since there is only a little research on this topic. From these, the assumption is formulated: The war in Ukraine will lead to the intensification of energy cooperation between Kazakhstan and the European Union.

Methodology

This qualitative research is grounded in an interpretive philosophy, aiming to understand the meanings embedded in the policy dynamics of the EU towards Kazakhstan. The research design is a case study that enables an in-depth investigation and analysis of complex interactions in the context of the current geopolitical situation. It describes how the EU and Kazakhstan partnership developed within the context of war in Ukraine. The research consists of two parts.

For the first part, a databank containing all press materials of the European External Action Service (EEAS) in Kazakhstan was analysed. Another examined source is media outlets' articles regarding EU-Kazakhstan relations. Data is collected from two periods 2018-2021 and 2022-2024 and divided into three sections: the Economic Prospects, Energy Sector and Democratisation and Development. The selection of the first period is justified due to COVID-19 which was at its peak in 2019-2020; during these years activity between Kazakhstan and the European Union was very low. The years 2018 and 2021 allow researchers to analyse activity during times not marked by pandemics or war to evaluate the dynamics of relations before and after the war began.

The second section is a qualitative content analysis with elements of a quantitative approach. The research attempts to analyse the meanings and purposes embedded within the content of press

materials regarding the development of EU and Kazakhstan relations. The quantitative part of content analysis includes counting the number of times specific terms and categories of words appear in texts (Halperin & Heath, 2020).

It is important to mention that only press materials covering activities between the EU and Kazakhstan and the EU and Central Asia with mentions of Kazakhstan are chosen. The overall number of press materials analysed is 191: 58 in 2018-2021, 86 in 2022 and 47 in 2023-2024. The year 2022 is a separate period since it commemorates the start of the Russo-Ukrainian war. It can be observed that the quantity of published materials surged in this particular year.

The terms are divided into 7 categories: Democratisation and Development, Economy, Energy, Security, Initiatives, Parties and Verbs. Some of these categories need further explanation. The researchers interpret the “Democratisation and Development” category as actions taken to work on human rights, transparent government, tackling climate change, social policies including children's well-being and infrastructural improvements such as water and housing management that directly influence the prosperity of a nation. The “Initiatives” section involves all the official actions, such as agreements, programmes and events initiated by and held between two parties. The “Parties” implies the actors mentioned in the press materials. The “Verbs” demonstrates the purpose of initiatives.

“*” sign is needed to identify words that start the same but have different endings. For instance, by using “democra*” the software identifies all the words that begin with this, such as democracy, democratic, democratically and democratisation.

The first category encompasses 36 specific words, as follows: anti-corruption, child*, climate, constitut*, corrupt*, covid*, democra*, development, dignity, disaster, discriminat*, educat*, elect*, environment*, equal*, erasmus, free*, gender*, girls, housing, human*, ill-treatment, journalis*, justice, law, media, press, rights, stud*, sustain*, training, transparen*, university, violence, water, and women. The section of “Economy” comprises 6 particular expressions such as econom*, invest*, market*, sanction*, trade and transport*. The “Energy” category has 14 terms: alternative, atom*, batter*, critical, energ*, gas, green, hydro*, nuclear, oil, plant, power, raw, and renewable. The classification

“Security” contains 13 words: Afghan, arm*, extremis*, geopolit*, military, peace*, security, stabil*, territor*, terror*, traffic*, war and weapon*. The “Initiatives” section comprises 16 expressions as follows Action*, Agreement*, Conference*, Cooperat*, Dialogue*, Event, Forum*, Initiative*, Meeting*, Partner*, Platform, Polic*, Program*, Project*, Reform* and Strateg*. This category allows researchers to see how often initiatives were conducted in the different timeframes before and after the war. The next category is “Parties” with 5 particular terms: Central Asia*, EU+Europe*, Kazakh*, Russia* and Ukrain*. The last section “Verbs” consists of develop, enhance, foster, implement, improve, intensify, promote, and support with 8 words in total. The Verbs section can be used to explain the EU's intentions towards Kazakhstan during that time.

The software used to facilitate the process are Yoshikoder and Excel. Yoshikoder counts the words in a text and allows researchers to categorise them. Excel is used to visualise data into graphs and tables. The data is precoded based on the literature review as a result of which the terms were classified into the first 3 categories. However, the rigorous analysis of press materials revealed 4 new categories. To make the comparison clear, each category's top five frequent terms are chosen.

The results are explained through the prism of structural realism theory. Concerning ethical considerations, the research obtains information through legitimate channels, such as the EU's official websites and recognised news outlets. Potential limitations of the study involve the timeframe (2018-2024); this period is chosen because it encompasses pre-pandemic times, the COVID-19 years and the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

Analysis and Findings

2. Kazakhstan-EU Cooperation

2.1 Economic Prospects

Kazakhstan-EU economic cooperation plays a substantial role in the latter's economy, considering that the EU is its main trade and investment partner. The Enhanced Partnership and

Cooperation Agreement might be the crucial indicator of economic activity from the very beginning of 2020 until now. Along with economic development, EPCA aims to achieve regional peace and stability (European Commission, n.d.). However, the main goal of the agreement is to establish a free and effective market for businesses in the fields of service, raw materials, government procurement and intellectual property rights (European External Action Service, 2023).

2018-2021. First and foremost, the EU plays a considerable role in establishing a sustainable environment for foreign investments and business prosperity in Kazakhstan. The Union contributed to the financial development of the Central Asian region through the EU's multiannual indicative programme for 2014-2020 and through the assignation of financial assistance of \$1.1 billion to strengthen bilateral relations (Council of the European Union, 2019). Moreover, during the meeting with the Executive Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Trade, they emphasised the significance of Central Asia as a trade partner for the EU and announced that the Commission had allocated around €1 billion to enhance the business environment (EEAS, 2020).

The economic aspect of the Kazakhstan-EU partnership during these years was characterised mainly by attempts to resist the post-pandemic aftermath. The EU-Central Asia Dialogue on Partnership for Prosperity was held online in 2020. The event aimed to create a common strategy for joint economic recovery from the pandemic and set the groundwork for further forums (EEAS, 2020). The EU also expressed its intention to assist the small business environment in Kazakhstan, particularly women entrepreneurs. The support was implemented through the Ready4Trade program to help recover from COVID-19 outcomes and the economic crisis (EEAS, 2020).

The cooperation between parties is a long-term integration, including continuing work on previous agreements and summarising the results. At the 17th meeting of the EU-Kazakhstan Cooperation Council, the successful results of the EPCA program were discussed, with special regard to trade and customs. Additionally, all EU members fully ratified the Cooperation Agreement in 2020 (EEAS, 2020).

Economic cooperation was still relevant for both parties in 2021, and the evidence could be the launch of the European Union-Central Asia Economic Forum, which gathered leading business agents and policymakers from both regions (EEAS, 2021). In the course of the event, the EU demonstrated its anticipation for enhancing trade relations between the EU and Central Asia by embracing the new EU Ready4Trade programme, valuable for the improvement of Central Asian small and medium enterprises (EEAS, 2021). The results of the forum were discussed at the 17th EU-Central Asia Ministerial Meeting, stressing the need for transparent investments and corruption combat (EEAS, 2021). In order to overcome the trade obstacles between Central Asian states and the EU, another meeting was held in June 2021. The main impediments that hinder trade, such as lengthy lines on physical borders, difficulties with obtaining certificates, and the overall necessity for inordinate paperwork, were mentioned (EEAS, 2021).

2022-2024. The transition to a green economy has become one of the main priorities for the EU since the invasion. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Strategic Partnerships on Sustainable Raw Materials, Batteries, and Renewable Hydrogen Value Chains was signed in November 2022 as an instrument to reach effective management of raw materials. This step ensures the transformation of the energy sector through renewable hydrogen and battery value chains (EEAS, 2023). Building a sustainable market for critical raw materials such as lithium, cobalt and polysilicon accelerates the process of green energy technology development (EEAS, 2022). It represents the intersection of the goals and the means to achieve a low-carbon economy and highlights the fact that the direction of raw materials trade and partnership did not change significantly with the start of the Russo-Ukrainian war. However, it is essential to take into account that the ECPA agreement was ratified in 2020, and the exact actions and initiatives began to be taken relatively recently, already in the realities of war.

