

DIALOGUE AND ACTION FOR RESOURCEFUL YOUTH IN CENTRAL ASIA







Like the rivers its name evokes, DARYA – the European Union's new project in Central Asia – aims to bring people and ideas together to create fertile opportunities for young men and women in the region.

DARYA - Dialogue and Action for Resourceful Youth in Central Asia - also evokes the name for 'river' or 'sea' in the countries participating in the five-year, €10 million project. Two of the region's largest rivers are Syr Darya and Amu Darya.

Aimed at taking forward reforms and projects designed to help foster skills demanded by the market – including green, digital and entrepreneurial aptitudes – DARYA was launched in Central Asia in late 2022.

Involving stakeholders in education, training, labour market organisations, and development partners from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan as well as organisations and peer groups in Europe, DARYA addresses many of the youth training and employment challenges faced across Central Asia.

The EU-funded project, which is the first in the region to focus entirely on vocational education and training (VET) and skills development, is implemented by the European Training Foundation in partnership with skills supporting bodies and EU Member States. It is organised around three modules designed to encourage and facilitate cooperation and project ownership by participants at different levels of the education and training eco-system.

MODULE 1:

Forward-looking skills development based on better evidence and analysis of education and training outcomes and skills needs

Module 1 supports the five countries to develop their labour market and skills information systems and design new data collection instruments for skills anticipation. Data will be refined to better identify and match skills supply and demand, and undertake fresh cross-country research into future skills needs. Greater attention will be paid to enhanced monitoring of vocational education and training, skills development and improved labour market linkages. New types of studies not yet widely used in Central Asia will be used to better understand skills demand.

MODULE 2:

Stakeholder-driven flexible and permeable approaches to regional and national qualifications that allow equal opportunities for all

Module 2 focuses on ensuring qualifications meet labour market needs and are flexible across sectors, and regional and national boundaries. Relevant qualifications will be developed for priority sectors to broaden career opportunities and labour market flexibility. There will be joint work on the validation of non-formal and informal training, and better links between qualifications and career guidance pursued. Stakeholders will be encouraged to engage and cooperate in skills development, assessment and certification.

MODULE 3:

Increased use of flexible and inclusive teacher and learning approaches, based on learning outcomes relevant to the labour market

Module 3 tackles teaching to improve learning outcomes through greater flexibility and inclusive teaching and learning. The EU's digital, green and entrepreneurial self-assessment tool, SELFIE, will be used to improve the teaching and uptake of these key '21st century skills'. Improved teacher training will aim to support the introduction of key competences designed to improve personal and flexible learning. Opportunities for more work-based learning will be explored. VET providers will be encouraged to become "responsive agents for change and improvement," and genderspecific career guidance will be introduced.

The project will take forward and expand initiatives already initiated in countries in the region and introduce new measures to address youth training and employment needs.

It covers areas where countries across the region have a common interest – encouraging peer learning, exchange and cooperation to create mutually enriching improvements.

The focus is not only within Central Asia, but on the region's cooperation with peers working in the EU and other partner countries.

By taking a regional, rather than simple bilateral approach, and tracing the cycle from the identification of skills needs, through the design of responsive qualifications to the way teaching and learning best fits socio-economic needs, DARYA - which also means rebirth in some of the languages spoken in the region – aims to bring about a new synergy between all those involved in supporting better futures for young people in Central Asia whether at the national, regional or international level.



