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The European Union

“The **European Union** is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms.

The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders”.
The **European Commission** is the EU’s executive body.

The **European Commission** cooperates with five Central Asian countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan both, on bilateral and regional level.

The «**Central Asia - Invest**» programme was adopted in 2007 within the Regional Strategy of the European Commission for Central Asia for 2007 – 2013.

The **purpose of the “Central Asia – Invest” programme** is poverty alleviation in Central Asian countries through private sector development.
Special attention is paid to the development of small and medium sized businesses and facilitation of their gradual integration into the global economy.

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EcoDev



Economic Development in Central Asia through promotion of BIOs and SMEs in the food processing sector



This project is implemented by **Hilfswerk Austria International**

Contribution to inclusive growth of the food processing sector in Central Asia

THE PROJECT

Hilfswerk Austria International - in cooperation with its partners AFVE, ASTI, NASME, TES and WIFI implements the project «Economic Development in Central Asia through promotion of BIOs and SMEs in the food processing sector». The project is financed by the **European Union** within the program “Central Asia Invest III”.

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the stimulation of private sector development with an emphasis on the growth and expansion of export-oriented food processing SMEs in Central Asia.

Target group:

Food processing SMEs, specialised BIOs, suppliers of agricultural products, consumers, professional associations, farm unions, association of processors and sellers in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan .

Target area:

Kyrgyzstan: Batken and Osh provinces;

Tajikistan: Sughd province;



The project contributes to increasing the role and competency of Central Asian Business Intermediary Organizations (BIOs) with the aim of further development of and support to food processing SMEs on **product promotion, innovative methods of production and diversification, quality improvement, international food safety standards** and principles of **Fair Trade**.



The project promotes the **food cluster approach** to increase the competitive advantage of local producers and processors in external markets.

Special attention is paid to increasing the capacities and abilities of BIOs to support **favourable investment climate** and **legislative basis** for growth of food processing SMEs.

Along with other components/activities, the project will contribute to **internal and external economical integration of Central Asia** countries by increasing cooperation between regional BIOs and food processors.

The project promotes the establishment of close **cooperation** between trade representatives of the **European Union** and **Central Asia** opening more profitable markets for the processors.

We believe that regional integration and a sound business environment tend to accelerate growth and thus help overcome poverty in rural areas.

PARTNERS

The project is implemented in cooperation with international and local partners:

ASTI – Association of Scientific and Technical Intelligentsia



NASMB – National Association of Small and Medium Business of the Republic of Tajikistan



TES – Centre, Kyrgyzstan Training & Extension System



AFVE – Association of Fruit and Vegetable Enterprises, Kyrgyzstan



WIFI – Institute for Economic Promotion at the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber



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Hilfswerk Austria International is one of Austria's leading non-profit organizations for development cooperation and humanitarian aid. All our activities are designed according to the principles of sustainable development and the Universal Human Rights. **Hilfswerk Austria International** works in Central Asia since 2001.

This project is part of the **Hilfswerk Austria International** programme on the integration of **Central Asia** countries into the global economy.