The Ready4Trade, launched in 2020, had 30 companies participating in its portal system and reported that online sales of 500 thousand USD were achieved in total after partnering with the initiative (EEAS, 2022). Actions taken after the beginning of the war in Ukraine include the EU-Central Asian

Connectivity Conference, where representatives of Central Asian countries discussed the possible ways to continue working on trade infrastructure within the context of Russian aggression (EEAS, 2022). As a result, the Investors Forum for EU-Central Asia Transport Connectivity took place in January 2024. During the forum, €10 billion was committed by European institutions to accelerate the process of building efficient Central Asian trade routes in the realm of the Russo-Ukrainian war (European Commission, 2024). The emergency and strong demand for reliable infrastructure were highlighted, referring to the refusal of transit through Russia (European Commission, 2024).

2.2 Energy Sector

When particularly focusing on energy relations, the European Union is the main importer of Kazakhstani oil, with 70 per cent of the total export volume going to the EU, which accounts for 6 per cent of its imports. It is considered to be the third largest oil supplier state that is not a member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Besides trade, both sides have assets in each other's energy industries. Thus, the national company KazMunayGas owns a significant number of European assets in the Balkans and the Eastern Partnership states. The EU and Kazakhstan have numerous agreements in place to ensure energy security. The most well-known of these is the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Energy, which was signed in 2006. Kazakhstan supplies one-fifth of the EU's total uranium consumption, making it the top supplier of nuclear materials (EEAS, 2023). Furthermore, the EU4Energy programme greatly supports Kazakhstan technically in the promotion of competitive energy markets, renewable energy sources, and optimization of energy usage (EEAS, 2023).

2018-2021. Global interest in moving towards a renewable sustainable energy model bound Kazakhstan and the EU. According to the EU's new policy on Central Asia: New Opportunities for a Stronger Partnership, the plan is to assist Kazakhstan in moving towards sustainable management of natural resources and a low-carbon economy (EEAS, 2019). That means that, through joint efforts, the size of trade and the use of natural resources involved in renewable energy production should be

increased. Furthermore, the Low Enriched Uranium Bank, built by the International Atomic Energy Agency, started operating in Kazakhstan in 2019. The EU was part of the Bank establishment and the sponsor of LEU transportation, making steps towards sustainable energy aim achievement (EEAS, 2019).

During the 17th EU-Central Asia Ministerial Meeting, the Union showed support for the persisting realisation of the Paris Agreement regarding climate change and Central Asia's efforts to transform into a greener economy. These endeavours incorporate a growing proportion of sustainable energy into the power sector to achieve carbon neutrality. Moreover, Central Asian states were encouraged to enter the Global Methane Pledge (EEAS, 2021). The issue of the green economy was also considered during the EU - Central Asia Economic Forum, where the Union stressed the relevance of green investments and the communication prospects provided by the EU. Additionally, the EU recognised the potential of the Central Asian region for sustainable energy generation (EEAS, 2021).

2022-2024. When it comes to sustainable energy, Central Asia holds about 5 per cent of the world's capacity for capturing solar and wind power, which provides numerous prospects for the development of renewable energy (EEAS, 2022). From 2022 until today, the Kazakhstan-EU cooperation pays special attention to initiating actions for the mutual development of sustainable energy, for example, within the "European Union – Central Asia Water, Environment and Climate Change Cooperation" (WECOOP). This programme aims to encourage states to stick to European environmental standards and provides investments to monitor and measure greenhouse gases in the region. A workshop, organized in May 2022, to exchange European experiences in the field of solar and wind power generation was one of the projects funded by this programme (EEAS, 2022).

When Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Alikhan Smailov and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen signed the Strategic Partnerships on Sustainable Raw Materials, Batteries, and Renewable Hydrogen Value Chains in November 2022 during the COP27 in Egypt, it was one of the major turning points in the energy relations between the two parties. In light of the present geopolitical

shifts, this initiative is the first step toward improving Europe's supply of vital raw materials for the decarbonization process as well as the green and digital transformation (EEAS, 2023). Examples of these materials include polysilicon, a semiconductor, lithium and cobalt used in the manufacturing of batteries, and earth magnets used in wind turbines (EEAS, 2022). As a follow-up to this partnership, Tau-Ken Samruk (TKS) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in June 2023 at the Astana Mining and Metallurgy Congress, which the European Commission Executive Vice-President for Green Deal, Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight attended (EEAS, 2023). Moreover, in June 2022, when the Strategic Partnership was launched, the EU introduced another project called Sustainable Energy Connectivity in Central Asia (SECCA). The main goal of this initiative is to boost investment, efficiency, and knowledge in alternative energy, as well as reinforce policies aimed at transitioning to a renewable energy system (EEAS, 2022).

The European Union has frequently stated that it is willing to improve ties in the energy sector in the years since the start of the war in Ukraine. During the 20th meeting of the Kazakhstan-EU Cooperation Council in October 2022, the EU acknowledged Kazakhstan's contribution to its energy security, offered support for the advancement of renewable energy sources, and urged Kazakhstan to participate in the Global Methane Pledge (European Council, 2023). It is a global target, introduced at COP26 by the EU and the US, to reduce CH₄ emissions to 30% by 2030 (Global Methane Pledge, 2023). At the beginning of June 2023, Kazakhstan took part in the second EU-Central Asia Economic Forum, where three priorities, including green and digital transitions, were discussed. At this point, all states recognized the consequences of global warming in the region and agreed on the need for actions and policies, such as investments in alternative energy and enhancing trade in the area of electricity that is produced sustainably, to transform into a green economy. Parties also reaffirmed their support for the Regional Team Europe Initiative on Water, Energy, and Climate Change, which assists Central Asian states in realizing the full potential of alternative energy sources like solar, wind, and hydropower (EEAS, 2023). Another event hosted in the same month was the EU-Central Asia: 10th High-Level

Political and Security Dialogue, at which the EU, by accentuating the situation in Ukraine and instability in Afghanistan, reiterated its commitment to the region and enhanced cooperation, including in the energy sector (EEAS, 2023).

President Tokayev's January visit to Italy was one of the milestone events that marked the start of 2024. He invited Italian companies to explore investment opportunities in Kazakhstan, including critical raw material supply, renewable energy, and the oil and gas industries. It is noteworthy that in 2023, Kazakhstan and Italy had trade worth approximately \$12 billion, with nearly 95% of Kazakhstan's exports consisting of crude oil, and due to this reason, Italy is the main importer of Kazakh oil in Europe. Economic cooperation between two states goes beyond simple trade, covering infrastructure as well. To illustrate, KazMunayGas and Italian company Eni signed an agreement on constructing a hybrid power station consisting of solar and wind plants in Zhanaozen city needed for KMG's local facilities. Despite already having ENI's investment projects in Kazakhstan, such as Badamasha wind farms in Aktobe, this project is an unprecedented case for Kazakhstan of a hybrid plant (Satubaldina, 2024).

2.3 Democratisation and Development

The cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan lies beyond economic ties. This section will explore the democratisation and development efforts before and after the start of the Russo-Ukrainian War. It will cover essential topics such as education, diplomatic visits of leaders of both the EU and Kazakhstan, climate change initiatives, human rights, corruption issues, justice, and home affairs.

2018-2021. The pre-war period of relations between the EU and Kazakhstan can be described by Joint Communication with the European Parliament and the Council: The EU and Central Asia: New Opportunities for a Stronger Partnership. The document emphasises the importance of Central Asian states and their geopolitical features and admits European interest in cooperation. The strategy suggests main priorities: to develop Central Asian resilience towards internal and external challenges such as

globalisation and climate change and to strengthen bilateral relations (EEAS & European Commission, 2019).

Considerable concern was expressed by the EU about issues of human rights violations. The Subcommittee on Justice and Home Affairs and the Human Rights Dialogue took place in 2019 between Kazakhstan and the EU. The issue of human rights was discussed during the dialogue, and positive results such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention against Discrimination in Education were highlighted. Moreover, the EU opened the discussion regarding peaceful demonstrations and freedom of speech (European External Action Service, 2019). OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission mentioned serious violations during the 2019 presidential elections in Kazakhstan, such as group voting and a series of identical signatures of voters. The committee called on the government to correct the inconsistency in the conduct of elections and expressed readiness to continue cooperation within the framework of EPCA (EEAS, 2019).

