



Kazakhstan- EU Weekly Briefing

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- TCTC container volumes more than doubled in May (4 June, [The Astana Times](#))
- Kazakhstan links **critical raw materials cooperation** with research, semiconductors and extraction technologies in Belgium (2 June, [Qazinform](#))
- **German business mission** targets mining, raw materials and mining technology (1–5 June 2026, [AHK Central Asia](#))
- Kazakhstan enters top 10 “Rising Stars” in Dealroom’s **Global Tech Ecosystem** Index (2 June, [The Astana Times](#))
- OpenAI and Kazakhstan discuss **AI cooperation** (4 June, [Ministry of AI and Digital Development of Kazakhstan](#))
- CBAM becomes a near-term competitiveness issue for Kazakhstan’s heavy exporters (4 June 2026, [The Astana Times](#))
- **Kazakhstan–Cyprus Business Forum** expands EU private-sector channel (3 June 2026, [Prime Minister of Kazakhstan](#))
- Cyprus opens first Central Asian embassy in Astana, deepens business links with Kazakhstan and launches direct flight (3 June, [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Kazakhstan](#))
- **EBRD and Kazakhstan** sign five-year **cooperation framework** through 2030 (7 June 2026, [EBRD](#))
- EBRD regional outlook points to resilient Central Asia but moderating growth (June 2026, [EBRD](#))
- Kazakhstan advances **research and higher education cooperation** with EU institutions and Belgian universities (2 June, [Qazinform](#))
- EU announces **sanctions-compliance** seminar for companies operating in Kazakhstan (2 June, [EEAS](#))



Transport, logistics and connectivity

EU and Kazakhstan hold Third National Workshop of the Trans-Caspian Transport Coordination (TCTC) Platform in Astana (3 June, [EEAS](#))

The EU and Kazakhstan used the Third National Workshop of the TCTC Coordination Platform in Astana to review progress and discuss next steps with government bodies, IFIs, national companies, development partners and the private sector. EU support includes a €30 million programme, Aktau port modernisation, Beyneu–Sekseul road preparation and digitalisation of cross-border procedures.

TCTC container volumes more than doubled in May (4 June, [The Astana Times](#))

Kazmortransflot reported 7,451 TEUs transported on the Aktau–Alyat/Baku route in May 2026, up from 3,359 TEUs in May 2025. The increase points to rising demand for the Middle Corridor route linking China and Central Asia to Europe via the Caspian Sea, South Caucasus and Türkiye.

Why it matters:

The corridor is moving from diplomatic priority to operational and investable infrastructure agenda. EU-backed work on ports, roads, border procedures and digitalisation directly affects transit times, reliability and bankability for logistics operators, manufacturers and trade-finance providers.

What to watch:

The next marker is the **23 June 2026 high-level TCTC meeting**. Watch for project pipelines around Aktau/Kuryk ports, road and rail bottlenecks, customs-data exchange, private-investment structures and whether EU banks translate political support into financeable corridor assets.

Critical Raw Materials

Kazakhstan links critical raw materials cooperation with research, semiconductors and extraction technologies in Belgium (2 June, [Qazinform](#))

During Minister Nurbek's visit to Belgium, cooperation opportunities with KU



Leuven, Ghent University and IMEC included rare earth metals, semiconductors, uranium, hydrometallurgy and critical raw material extraction technologies. The talks connected Kazakhstan's resource potential with European expertise in advanced research, microelectronics, sustainable processing and applied engineering.

German business mission targets mining, raw materials and mining technology

(1–5 June 2026, [AHK Central Asia](#))

AHK Central Asia listed a German business initiation mission in Kazakhstan from 1–5 June, focused on mining, raw materials and mining technology, with stops in Astana and Karagandy. The format is commercially relevant for EU suppliers of exploration, extraction, processing, engineering, ESG, safety and automation solutions.

Why it matters:

Long-term resilience will depend on whether supply-chain cooperation also includes sustainable processing, research infrastructure, scientific capacity, and local skills. European companies can compete in equipment, geology, processing, industrial automation, ESG compliance, water management, mine safety, traceability and midstream value chains. These are the areas where EU industrial strengths align with Kazakhstan's diversification agenda.

