

## EURASIA - FASHION PROJECT LAUNCHED

N° 1

A newsletter published by the Hellenic Clothing Industry Association – A project funded by the European Union's Central Asia Invest programme

The Eurasia-Fashion project (Strengthening Central Asian - European partnership and co-operation in the fashion sector) launched in January 2011. The project is co-funded by the European Union's Central Asia Invest programme. The first project meeting was held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in 1 and 2 February 2011.

### Main scope

The ultimate scope of the Eurasia-Fashion project is to improve the internationalisation of the textile / clothing / fashion sector of the Central Asian countries and to develop specific mechanisms that will provide institutional capacity building to the targeted Business Intermediary Organisations (BIOs).

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have shown a clear potential in the textile and clothing (T&C) sectors and targeted support could lead to economic growth. The T&C sectors in the countries concerned are characterised by a large concentration of raw materials and apparel subcontracting activities but economic, social and institutional barriers hold back export and internationalisation. The Eurasia-Fashion project will help the industry reach its full potential.

The project sets out to build the capacity of the BIOs to work more closely with SMEs and with the European actors to encourage new flows of investment. The final beneficiaries will be the SMEs in the T&C sector. To make sure all achievements are sustainable, the project will also focus on generating a stable ground for lobbying and advocacy functions.

The project duration is 18 months.



The project is funded by the European Union

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### Components and Activities

The proposed project is structured along the following 3 components:

#### Component 1: Setting up the partnerships

- 1.1: Drawing up a Partnership Agreement.
- 1.2: Assessment of the BIOs' capacity to influence policies in favour of SMEs in the target countries.
- 1.3: Establishing networking facilities.

#### Component 2: Institutional capacity building activities

- 2.1: Capacity building activities to the BIOs of the three target countries.
- 2.2: Selection of SMEs to be trained locally, based on specific criteria.
- 2.3: Organising collaborative workshops.
- 2.4: Delivery of training by the BIOs to the SMEs.

#### Component 3: Disseminating activities in favour of micro and small scale companies

- 3.1: Designing and Implementing an Action Plan for a Communication Strategy.
- 3.2: Development and distribution of international and analytical dissemination material.
- 3.3: Organisation of a brokerage event for the Textile/Clothing sector in Europe.
- 3.4: Monitoring and Follow up activities.

### Objectives

The Main Goal is to promote the development of the private sector by encouraging the growth and expansion of Central Asian Small and Medium Enterprises in the fashion sector. Key objectives are:

- to reinforce the role and the competences of Business Intermediary Organisations (BIO) in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, increasing their capacity to support SMEs and to influence policies in favour of micro and small scale companies.
- to establish permanent partnership channels to enable transfer of know-how and expertise exchange, as well as international business and commercial co-operation and diffusion of results,
- to upgrade the skills of BIO staff members making them better equipped to service the local SMEs, and
- to generate a stable ground for effective lobbying and advocacy functions in favour of micro and small scale companies.

### Target groups

The project is mainly addressing the following target groups:

- The Business Intermediary Organisations serving the Textile / Clothing industries across Europe and Central Asia.
- The SMEs related to the Textile and Clothing (T&C) sectors in the three target countries.
- Policy makers in Local / National / International levels (Governmental bodies, local / regional / national authorities, etc).

Addressing the aforementioned groups, the consortium anticipates an impact on a larger audience, based on the size of the TC markets in Europe and in Central Asia.



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## Capacity building - Training

Within Eurasia-Fashion three training courses are under development, focusing on:

- new fashion business,
- fashion branding, and
- new technologies in the T&C sector.

These courses will be given as train-the-trainers Seminars to the BIOs staff from EU experts. The Central Asian partners will then identify 10 companies in each country and will provide the full training course to them using the local experts.

The training material will be available in English and in Russian and the final material will be ready by September 2011.

## Capacity building – Visits

Within the project, mutual visits and staff exchanges will be organised in order to provide practical consultancy assignment to the BIOs consultants towards increasing their capacity to support SMEs and to influence policies in favour of micro and small scale companies.

Our Project intends to organise visits to Greece, Holland and Bulgaria during which, the target countries' BIOs representatives will be able to share experiences from Europe and to see in an on-the-job-training procedure how these experiences could be successfully applied in their country's business environment. The visits will be organised in October 2011.

## Collaborative workshops

The main objective of the Eurasia-Fashion project is to reinforce the role and competence of the BIOs in the target countries, towards being able to support SMEs and to influence policies in favour of micro and small scale companies. An important tool for achieving such an ambitious task is to bring together the BIOs from Europe with those of the target countries and give them the opportunity to exchange best practices and experience.

To this end, three collaborative workshops will be organised in Central Asia with emphasis on:

- Internationalisation of the T&C sector,
- New technologies in the T&C sector,
- Best EU practices, including new business models, the structure of the T&C market.

All three Workshops will be open to stakeholders from the public and private sector in the targeted countries, and the interested society at large. During the workshops, specific round tables will be organised, focusing on policy and strategy issues, legal and regulatory aspects of importance to the SME sector.

The key areas of activity will include:

- Possible development of the SME Strategy / Programme;
- Development of an integrated SME information system, including on-line discussion / feedback;
- Development of a Monitoring and Evaluation system for the SME sector;
- Ad hoc issues of importance to the whole sector (e.g. draft laws, regulations, export promotion, FDI attraction etc.).

## Brokerage event for the Textile/Clothing sector in Europe

To enable a face-to-face meeting between potential buyers and customers in the sector, Eurasia-Fashion will organise a brokerage event in Europe, together with the final conference of the project. Overall, the aim of this Activity will be to establish a permanent structure that will act as a brokerage event bringing together the textile / clothing sector and the newest developments in the T&C areas in Europe and internationally. The organisation of such an event every year can provide great benefits to the textile / clothing sector and can ensure the sustainability of the whole attempt.

The Brokerage event will be organised in Holland in 2012.

## Kick-off meeting

The kick-off meeting was organised in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan on 1 and 2 February 2011. During the meeting, the project partners had the opportunity to present their activities and to clarify the responsibilities within the project. Moreover, the meeting was attended by EU officials, who provided the necessary clarifications regarding the contract management. Finally, the draft partner's Agreement was presented during the meeting.

## Project partners

### Europe

Hellenic Clothing Industry Association



The International Apparel Federation



Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry



### Central Asia

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan in Tashkent region



The Union of Textile Enterprises in Kyrgyzstan



The Association of Light Industry Enterprises in Kazakhstan



### For more information:

[www.eurasia-fashion.eu](http://www.eurasia-fashion.eu)

### Eurasia-Fashion project

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