The initiatives to overcome post-pandemic crises proceeded in 2020. During the 18th meeting of the EU-Kazakhstan Cooperation Committee, the EU announced the Central Asia COVID-19 Crisis Response Solidarity Programme, which specifically concentrates on Kazakhstan and assistance to overcome pandemic consequences (EEAS, 2020). As a result of the Asia-Europe Meeting, the significance of international traffic and critical transportation infrastructure as well as the continuation of cooperation on financial resilience were emphasised (EEAS, 2020).

The year 2021 marked a prosperous year in terms of improving democratisation in Central Asia and Kazakhstan in particular, with an emphasis on the development of the region. For instance, a reoccurring Human Rights Dialogue and Subcommittee on Justice and Home Affairs were held in Kazakhstan on December 2 and 3. During the Dialogue, President Tokayev's reforms concerning human rights and their implementation were discussed (EEAS, 2021). The Subcommittee on Justice and Home Affairs introduced the actions taken by Kazakhstan to enhance the administrative and criminal systems. These measures include a rise in the number of skilled lawyers and an improvement in e-services for residents (EEAS, 2021). Furthermore, a crucial topic of the death penalty was brought up by

Kazakhstan, which has taken its first steps to abolish it in the state by announcing the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in January 2021 (EEAS, 2021). Human rights and their protection have always been important to the EU, and one of the projects demonstrating this endeavour is “Leaders of Change,” created by a collaboration between Kazakhstan’s and Czech public foundations “Erkindik Qanaty” and Free Press for Eastern Europe; this project is for the activists of Kazakhstan who advocate and promote human rights (EEAS, 2021). Education is also a significant aspect of the development and prosperity of a nation and the EU supports initiatives regarding the education sector by funding various projects, including the 24-month initiative "School of Public Action - Western Kazakhstan" (EEAS, 2021). Another yet crucial project is ENGINE, which is responsible for providing a training course for participants about the improvement of digital skills, along with the provision of information and technologies needed for buildings and structures (EEAS, 2021). Kazakhstan is not the only state in Central Asia that has strong ties with the EU. For example, Tajikistan, being one of the frontline countries facing the crisis in Afghanistan and its implications, receives aid and gratitude from the EU when it comes to the border, migration control and humanitarian help (EEAS, 2021).

2022-2024. To start with the education sector, it is crucial to mention that Kazakhstan is the only state in the Central Asian region that entered the Bologna Process by signing the Bologna Declaration in March 2010 (Independent Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, n.d). It brought major changes to the system, adjusting it to European standards. Another project that facilitated the improvement of education in Kazakhstan is the Erasmus+ programme dedicated to higher education and training opportunities for students, which allows the exchange of expertise. For example, in 2022, the number of scholarships allocated for Kazakhstan was equal to 59 (EEAS, 2023). Moreover, the same year, the regional Dialogue and Actions for Resourceful Youth in Central Asia (DARYA) was launched; it targeted the development of the quality of education and training as well as employment systems in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan after the Covid-19 (European

Training Foundation, 2022). Educated youth are the engine of progress, and it makes total sense that the EU targets them to have a positive influence in Kazakhstan.

The geopolitical situation in the world has changed since the beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian War, and to adjust to these changes, the EU has heightened its involvement with its strategic partners, including Kazakhstan. From August 21 to August 25, 2023, for instance, a delegation of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the EU visited Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, illustrating an increased interest in the region. The main issue discussed during the visit was the possibility of sanction evasion by Russia. However, David McAllister, the chair of the Committee, noted the importance of Central Asia in the energy sector, emphasising the Trans-Caspian Corridor as an alternative route that connects Europe with the Central Asian raw materials market, bypassing sanctioned states. He also mentioned economic and political reforms in Kazakhstan alongside the human rights situation (EEAS, 2023). In the same year, the annual High-Level Political and Security Dialogue between the EU and the Central Asian states was held in Astana. It focused, yet again, on the assurance of the EU's intentions to strengthen cooperation with the region, paying additional attention to the management of water resources, climate regulation, energy, terrorism, etc (EEAS, 2023).

Another important aspect is human rights improvement ambition. According to the European External Action Service, there were four major projects launched before the start of the war in Ukraine; two of them focused on human rights and democracy. It must be noted, that these projects are still in force as of March 2023. One of the initiatives endeavours to eradicate torture and ill-treatment, and the other targets the creation of a dialogue to increase social involvement in economic and human rights issues by improving legal and media literacy (EEAS, 2022; EEAS, 2022). Additionally, on March 9 of the same year, the EU and Kazakhstan had the 14th Human Rights Dialogue in Brussels, where the former remembered the social unrest that occurred in January 2022 in Kazakhstan, known as "Bloody January", stressing the necessity to have a complete, transparent investigation of the event. Furthermore, the EU reminded Kazakhstan to ensure the freedom of assembly and association for the citizens of the country (EEAS, 2022). As for justice and home affairs, these aspects were also on the agenda of the

20th Subcommittee on Justice and Home Affairs meeting that took place simultaneously with the Human Rights Dialogue. The results of endeavours to combat money laundering, corruption, human trafficking and other crucial issues were presented. In addition, Kazakhstan's side also demonstrated the actions that were implemented for the advancement of the systems of administrative and criminal justice in the state (EEAS, 2022). Protection of human rights and freedoms is an integral part of the EU's values, and if Kazakhstan wants to have successful and flourishing relations in any aspect, be it economic or social, it must strive to ensure these rights.

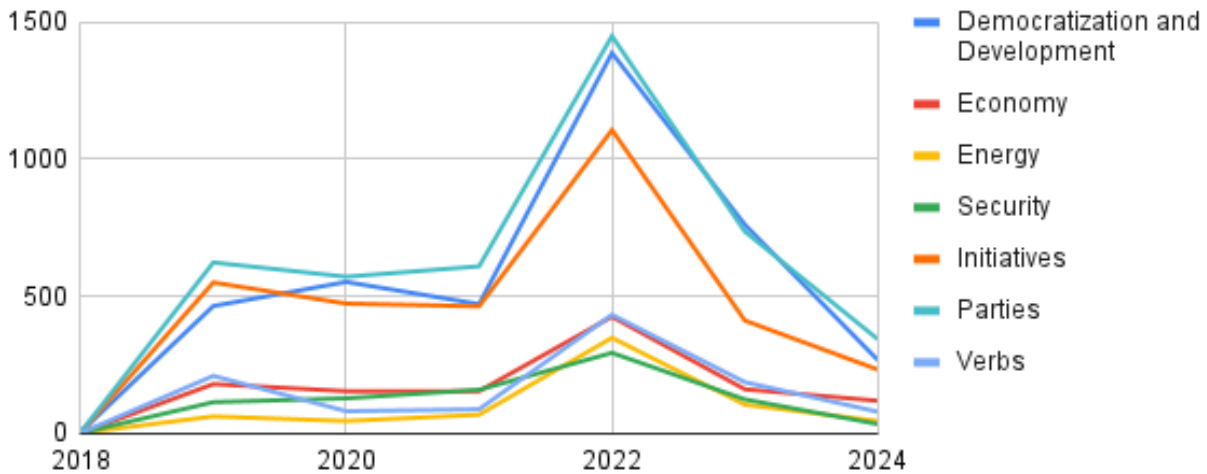
Overall, the EU aims to tackle various issues concurrently and an example of this might be a comprehensive partnership program with 72 concrete actions that put water management, climate and energy first (Satubaldina, 2024). Shifting the focus to the everlasting climate change issue, an important initiative can be highlighted. In May 2022, the EU-financed JAILYM Project was introduced; its main goal is to change non-climate-friendly practices on pastures in the Enbekshi-Kazakh district of the Almaty region. The initiative aims to offer guidance and technical assistance regarding the optimization of animal husbandry practices, addressing the challenges posed by climate change, and facilitating adaptation strategies (EEAS, 2022). Surely these are not the only projects for the improvement of social well-being and security sponsored by the EU. During the 18th EU-Central Asia Ministerial Meeting, for instance, the performance of the Border Management Programme in Central Asia (BOMCA) and the counter-terrorism project Law Enforcement in Central Asia (LEICA) was evaluated and discussed (EEAS, 2022). All of these efforts will have positive consequences in a broader sense, contributing to the reduction of anthropogenic contamination and the improvement of public welfare.