What to watch:

The main indicator will be whether contacts with KU Leuven, IMEC and other European research actors lead to joint projects, technology transfer or participation in EU-funded programmes. The critical raw materials agenda will be more credible if it connects mining potential with environmental, social and governance standards, processing capacity and European industrial demand.

Digitalisation, AI and innovation

Kazakhstan enters top 10 "Rising Stars" in Dealroom's Global Tech Ecosystem Index

(2 June, [The Astana Times](#))



Kazakhstan entered the top 10 of the Rising Stars category in Dealroom's Global Tech Ecosystem Index 2026. The ranking covers 325 cities across 77 countries and uses indicators such as venture capital, company valuations and patents, reinforcing Kazakhstan's pitch as a regional technology and investment hub.

OpenAI and Kazakhstan discuss AI cooperation and education deployment

(4 June, [Ministry of AI and Digital Development of Kazakhstan](#))

Kazakhstan's Ministry of AI and Digital Development said OpenAI representatives discussed AI cooperation, joint educational initiatives, ChatGPT Edu deployment and practical AI skills for students, educators and professionals. Reported usage data placed Kazakhstan among countries with high consumer ChatGPT adoption and above regional peers on per-capita use.

Why it matters:

Kazakhstan is presenting digitalisation as an investment lane, not just a public-sector reform agenda. For EU companies, the relevant openings include GovTech, AI education, cybersecurity, cloud infrastructure, fintech, regtech, data centres, venture capital and startup acceleration.

What to watch:

Track procurement and partnership mechanisms around Alem.AI, Astana Hub, data-centre capacity and education-tech deployment. Also watch whether EU firms can enter through compliance-heavy niches: trusted AI, digital identity, cybersecurity, public-service platforms and financial-sector supervision.

Trade and investment

CBAM becomes a near-term competitiveness issue for Kazakhstan's heavy exporters

(4 June 2026, [The Astana Times](#))

The CBAM assessment focuses on aluminium, iron and steel, sectors with direct exposure to EU climate-trade rules. For investors, the issue is broader than taxation: companies will need emissions data, verification systems,



cleaner production pathways and buyer engagement strategies to preserve access to the EU market.

Kazakhstan–Cyprus Business Forum expands EU private–sector channel

(3 June 2026, [Prime Minister of Kazakhstan](#))

The Kazakhstan–Cyprus Business Forum in Astana gathered more than 70 business representatives from both countries. Discussions covered trade, logistics, agro–industrial cooperation, IT and AI. Kazakhstan highlighted Astana Hub, the Alem.AI International AI Center and supercomputing infrastructure as platforms for future cooperation with Cypriot companies. Cyprus positioned itself as a gateway to European markets, while Kazakhstan emphasised its Eurasian transit role and readiness to support new projects.

EBRD regional outlook points to resilient Central Asia but moderating growth

(June 2026, [EBRD](#))

The EBRD’s June 2026 Regional Economic Prospects reported that Central Asia grew strongly in 2025 and is expected to moderate in 2026–2027. For Kazakhstan–facing investors, the relevance is macro: continued regional growth supports logistics, finance and infrastructure demand.

Why it matters:

The week’s trade signals are heavily compliance–oriented. Sanctions, CBAM, customs and reporting rules are now core business issues in EU–Kazakhstan trade. Companies that build compliance capacity early will be better placed to maintain EU market access and avoid reputational or regulatory risk.

What to watch:

It is relevant how CBAM implementation costs are assessed for Kazakh exporters, sector–specific guidance for aluminium and steel, and whether chambers of commerce turn these issues into recurring advisory services for EU and Kazakh firms.

People–to–people connections



Kazakhstan advances research and higher education cooperation with EU institutions and Belgian universities (2 June, [Qazinform](#))

Kazakhstan's Minister of Science and Higher Education Sayasat Nurbek held meetings in Belgium with EU institutions, including the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European External Action Service, as well as with Ghent University, KU Leuven and IMEC. The visit was followed by a Shanyraq Dialogue roundtable in Brussels on Kazakhstan's knowledge economy and new opportunities for EU-Kazakhstan cooperation in science, education and innovation.

