

**DOCUMENT OF THE EUROPEAN BANK
FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT**

STRATEGY FOR BULGARIA

**REPORT ON THE INVITATION
TO THE PUBLIC TO COMMENT**

Table of contents

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS..... 3

1. INTRODUCTION 4

ANNEX 1 5

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIP	Access to Information Policy
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ESG	Environmental, Social, and Governance

1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this report is to summarise the key comments received from stakeholders during the consultation period on the EBRD's draft Bulgaria Country Strategy (hereinafter – draft Strategy) and provide responses of the Bank's management.

The public consultation process was in line with the EBRD's Access to Information Policy (AIP) and Access to Information Directive stipulating that the Bank's draft country strategies are disclosed for a period of 45 calendar days during which time the public is invited to send comments to the Bank.

The draft Strategy was posted on the EBRD website for 45 calendar days, starting from 3 April 2025 until 15 May 2025. The previous Country Strategy for Bulgaria was also made available to the public on the EBRD website: <https://www.ebrd.com/home/what-we-do/where-we-invest/bulgaria.html>

Information about the public consultation process was posted on the EBRD's dedicated "Have your say" webpage, which highlights the latest opportunities for the public to comment on the Bank's policies and strategies under review. Targeted notifications of the consultation process were sent to local and international civil society organisations (CSOs) that have expressed interest in the Bank's work in the country.

During the consultation period, the Bank received no comments in written format.

In line with the Bank's increased efforts to involve civil society at an early stage of elaborating the country strategy, the EBRD organised an in-person public consultation meeting with civil society organisations in Bulgaria on 16 January 2025. The objective of the meeting was to collect civil society's feedback during the preparatory phase of developing the draft Strategy. Six CSO representatives from six different civil society organisations participated in the consultation.

The EBRD was represented by the EBRD Resident Office team in Bulgaria, as well as by the Country Strategy, Policy Strategy Delivery, and Civil Society Engagement teams.

The summary of the key messages and the list of CSO participants in the consultation process are provided in the Annex 1 to this report.

ANNEX 1

Consultation with Civil Society Organisations on the EBRD country strategy for Bulgaria

16 January 2025

Key messages from Civil Society to the EBRD

- Civil society in Bulgaria underlined the needs for further enhancing transparency and accountability of governance system to tackle systemic issues related to corruptions in the country as well as to improve access and independency of the judiciary system.
- CSOs highlighted that green transition of the country can be accelerated through (i) scaling up green investments in energy efficiency, (ii) improving financial system, (iii) policy and regulatory reforms, and (iv) standardisation of ESG-related reporting for the industry.
- CSOs presented the challenges on the social and economic inclusion of local communities within the country and called for their increased access to labour markets and opportunities for the up-skilling of employees with the support from the government.