3. Content Analysis

There are 7 categories identified: Democratisation and Development with 36 specific terms, Economy with 6 terms, Energy with 14 terms, Security with 13 terms, Initiatives with 16 terms, Parties with 6 terms, and Verbs with 8 terms. The total count of terms in each category from 2018 to 2024 is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Number of terms in categories used from 2018 to 2024



The lowest indicators are in 2018 since press materials became available starting at the end of this year. In 2019, the Democratisation and Development, Parties, and Initiatives categories experienced a sharp increase since the first contains a large number of terms in general (36) and the second and third contain general words that are present in each press material. From 2019 to 2021, the Energy and Economy categories plateaued, while others experienced slight fluctuations, illustrating the general stability of relations between Kazakhstan and the European Union. It is observed that the busiest year is 2022, as it has the highest frequency of specific terms appearing in each category. This year marks the invasion of Ukraine, which can explain the rise in activity between the two parties. In 2023, there is a sharp fall in the frequency of words, but the activity is still higher than before 2022. The fact that 2024 is only halfway through the year explains why there has been a decline in activity in each category as of today.

The following 7 tables illustrate the top 5 most frequent words in each category through the three timeframes - 2018-2021, 2022 and 2023-2024. 2022 is considered separately since, from the graph above, it can be seen that this year marks the highest amount of words in each category, which can be interpreted as a high level of activity from the European side towards Kazakhstan.

Table 1

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Democratisation and Development

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	2023-2024 Count
Democratisation and Development	1490	Democratisation and Development	1388	Democratisation and Development	1031
human*	168	development	150	rights	87
rights	167	sustain*	126	human*	85
development	158	disaster	103	child*	84
sustain*	129	constitut*	91	educat*	84
environment*	83	human*	78	sustain*	66

It can be observed that words containing “human*” are the most frequently appearing in 2018-2021, indicating that humanitarian aid and human rights, for instance, were more crucial in EU-Kazakhstan relations. However, its importance decreased in 2022, ranking 5th and the “development” rose from 3rd place to 1st, implying that the development of various projects regarding different spheres became essential to the EU. It should be mentioned that “rights” and “human*” resurfaced in 2023-2024 suggesting that these topics regained relevance but diminished almost two times compared to the pre-war period.

Table 2

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Economy

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	
Economy	485	Economy	425	Economy	278
econom*	206	econom*	116	econom*	71
trade	117	trade	121	invest*	65
invest*	97	invest*	113	trade	60
transport*	33	transport*	38	transport*	46
market*	24	market*	22	sanction*	22

The number of words in the period of 2018-2021 equals 485, and for the year 2022, 425. The top 5 terms in these years are the same: econom*, trade, invest*, transport*, and market*. Notably, terms comprising of “econom*” hold 1st place throughout the years, including 2023-2024. Nonetheless, it

experienced a significant drop in 2022, which accounts for almost 50 per cent of the loss. The last period has similar patterns with previous years except for the last expression - “sanction*,” surfacing and signifying that attention is paid to sanction-based themes in these years.

Table 3

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Energy

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	
Energy	172	Energy	348	Energy	149
energ*	62	energ*	147	energ*	65
green	62	green	86	green	23
renewable	11	renewable	40	raw	14
nuclear	9	raw	17	critical	12
critical	8	hydro*	16	renewable	12

Table 3 demonstrates the list of patterns in the category of energy cited most often. The terms “energ*” and “green” are leading consistently throughout the period, starting with 2018-2021, when both reached the value of 62; nevertheless, the usage of both patterns is on the rise in 2022, reaching the values of 147 and 86, respectively. The word “renewable” experiences the same changes, going up sharply from 11 to 40 in 2022 and then showing up on the list as being in 5th place in the 2023-2024 period instead of 3rd in 2022. The word “raw” shows an increase in usage throughout the overall period. It became the 4th most frequently used in 2022 and reached 3rd place in further periods. The term “hydro*” entered the list as the 5th in 2022, and then experienced a decrease in the 2023-2024 period. The term “critical” is seen in the 5th place in 2018-2021 years and increases in the value of mentioned cases only in 2023-2024 period, reaching a value of 12.

Table 4

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Security

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	2023-2024 Count
Security	398	Security	293	Security	166
security	113	Afghan	88	Afghan	55

Afghan	98	security	67	security	50
peace*	64	peace*	28	peace*	33
traffic*	30	war	19	war	13
stabil*	28	traffic*	18	stabil*	12

The most frequently mentioned patterns over the full selected period remain the same. The words “security” and “Afghan” are used throughout the whole period most often. The “peace” pattern remains in 3rd place from 2018 until 2024. The word “traffic*,” which refers to drug and human trafficking, was in 4th place in 2018-2021, but decreased in frequency almost twice in 2022 and disappeared from the top 5 list in 2023-2024, demonstrating that it became less important for the EU’s agenda. While the word “war” enters the list of most frequently used words in 2022 and remains stable in further periods. The pattern “stabil*”, which refers to stability, stable and stabilisation, was the 5th in the list before 2022, but with the start of the war in Ukraine, it leaves the list of words mentioned most often and returns in 2023-24, taking the 5th place.

Table 5

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Initiatives

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	
Initiatives	1488	Initiatives	1107	Initiatives	664
Cooperat*	377	Cooperat*	211	Cooperat*	130
Partner*	214	Project*	167	Partner*	88
Strateg*	107	Partner*	128	Meeting*	55
Action*	88	Program*	117	Dialogue*	45
Dialogue*	87	Strateg*	86	Forum*	45

Table 5 demonstrates the list of patterns in the category of “Initiatives” mentioned most often. The pattern “cooperat*” remains constantly the most frequently used word throughout the period. The term “partner*” was used 214 times during the first period; the usage is in decline in 2022, reaching 3rd place in the list after the 2nd previously. However, the indicator increased in the 2023-2024 period. The same trend is experienced by the word “dialogue*.” The value starts with 87 in 2018-2021 in the 5th place,

decreases and leaves the top 5 list in 2022, and goes up to 4th place in the last period, reaching the value of 45. Despite the word “action*” being used 88 times in the first period, having 4th place in the list, its value decreases in 2022 and further, no longer being included in the top.

Table 6

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Parties

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	2023-2024 Count
Parties	1805	Parties	1450	Parties	1079
EU+Europe*	910	EU+Europe*	598	EU+Europe*	461
Central Asia*	603	Central Asia*	431	Kazakh*	310
Kazakh*	269	Kazakh*	359	Central Asia*	255
Russia*	18	Russia*	33	Ukrain*	27
Ukrain*	5	Ukrain*	29	Russia*	26

Table 5 demonstrates that the most popular reference is the EU itself as it conducts all of the activities. During 2018-2022, the reference to Central Asia was the most frequent among all other parties besides the EU, while in 2023-2024 Kazakhstan became the most mentioned word on the EU’s agenda. It can also be noted that before the war, mentions of Kazakhstan were almost 100 times lower than in 2022. Russia took 4th place in 2018-2022 and Ukraine took 5th place in the following years. However, if Ukraine was mentioned only 5 times before the war, in 2022 it was mentioned almost six times more, reaching a value of 29. In 2023-2024, this number decreased slightly and amounted to 27 times. If Russia was mentioned 18 times before the war, then in the year of the invasion, this number almost doubled and was equal to 33.

Table 7

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Verbs

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	2023-2024 Count
Verbs	376	Verbs	432	Verbs	264
support	123	support	136	support	95
promote	108	develop	96	develop	37

develop	42	implement	61	enhance	37
enhance	33	enhance	50	promote	37
improve	30	improve	44	improve	21

The main trend observed from the table is that “support” is the main word that characterises the EU-Kazakhstan relations in the whole period. If before 2022 the verb “promote” occupied the 2nd place, when the war began, “develop” took this place. The other verbs “improve” and “enhance” hold the last two positions. Overall, the value of all of the verbs used was higher in 2022, showcasing events conducted actively between Kazakhstan and the EU this year, but the activity decreased between 2023 and 2024. The word “implement” entered the list only in 2022 in the 3rd place, emphasising the period of taking action.