Why it matters:

The visit positions education, research and scientific mobility as a strategic component of EU-Kazakhstan cooperation, rather than a secondary people-to-people file. It also links human capital to industrial priorities, including artificial intelligence, semiconductors and critical materials, where both sides have an interest in moving from political dialogue to practical research partnerships.

What to watch:

The key follow-up will be whether Kazakhstan's engagement with Horizon Europe, European universities and research centres results in concrete joint laboratories, research consortia, academic mobility schemes or technology partnerships. A shift from ad hoc academic contacts to structured cooperation would strengthen the human-capital pillar of the wider EU-Kazakhstan partnership.

Policy and diplomacy

EU announces sanctions-compliance seminar for companies operating in Kazakhstan (2 June, [EEAS](#))

The EU Delegation announced a one-day seminar in Almaty on 1 July to help Kazakh and international companies operating in Kazakhstan navigate EU restrictive measures and sanctions. The event will be organised by the International Science and Technology Center and is aimed at companies, chambers of commerce and EU Member State embassies and consulates.



Cyprus opens first Central Asian embassy in Astana and deepens business links with Kazakhstan (3 June, [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Kazakhstan](#))

Cyprus opened its first diplomatic mission in Central Asia during President Nikos Christodoulides' first official visit to Kazakhstan. The visit included the opening of the Cypriot embassy in Astana and a Kazakhstan-Cyprus Business Forum. It was accompanied by the launch of direct air connections between Kazakhstan and Larnaca, with routes from Astana and Almaty scheduled twice weekly.

Kazakhstan to launch direct flights to Larnaca from Astana and Almaty (1 June, [Qazinform](#))

Why it matters:

The Cyprus-Kazakhstan bilateral cooperation is relevant for EU-Kazakhstan cooperation because Cyprus presents itself as a gateway for Kazakh companies to European markets. Yet, it has always been critical on Kazakhstan's engagement on the OTS (Organization of Turkic States) platforms with the unrecognised Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)

The sanction seminar is a practical follow-up to the EU's continued focus on preventing **sanctions circumvention** through third countries. The next key question is whether **visa facilitation** negotiations produce a clear timeline or deliverable. It will also be important to monitor how the EU and Kazakhstan balance deeper economic cooperation with EU expectations on sanctions compliance, regional security and regulatory alignment.

What to watch:

The seminar may indicate whether EU-Kazakhstan cooperation on sanctions compliance becomes more structured and business-facing. It is relevant to monitor attendance and outputs from the 1 July sanctions seminar. Future developments to monitor include guidance for logistics, finance and dual-use sectors, as well as whether Kazakh companies adapt internal compliance procedures to maintain access to European partners and markets. Regarding visa facilitation, the next key question is whether visa facilitation negotiations produce a clear timeline or deliverable.



EBRD and Kazakhstan sign five-year cooperation framework through 2030

(7 June 2026, [EBRD](#))

At the EBRD Annual Meeting in Riga, Kazakhstan and the EBRD signed an Enhanced Partnership Framework Arrangement to streamline cooperation until 2030. Priorities include private-sector development, FDI, low-carbon development, sustainable infrastructure, digitalisation, AI, cybersecurity, logistics, AIFC development, green finance, privatisation and institutional capacity.

Why it matters:

The EU–Kazakhstan agenda is increasingly integrated: transport, CRM, sanctions, CBAM, digitalisation, finance and governance are now connected policy files. The EBRD framework gives this agenda a practical finance and reform channel through 2030.

What to watch:

Watch for implementation details: EBRD-backed procurement, PPP reforms, digital-substation or infrastructure tenders, EU sanctions cooperation, and whether Cyprus develops into a more active EU member-state platform for Kazakhstan's access to European finance and services.

Other Developments

Exclusive Executive Program: “Geopolitical Trends and Global Strategy for Business Leaders” June 22–23, 2026, [Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Business](#))

Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Business lists an open-enrolment executive programme, “Geopolitical Trends and Global Strategy for Business Leaders,” delivered with and at the premises of Koç University in Istanbul. The programme is aimed at business leaders and executives seeking to understand geopolitical trends, global strategy and their implications for corporate decision-making.