



## Methodology of the Study

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### «United Central Asia. Obstacles, opportunities, prospects» (Pilot Project)

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## ABOUT CENTRAL ASIA BAROMETER

### Central Asia Barometer (CAB)

is a regional, independent, non-profit institution for applied social research and analytics on topics of public interest, carrying its activity **since 2012**.

#### GEOGRAPHY

CAB operates in **all Central Asian countries** and conducts its research in all spoken languages of the region on topics of public interest.

**(Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan)**



#### MISSION

We measure the social, economic, and political "atmosphere" in the countries of Central Asia. The results of our research help our partners make data-based decisions in the best interests of the region's citizens. We conduct regular applied social science research studies and analytically reflect on social processes. In this

way, we contribute to in-depth, democratic institutional developments in these countries.



#### OUR VALUES

##### Non-partisanship

As an institution, we never take sides on political, economic, or social questions and always stay neutral to guarantee the objectivity of our research and analysis.

##### Adherence to research standards

We commit ourselves to the principle of academic freedom and the pursuit of academic excellence. CAB strictly adheres to research standards (WAPOR Code of Ethics).

##### Central Asia as a research focal point

CAB is an attempt to understand Central Asia by Central Asians through their own optic and with no "outside eye".

##### Open data

CAB aims to make its research results available to the public within a reasonable timeframe.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

**GOAL:** Identification of obstacles, factors, and opportunities for improving cooperation and rapprochement between Central Asian countries through the prism of opinions and perceptions of citizens and experts in the region.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Determination of the level of trust between countries, and the readiness of countries (at the level of citizens) for further rapprochement and cooperation.
- Determination of the current level of cooperation in the region (economy and trade, political cooperation, cultural exchange, education, borders, water resources, etc.). Identifying strengths and weaknesses.
- Analysis of problems and obstacles preventing the unification and cooperation of the countries of the region, the movement of human and financial capital, the exchange of ideas, goods and services, including at the level of communities and citizens, entrepreneurs and organizations, government institutions, cultural and educational institutions.
- Search for factors and areas that have a critical impact on the level and effectiveness of economic, social, cultural, and other ties between the countries of the region.
- Identification of the level of trust and effectiveness of forms of communication and dialogue between citizens and the state.
- Search and identification of common symbols, ideas, principles, stories that can be used to create platforms for consolidation and collaboration.
- Identification of prospects and main tasks for uniting the countries of the region to increase economic and financial stability, trade efficiency, and improve the living standards of citizens.
- Open access to data and dissemination of research results and conclusions in the countries of the region.
- Organization of the discussion of the results and conclusions of the project among stakeholders.

**GEOGRAPHY:** Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

The research methodology included quantitative and qualitative methods, namely population surveys and in-depth interviews with experts.

#### **2.2 THE TARGET GROUPS OF THE STUDY (THE OBJECTS OF THE STUDY):**

1. Population of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

The sample size in each country was composed of 800 respondents aged 18 and over. A total of 1,600 interviews were conducted in two countries.

The sampling is random and based on the following parameters: a sampling error of 3.5% and a confidence level of 95%.

The samples reflected the age and gender structure of the adult population of the countries.

2. Expert community in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

Ten interviews were conducted in each country, a total of 20 interviews.

Interviews were conducted with experts in economics, water resources, politics, interethnic relations, and border issues.

#### **2.3 POPULATION SURVEY**

Surveys in both countries were conducted between August 19 and September 8, 2021. A formalised structured questionnaire with closed-ended and open-ended questions was used as a data collection tool. The questionnaire had been tested, translated into local languages, and programmed. Due to the restrictions caused by the coronavirus's spread, the population survey in both countries was carried out via phone calls from call centres in Almaty and Tashkent. Phone numbers for the survey were randomly generated. Quotas by gender and age were used. Depending on the preferences of the respondents, interviews were conducted in Kazakh, Uzbek, or Russian. The average interview duration was 25 minutes. Quality control was carried out through subsequent audio recordings (20% of interview audio recordings were random). After completing the survey, the databases were checked and cleaned, and open questions answers were coded.

#### **2.4 EXPERT INTERVIEWS**

Interviews with experts in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan were conducted from August 1 to September 17, 2021. The study's search and recruiting of experts were conducted using Internet resources, media and social networks, "snowball" sampling, and other methods. Central Asia Barometer has developed guides for conducting in-depth interviews. Interviews were conducted by the specialists of Central Asia Barometer remotely - using the online service ZOOM. The average duration of an interview was 40 minutes. Audio recordings of the interviews were further used for analysis and preparation of the report.

#### **2.5 DATA PROCESSING**

Statistical processing of quantitative data was carried out using the SPSS and Excel programs. Analysing the data, we used such types of analysis as the correlation method, the linear regression method, and the cross-sectional analysis method.