3.1 Content Analysis Findings

In general, 2022 is considered the most active year as the count of words in all of the categories is the highest compared to other periods, implying that the cooperation between Kazakhstan and the EU was very intense when the war began.

From the Democratisation and Development category, it can be seen that the persistent human rights agenda before the war was replaced by the development narrative in 2022. However, human rights issues returned in 2023-2024, re-taking 1st place. In the Economy section, there were no significant changes in narrative throughout the whole period, despite the fact that in 2023-2024, the word “sanctions” entered the list of the most common words. Concerning energy, the word “green,” which refers to the green economy and green energy, has been in 2nd place from the very beginning until today; the word “hydro*,” referring to hydropower; and the word “renewable” significantly increased in 2022, showcasing that the EU started to pay more attention to cooperation in the field of sustainable energy as it reduced dependency on fossil fuels coming from Russia in the face of invasion. In the Security category, words like “security,” “Afghan*,” and “peace*” were stable throughout the entire period, but the discourse about war appeared in 2022 and remained constant till today. It is

noteworthy that in the Initiatives section, the activity in 2022 alone was relatively high compared to four years before the war began and two years after. As for the parties in the press materials, the reference to Kazakhstan appeared more often in 2022, while before the war, the EU mentioned Central Asia more frequently than Kazakhstan. From the Verbs sections, it can be noticed that the relationships are mainly built on supportive actions throughout the years, but before the war, the 2nd priority was “to promote” and after the war began, it was replaced by “to develop.”

4. Theoretical Explanation

The findings can be explained through the lens of Kenneth Waltz’s structural realism theory. According to neorealism, state behaviour can be predicted by the assumption that the international system is anarchic and states act in a self-help manner to reach their ultimate goal, which is security (Waltz, 1979).

To achieve security, Kazakhstan sticks to a multivector policy to manoeuvre and balance between major powers to set favourable and pragmatic relationships and preserve non-ideological, neutral status (Gnedina, 2015). This allows Kazakhstan to engage many actors to diversify its opportunities and pursue national interests, such as geopolitical stability and resistance to economic challenges. It is achieved by soft-balancing Russian power via non-military methods (economic, diplomatic and institutional instruments).

The motivation behind the intensified relations lies in the EU's dependence on fossil fuels that previously came from Russia. However, at this point, the priority of the EU is the development of sustainable energy, for which Kazakhstan exports raw materials. Nevertheless, the EU still employs nonrenewable energy sources where Kazakhstan supplies it with petroleum, gas and coal.

Conclusion

The current study’s goal was to explore and understand how the war in Ukraine affected cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan. Through the analysis and interpretation of the data,

several conclusions can be drawn, shedding light on the influence of war on relations between the aforementioned actors.

The Kazakhstan-EU partnership has shown resilience and adaptability across democratisation and development, economy and energy fields in the realities of the challenges posed by the Russo-Ukrainian war. The Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA) is the basis for Kazakhstan-EU economic relations. Both sides strive to ensure economic prosperity by adhering to sustainable management of raw materials. The EU's interest in transforming an important sector of the economy, namely energy, with an emphasis on renewable sources is revealed by initiatives such as the Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Partnerships on Sustainable Raw Materials, Batteries, and Renewable Hydrogen Value Chains signed in 2022. Moreover, establishing efficient trade routes in the face of geopolitical disruptions is crucial for both parties, as demonstrated by recent events such as the Investors Forum for EU-Central Asia Transport Connectivity and the EU-Central Asian Connectivity Conference. Focusing on the energy sector, the cooperation between the two showcases mutual benefit, as Kazakhstan supplies Europe with raw materials and the latter provides support and invests in the former's energy industry. In general, the energy partnership between the EU and Kazakhstan, taken as a whole, shows a shared commitment to sustainable development, energy security, and tackling global challenges in the shift to a low-carbon future. It was intensified with sanctions against Russia, which led to the acceleration of the enhancement of renewable energy sources by Europe. In the sphere of democratisation and development, educational programs, diplomatic exchanges, human rights advancements and other important projects contributing to the region's sustainability signify a consolidation of ties that extends beyond economic transactions. These findings from the three main areas of cooperation illustrate that relations between Kazakhstan and Europe intensified significantly after the invasion of Ukraine.

From the content analysis, the dynamic shift in the discourse between Kazakhstan and the EU, particularly in the pivotal year of 2022, when the war started, can be highlighted. This was a peak year for various sectors, indicating heightened collaboration in the face of the developing conflict. In the

Democratisation and Development category, the topic of human rights was significant for the EU before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, but development became the top priority for the Union after the war began. In the Economy section, the narrative remained relatively unchanged throughout the period, although “sanctions” became one of the most frequently mentioned terms in 2023-2024, showing the EU’s concern about geopolitics. In the Energy category, increased attention to green energy can be observed, especially in 2022 in the face of energy disruptions because of Russia. It can be seen that the issue concerning Afghanistan is an essential part of the EU-Kazakhstan interaction agenda throughout three periods, but in 2022, the agenda started mentioning the word “war.” In the Initiatives section, activity in 2022 was notably higher compared to the four years before the war and the two years after. In the Parties section, Kazakhstan is referenced more frequently in 2022, whereas the Central Asian region is taken as a whole and mentioned more often than the former before the start of the war. In the Verbs section, relationships were mainly built on supportive actions. Before the war, the focus was on promoting, but after the war began, it shifted to developing.

These results from the two parts of the study can be explained through the prism of structural realism since the EU as well as Kazakhstan pursue the goal of resisting geopolitical challenges.

Connecting the findings from both parts of the study, it is evident that the Russo-Ukrainian war has intensified Kazakhstan-EU cooperation. The intense interaction in various sectors demonstrates the adaptability of relations to address the current geopolitical situation. The emphasis on sustainable energy, development initiatives, and security concerns highlights a strategic move aimed at enhancing regional stability. In general, the interests of the EU in terms of initiatives towards Kazakhstan have increased, particularly in the energy sector, supporting the assumption.

This research has contributed to the existing literature on Kazakhstani-European relations, offering insights into the strategic importance of Kazakhstan for the EU as an institution. Moreover, it enriches existing knowledge of broader topics such as geopolitics and crisis management. Further research could be done on particular facets of Kazakhstan-EU cooperation mentioned in this study, such as the impact of the war in Ukraine on trade, energy and the implementation of joint projects promoting

sustainability and human rights. As for the recommendations, additional investments in the renewable energy sector and enhancing diplomatic connections to foster stability and prosperity in the region are the potential steps for mutual benefit.

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Appendices

Appendix 1.

Press materials published by the European External Action Service - Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2018-2024.

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/press-material_en?f%5B0%5D=press_site%3AKazakhstan&s=222

2018

- 1) Media Advisory: Press Point following the EU-Central Asia Ministerial Meeting, 21.11.2018

2019

- 1) Joint Communication on the EU and Central Asia: New opportunities for a stronger partnership, 15.05.2019
- 2) Statement by the Spokesperson on the presidential elections in the Republic of Kazakhstan, 10.06.2019
- 3) Council of the EU conclusions on the new EU strategy for Central Asia, 17.06.2019
- 4) European Union and Central Asia: New Partnership in Action, 09.09.2019
- 5) The EU co-funded Low Enriched Uranium Bank becomes operational at a purpose-built facility in Kazakhstan, 17.10.2019
- 6) Resource Efficiency and Responsible Consumption Key to Move Towards a Green Economy and Contribute to Sustainable Development, 13.11.2019
- 7) EU and Kazakhstan hold Subcommittee on Justice and Home Affairs and the Human Rights Dialogue, 20.11.2019

2020

- 1) Entry into Force of the EU-Kazakhstan Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement – 1

March 2020, 25.02.2020

- 2) Joint Statement to Mark the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia IDAHOBiT, 17.05.2020
- 3) World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development: Joint Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell and Commissioner Mariya Gabriel, 20.05.2020
- 4) Central Asia: High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell holds video conference with Foreign Ministers in the region, 12.06.2020
- 5) World Refugee Day, 20 June 2020: Joint Statement by the European Commission and the High Representative, 19.06.2020
- 6) International Day in Support of Victims of Torture: Statement by the EU High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell, 25.06.2020
- 7) Nur-Sultan. Pandemic-hit small and medium-sized enterprises in Central Asia to get boost from European Union and International Trade Centre, 16.07.2020
- 8) Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe OSCE: Statement by the Spokesperson on the re-appointment of the senior leadership, 17.07.2020
- 9) International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence based on Religion or Belief: declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union, 21.08.2020
- 10) Europe in the face of the new empires, 30.08.2020
- 11) Brussels. Coronavirus: Asia-Europe Meeting ASEM Statement, 07.09.2020
- 12) Brussels. EU-Kazakhstan Cooperation Committee, 25.09.2020
- 13) Brussels. EU-Kazakhstan Cooperation Committee, 25.09.2020
- 14) Brussels Video message by the High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the Central Asia Civil Society Forum, 27.10.2020
- 15) Brussels. Video message by the High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the Central Asia Civil Society Forum, 27.10.2020
- 16) Brussels Joint Communiqué: 16th EU-Central Asia Ministerial Meeting, 17.11.2020

- 17) Gender Action Plan – putting women and girls' rights at the heart of the global recovery for a gender-equal world, 25.11.2020.
- 18) Brussels. EU and Kazakhstan hold annual Human Rights Dialogue and Subcommittee on Justice and Home Affairs, 27.11.2020
- 19) Brussels OSCE: Remarks by the High Representative/Vice-President, Josep Borrell, at the 27th Ministerial Council, 03.12.2020
- 20) Brussels OSCE: Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell on the appointment of a new leadership, 04.12.2020
- 21) Central Asia: Online Economic Forum “EU-Central Asia Dialogue on Partnership for Prosperity”, 07.12.2020
- 22) Remarks by EU Ambassador Sven-Olov Carlsson at the Kazakhstan – Northern Europe Investment Roundtable, 07.12.2020
- 23) International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime: Statement by HR/VP Josep Borrell, 09.12.2020
- 24) Gender Action Plan III: Presidency issues conclusions welcoming an ambitious agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment in EU external action, 16.12.2020
- 25) International Migrants Day: Joint Statement by the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, 17.12.2020

2021

- 1) Kazakhstan: Statement by the Spokesperson on steps to abolish the death penalty, 07.01.2021
- 2) Kazakhstan: Statement by the Spokesperson on the parliamentary elections, 11.01.2021
- 3) Kazakhstan: Statement by the Spokesperson on the increasing pressure on human rights NGOs, 01.02.2021
- 4) Kazakhstan: Speech on behalf of High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the EP

- debate on the human rights situation in the country, 11.02.2021
- 5) Afghanistan Peace Process: EU-Central Asia Communiqué by EU and Central Asia Special Envoys, 15.04.2021
 - 6) The EU shares experience on Environmental Economics with university teachers of Central Asia, 30.04.2021
 - 7) Leaders of Change: how can a human rights defender become an influencer?, 28.05.2021
 - 8) European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear CBRN Centres of Excellence Initiative: National Focal Points of Central Asia discuss regional priorities in CBRN risks mitigation during the 14th Round-Table Meeting, 03.06.2021
 - 9) European Union and Council of Europe reiterate their continued support to reforms to ensure human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Central Asia, 04.06.2021
 - 10) First activities within the framework of the EU-funded project "School of public action - Western Kazakhstan", 07.06.2021
 - 11) Central Asia and Afghanistan: EU, Central Asian states and Afghanistan hold annual political and security dialogue, 01.07.2021
 - 12) Moving past trade flow obstacles in Central Asia: Regional Expert Meeting, 05.07.2021
 - 13) CLEANTECH LATVIA” and the Association "Kazakhstan Su Arnasy" KSA invites to participate in pilot training course “Building Information modelling Technologies”, 24.08.2021
 - 14) European and World Day against the Death Penalty, 10.10.2021: Joint statement by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union and the Secretary-General on behalf of the Council of Europe, 8.10.2021
 - 15) EU – Central Asia Economic Forum: bringing regions closer #EUCA21, 02.11.2021
 - 16) EU – Central Asia Economic Forum: bringing regions closer, 5.11.2021
 - 17) EU-Central Asia Economic Forum - Joint press statement, 05.11.2021
 - 18) EU-Central Asia Ministerial Meeting: Press remarks by High Representative Josep Borrell, 22.11.2021

- 19) Joint Communiqué: 17th EU-Central Asia Ministerial Meeting, 22.11.2021
- 20) 17th EU-Central Asia Ministerial Meeting – Turning Challenges into Opportunities, 22.11.2021
- 21) Central Asia: Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell to the press, 24.11.2021
- 22) Kazakhstan: Annual Human Rights Dialogue and Subcommittee on Justice and Home Affairs, 03.12.2021
- 23) The workshops on Preparation of Applications for Social Projects held in Mangystau, 03.12.2021

2022

- 1) Kazakhstan: Statement by the Spokesperson on the latest developments, 05.01.2022
- 2) Kazakhstan: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on the situation, 08.01.2022
- 3) Risk Assessment in Central Asia will contribute to measures against natural hazards, 18.01.2022
- 4) Kazakhstan: Speech on behalf of High Representative/Vice President Josep Borrell at the EP Plenary, 19.01.2022
- 5) Joint statement following the EU and Central Asia Special Envoys for Afghanistan and EU Special Representative for Central Asia meeting in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 23.02.2022
- 6) EU and WHO release comic book on COVID-19 preventive measures for children, 17.03.2022
- 7) The Second Steering Committee Meeting of the European Union - funded Strengthening Financial Resilience & Accelerating Risk Reduction Program in Central Asia provides updates on risk reduction actions in the region, 18.03.2022
- 8) Border Guard and Law Enforcement Agencies of Central Asia continue to enhance cooperation in investigating cross-border crimes, 30.03.2022
- 9) European Union project helps Kazakhstani human rights defenders to improve media coverage of human rights topic, 04.04.2022
- 10) EU-Kazakhstan: 19th Cooperation Committee Meeting, 05.04.2022

- 11) EU project promotes green financing in Kazakhstan's tourism sector, 07.04.2022
- 12) European Union supports Central Asia in application of waste-to-energy solutions, 08.04.2022
- 13) European Union-Funded Project Supported the City of Nur-Sultan to Conduct a Detailed Disaster Resilience Scorecard Assessment, 13.04.2022
- 14) EU Regional project facilitates ITC and DHL partnership to drive sales in Central Asia, 18.04.2022
- 15) The EU-funded Programme continues to enhancing the capacity of criminal intelligence officers in Kazakhstan, 20.04.2022
- 16) European Union organises the EU Mini Model Game 2022, 22.04.2022
- 17) European Union funded Ready4Trade project simplifies trade procedures in Central Asia, 11.05.2022
- 18) Leaders of Change: Ceremony for Launching Communication Campaigns, 16.05.2022
- 19) EU-Central Asia: Annual high-level Political and Security Dialogue held in Brussels, 18.05.2022
- 20) Concert to mark Europe Month in Kazakhstan, 18.05.2022
- 21) European Union strengthened Kazakh authorities' capacities to investigate cross-border crimes, 19.05.2022
- 22) European Union promotes development of renewable energy sector in Central Asia, 20.05.2022
- 23) European Union supports sustainable grazing and pasture management in Kazakhstan, 23.05.2022
- 24) BOMCA contributes to assurance of legal guarantees and human rights protection in the law enforcement systems of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, 25.05.2022
- 25) European Union-UNICEF joint programme helped 1,500 migrant children in Kazakhstan to receive birth certificates, 27.05.2022
- 26) Joint Press Statement by EU and Central Asia Special Representatives and Special Envoys for Afghanistan, 01.06.2022
- 27) Winners of the EU Contest on Renewable Energy for Central Asian Journalists announced,

06.06.2022

- 28) Kazakhstan: Statement by the Spokesperson on the Constitutional Referendum, 07.06.2022
- 29) EU project supports Karaganda Region in tackling climate change, 08.06.2022
- 30) Kazakhstan, European Union and UNICEF works jointly on successful reintegration of families and children returned from conflict zones, 09.06.2022
- 31) Spotlight Initiative for Central Asia and Afghanistan convenes II Regional Steering Committee Meeting, 13.06.2022
- 32) The EU-funded Programme improves information exchange for border crime analysis in Central Asia, 16.06.2022
- 33) Central Asian countries discussed progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals at a high-level summit in Almaty, 16.06.2022
- 34) CADAP Programme and its national partners wrapping up the progress and making plans for the future, 16.06.2022
- 35) EU project supports regional exchange of housing experiences in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, 16.06.2022
- 36) EU boosts collaboration between government and tourism business community in Kazakhstan, 23.06.2022
- 37) EU-funded project helps make Central Asian cities safer and sustainable, 23.06.2022
- 38) EU-ITC Ready4Trade project helps Kazakhstan businesses reach \$500,000 in online sales, 28.06.2022
- 39) European Union supports Kazakhstan in development of National Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production, 28.06.2022
- 40) European Union supports digital transformation for strengthened state-citizens interaction in Kazakhstan, 29.06.2022
- 41) Consolidation of efforts in training on identification and profiling, 01.07.2022
- 42) European Union supports Green Energy and Waste Recycling in Central Asia, 04.07.2022

- 43) European Union-ITC project Ready4Trade launched the Kazakhstan Trade Portal, 04.07.2022
- 44) EXCHANGE OF HOUSING EXPERIENCE WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION, 14.07.2022
- 45) 10th EU-Kazakhstan High-Level Business Platform focussed on Cooperation in the Area of Raw Materials and Sustainable Mining, 15.07.2022
- 46) Workshop on earthquake and flood risk modelling contributes to disaster risk preparedness in Central Asia, 08.08.2022
- 47) Afghan women have completed first year of education within EU-UNDP joint project, 18.08.2022
- 48) 59 new Kazakh students going to study in Europe on the EU scholarships, 06.09.2022
- 49) BOMCA, the EU-funded project on border management reviews its achievements in Kazakhstan for 2022, 06.09.2022
- 50) Regional risk assessment for earthquakes and floods contributes to disaster risk management and financing activities in Central Asia, 09.09.2022
- 51) BOMCA Regional workshop promoted a common understanding and approach to the operation of Joint Investigation Teams investigating cross-border crimes, 14.09.2022
- 52) Best practices in e-QMS to help traders in Central Asia, 14.09.2022
- 53) Ready4Trade project launches free courses for exporters, 19.09.2022
- 54) Karasu River cleaned as part World Cleanup Day international campaign, 19.09.2022
- 55) EU-OECD held a final working group meeting for the peer review meeting on improving framework conditions for the digital transformation of businesses in Kazakhstan, 20.09.2022
- 56) Strategic risk analysis of the law enforcement agencies in Kazakhstan strengthened by EU expertise, 21.09.2022
- 57) European Union and WHO join forces for disease prevention and a stronger health care system in Kazakhstan, 21.09.2022
- 58) Tackling violent extremism in prisons: Kazakhstan hosts international conference to mark the completion of the European Union and the United Nations System joint initiative, 22.09.2022

- 59) Central Asian Experts learnt European experience on environmental permitting and Best Available Techniques in Czechia, 23.09.2022
- 60) Young Entrepreneurs from Central Asia studied Latvian experience in green business development, 03.10.2022
- 61) European Union project shares Estonian experience with housing experts from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, 04.10.2022
- 62) Regional forum on disaster risk reduction: strengthening the resilience of Central Asia, 06.10.2022
- 63) European Union supports integration of Water-Energy-Food Nexus approach into educational curricula in Kazakhstan, 10.10.2022
- 64) Specialists in the field of prevention of torture and ill-treatment are improving their qualifications, 24.10.2022
- 65) Joint press statement of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, 27.10.2022
- 66) Joint press communiqué by Heads of State of Central Asia and the President of the European Council, 27.10.2022
- 67) G7: Press remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell upon arrival at the Ministerial meeting, 04.11.2022
- 68) Statement by President von der Leyen on the occasion of the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding with Kazakhstan, 07.11.2022
- 69) COP27: European Union concludes a strategic partnership with Kazakhstan on raw materials, batteries and renewable hydrogen, 08.11.2022
- 70) Ambassadors of the European Union and the EU Member States visited Atyrau oblast, 14.11.2022
- 71) EU, Kazakhstan and Central Asia: Traditional links revived and given new boost, 16.11.2022
- 72) Central Asia: High Representative Borrell to visit Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, 16.11.2022

- 73) The EU's Youth Action Plan inspired a meeting of the Central Asian Youth during the Samarkand Connectivity Conference, 17.11.2022
- 74) European Union's new project to boost sustainable energy in Central Asia, 17.11.2022
- 75) Kazakhstan: Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the joint press conference with Foreign Minister Mukhtar Tileuberdi, 17.11.2022
- 76) Joint Communiqué: 18th EU-Central Asia Ministerial Meeting, 17.11.2022
- 77) EU-Central Asia Ministerial: Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the joint press conference with Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Vladimir Norov, 17.11.2022
- 78) Opening remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the EU-Central Asia Connectivity Conference: Global Gateway, 18.11.2022
- 79) Joint Declaration: EU-Central Asia Connectivity Conference: Global Gateway, 18.11.2022
- 80) EU-Central Asia Connectivity Conference: Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the joint press conference with Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Vladimir Norov, 18.11.2022
- 81) Central Asia: 18th EU-Central Asia Ministerial Meeting - finding solutions to common challenges, 18.11.2022
- 82) Kazakhstan: Statement by the Spokesperson on the outcome of Presidential elections, 22.11.2022
- 83) European Union meets Central Asia to work jointly on skills development and employment of youth, 22.11.2022
- 84) JOINT STATEMENT on the occasion of the '16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence' global campaign, 25.11.2022
- 85) High-level meeting discusses Central Asia's joint efforts to strengthen climate and disaster resilience, 28.11.2022
- 86) EU Delegation in Kazakhstan marked human rights day, 13.12.2022

2023

- 1) Local EU Statement for the anniversary of the January events in Kazakhstan, 05.01.2023

- 2) Local EU Statement on Recent Attacks on Independent Journalists in Kazakhstan, 20.01.2023
- 3) Afghanistan: Joint Statement of Special Representatives and Envoys from the EU and Central Asian republics after meeting in Brussels, 28.01.2023
- 4) Kazakhstan – EU: Joint statement on the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, 02.02.2023
- 5) Celebration of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the European Union and Kazakhstan, 06.02.2023
- 6) Final meeting of the European Union funded project on “Strengthening Disaster Resilience and Accelerating Implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in Central Asia”, 15.02.2023
- 7) ONE YEAR OF WAR AGAINST UKRAINE: ACTING TOGETHER TO ENSURE INTERNATIONAL LAW WILL PREVAIL, 24.02.2023
- 8) General information regarding applications for Schengen visas by citizens of Kazakhstan after 1 March 2023, 01.03.2023
- 9) EU-Kazakhstan: Annual Human Rights Dialogue and Subcommittee on Justice and Home Affairs meetings, 10.03.2023
- 10) UNICEF experts agree that Kazakhstan's experience repatriating and reintegrating children and women returned from conflict zones serves as an example for many countries, 16.03.2023
- 11) Kazakhstan: Statement by the Spokesperson on the outcome of parliamentary elections, 20.03.2023
- 12) UN Water Conference: EU joins efforts to address the global water crisis and ensure water security for all by 2050, 21.03.2023
- 13) EU Sanctions Training Workshops conducted in Astana 24-25 April, 25.04.2023
- 14) Kazakhstan: HR/VP Josep Borrell met with new Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, 15.05.2023
- 15) Joint Press Statement: 2nd EU-Central Asia Economic Forum, 19.05.2023

- 16) Kazakhstan: 20th Cooperation Committee Meeting with the EU took place in Astana, 23.05.2023
- 17) Joint Statement following the meeting on 26 May 2023 in Ashgabat, 26.05.2023
- 18) Vice-President Šefčovič travels to Kazakhstan to participate in Astana Mining and Metallurgy Congress 2023 and strengthen the bilateral relationship, 31.05.2023
- 19) The President of the European Council Charles Michel will visit Kyrgyzstan on 2-3 June, 01.06.2023
- 20) Vice-President of European Commission Maroš Šefčovič Awarded Winners of the EU Contests #Reels4SustainableEnergy and for the best Sustainable Energy Mural Design, 02.06.2023
- 21) EU-Central Asia: 10th High-Level Political and Security Dialogue held in Astana, 13.06.2023
- 22) BOMCA 10 provided ICT and other specialised equipment to the Kazakh state agencies, 17.08.2023
- 23) Central Asia: Foreign Affairs MEPs conclude visit to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, 25.08.2023
- 24) EU Beach Clean-up in Astana, 19.09.2023
- 25) EUSR's Message for the International Conference "Women, Peace and Security in Central Asia", 16.10.2023
- 26) Criminalization of domestic violence on agenda of Central Asian countries, 19.10.2023
- 27) Central Asia Gateway wins "Best Trade Information Portal" Award at World Investment Forum, 20.10.2023
- 28) 20th meeting of the EU - Kazakhstan Cooperation Council, 23 October 2023
- 29) EUROPEAN UNION SUPPORTS DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL HOUSING MANAGEMENT IN CENTRAL ASIA, 07.11.2023
- 30) Training: Kazakhstan Uncensored, 08.11.2023
- 31) EUSR's Opening Remarks at Regional Forum of the Heads of emergency authorities of Central Asian countries, 10.11.2023
- 32) Opening Remarks on Behalf of the EUSR at the DARYA High-Level Group Meeting, Turin, November 2023, 27.11.2023

33) EUSR's Speech at the International Conference of the Women's Dialogue of Central Asian Countries, 03.12.2023

34) EUSR's Speech at Kazakh Constitutional Court event devoted to the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, 03.12.2023

2024

1) Global Gateway: €10 billion commitment to invest in Trans Caspian Transport Corridor connecting Europe and Central Asia announced at Investors Forum, 29.01.2024

2) Central Asia: Speech by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the Investors' Forum for Transport Connectivity with the EU, 29.01.2024

3) Global Gateway: EIB Global to support sustainable transport in Central Asia with co-financing of almost €1.5 billion, 30.01.2024

4) The CYBER TUMAR' informational and educational campaign launched in Kazakhstan: Protect Children Online, 06.02.2024

5) EUSR's Keynote Speech at EU – Türkiye Cooperation in Central Asia and South Caucasus Conference by KAS and AVIM, 22.02.2024

6) Kazakhstan, the European Union and UNICEF will continue cooperating on reintegrating and supporting returnee children, 23.02.2024

7) EU and international partners agree to expand cooperation on critical raw materials, 05.04.2024

8) EU empowers Central Asian educators with innovative learning tool: DARYA SCAFFOLD training in Kazakhstan, 15.04.2024

9) DARYA SCAFFOLD training in Kazakhstan: EU empowers Kazakhstan educators with innovative learning tool, 19.04.2024

10) European Union brings relief to the victims of floods in Kazakhstan, 19.04.2024

11) Kazakhstan: 7th Subcommittee on Energy, Transport, Environment and Climate Change held in Astana, 20.04.2024

12) Kazakhstan: 15th Annual Human Rights Dialogue held in Astana, 20.04.2024

13) Kazakhstan: 21st Subcommittee on Justice and Home Affairs held in Astana, 20.04.2024

Appendix 2.

Figure 1

Number of terms in categories used from 2018 to 2024

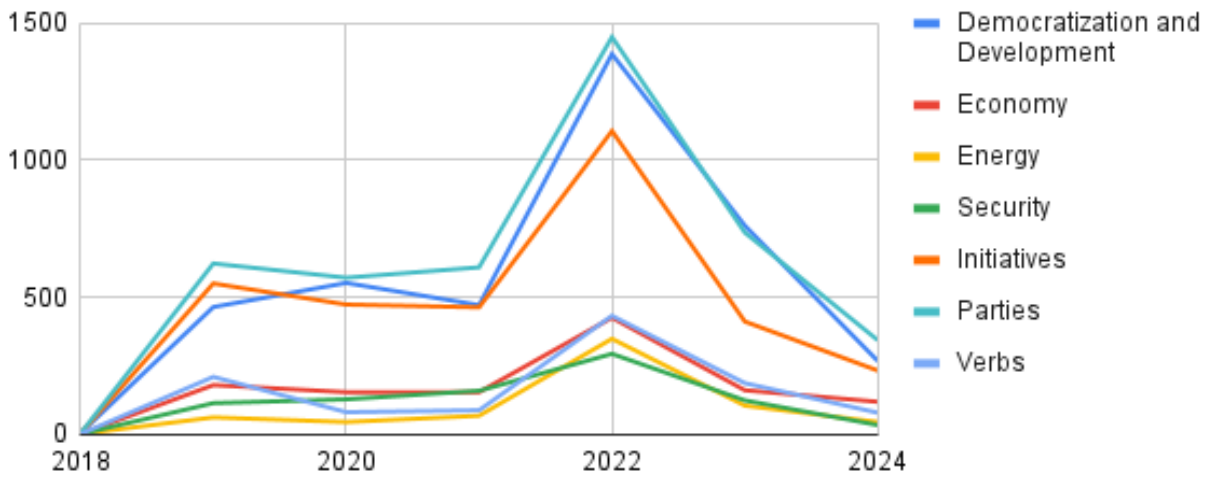


Table 1

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Democratisation and Development

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	2023-2024 Count
Democratisation and Development	1490	Democratisation and Development	1388	Democratisation and Development	1031
human*	168	development	150	rights	87
rights	167	sustain*	126	human*	85
development	158	disaster	103	child*	84
sustain*	129	constitut*	91	educat*	84
environment*	83	human*	78	sustain*	66

Table 2

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Economy

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	

					2023-2024 Count
Economy	485	Economy	425	Economy	278
econom*	206	econom*	116	econom*	71
trade	117	trade	121	invest*	65
invest*	97	invest*	113	trade	60
transport*	33	transport*	38	transport*	46
market*	24	market*	22	sanction*	22

Table 3

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Energy

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	2023-2024 Count
Energy	172	Energy	348	Energy	149
energ*	62	energ*	147	energ*	65
green	62	green	86	green	23
renewable	11	renewable	40	raw	14
nuclear	9	raw	17	critical	12
critical	8	hydro*	16	renewable	12

Table 4

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Security

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	2023-2024 Count
Security	398	Security	293	Security	166
security	113	Afghan	88	Afghan	55
Afghan	98	security	67	security	50
peace*	64	peace*	28	peace*	33
traffic*	30	war	19	war	13
stabil*	28	traffic*	18	stabil*	12

Table 5

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Initiatives

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	2023-2024 Count
Initiatives	1488	Initiatives	1107	Initiatives	664
Cooperat*	377	Cooperat*	211	Cooperat*	130
Partner*	214	Project*	167	Partner*	88
Strateg*	107	Partner*	128	Meeting*	55
Action*	88	Program*	117	Dialogue*	45
Dialogue*	87	Strateg*	86	Forum*	45

Table 6

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Parties

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	2023-2024 Count
Parties	1805	Parties	1450	Parties	1079
EU+Europe*	910	EU+Europe*	598	EU+Europe*	461
Central Asia*	603	Central Asia*	431	Kazakh*	310
Kazakh*	269	Kazakh*	359	Central Asia*	255
Russia*	18	Russia*	33	Ukrain*	27
Ukrain*	5	Ukrain*	29	Russia*	26

Table 7

Top 5 Most Frequent Terms in Verbs

Categories	2018-2021 Count	Categories	2022 Count	Categories	2023-2024 Count
Verbs	376	Verbs	432	Verbs	264
support	123	support	136	support	95
promote	108	develop	96	develop	37
develop	42	implement	61	enhance	37
enhance	33	enhance	50	promote	37
improve	30	improve	44	improve	21