



DRAFT Tajikistan Country Strategy 2025-2030



European Bank
for Reconstruction and Development



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		NECP	National energy and climate plans
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		NPL	Non-Performing Loans
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		ODA	Official Development Assistance
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		OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
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		R&D	Research and Development
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		TFP	Trade Finance Programme
		TMT	Technology, Media, Telecom
		VET	Vocational Education and Training
		WiB	Women in Business Programme
		YiB	Youth in Business Programme
		ICA	Industry, Commerce & Agribusiness
		ICT	Information and communications Technology
		IEA	International Energy Agency
		IFI	International Financial Institution
		ILO	International Labour Organisation
		IT	Information Technology
		MSME	Micro, Small & Medium sized Enterprise
		M&S	Manufacturing & Services
		MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
		NBFI	Non-Bank Financial Institution
		NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions

Executive Summary

Tajikistan's commitment to and application of the political principles of Article 1 as stated in the Agreement Establishing the Bank has been marked by international concerns over protection of fundamental civil and political rights during the previous Country Strategy period.

Tajikistan's economy has shown strong performance in recent years, outpacing the regional average, notwithstanding a low initial base and despite heightened geopolitical risks. Strong growth in remittances and real wages, including increases in minimum salaries, supported domestic purchasing power and boosted retail spending. Industrial growth was also robust, especially in mining and local manufacturing. Strong investment growth reflected primarily ongoing construction of the Rogun hydropower project, and other infrastructure projects, including those financed by donors and IFIs in transport, and water and wastewater sector. Inflation is at low single digits as a result of conservative monetary policy and price controls. Well managed fiscal policy supported by effective revenue mobilisation has also been contributing to robust macroeconomic performance. Close engagement with the IMF under a non-disbursing programme, the World Bank and other international partners signals commitment to policy agenda and is critical for ensuring funding for Rogun hydropower project. Robust economic performance combined with macroeconomic stability is expected to continue in the next strategy period, driven by domestic demand and continued investments in infrastructure, subject to sustained strong inflow of remittances, maintenance of fiscal discipline and donor support that is uncertain.

The country, however, still faces significant transition gaps, despite some improvements in recent years, and remains one of the poorest economies in the EBRD region. Tajikistan struggles with limited implementation capacity for public sector projects that are further hindered by the tight fiscal space, sovereign repayment capacity, and limited availability of donor funding. A challenging business environment continues to suppress private sector investments. There are also significant gender inequality and inclusion shortcomings despite recent improvements and policy measures. Additionally, an underdeveloped regulatory and legal framework for investments in renewables limits private sector participation and the appetite of foreign investors in this sector. The country also faces significant connectivity constraints due to limited market access, high transportation costs, aging infrastructure, and inefficient border-crossing procedures. Addressing these obstacles requires a combination of capital investments, regulatory reforms, capacity building, and enhanced financial development and sustainability.

Given the scale of transition challenges and the emergence of new opportunities for private sector-led growth arising from an improved pro-reform environment, the Bank is well placed to support deepening of economic reforms in line with the priorities of the government, utilising a wide range of available financial products and policy engagements across all sectors and in close cooperation and coordination with other IFIs and donors. The Bank will pursue the following strategic priorities in Tajikistan in 2025-2030:

- *Strengthen competitiveness and governance by fostering a more inclusive and larger private sector and improving public institutions*
- *Enhance green and sustainable energy and transport networks and municipal service delivery*



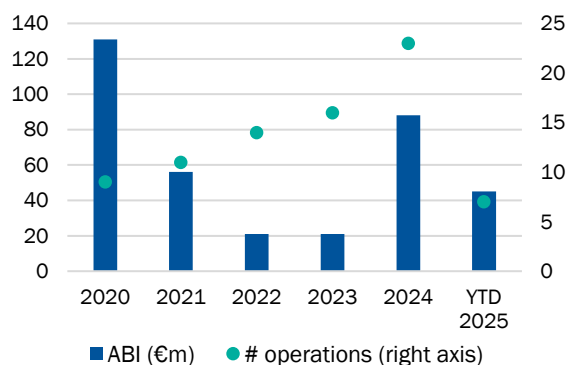
Tajikistan– EBRD Snapshot

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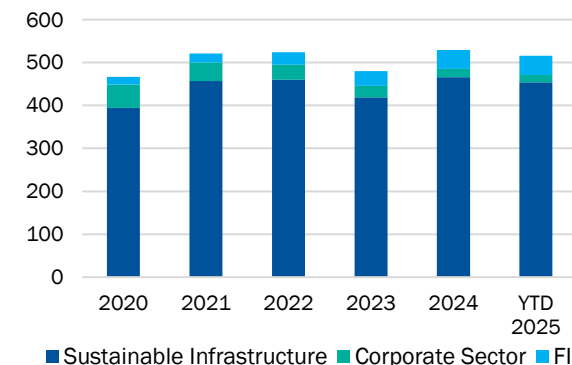
EBRD investment activities in Tajikistan (as of May 2025)

Portfolio	€529m	Active projects	79
Equity share	3%	Operating assets	€375m
Private Sector Share ¹	23.5%	Net cum. investment	€1,044m

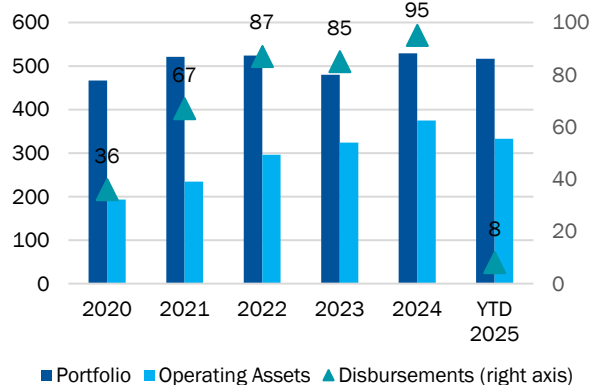
ABI and operations



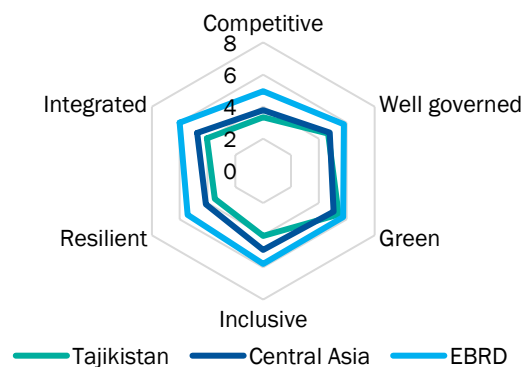
Portfolio composition (€m)



Portfolio dynamics (€m)



Transition Gaps²



Tajikistan context figures

	Country	Comparators
Population (million) ³ (2024)	10.2	Kazakhstan (20.1) Uzbekistan (36.9)
GDP per capita (PPP, thousands, USD) ³ (2024)	5.6	Kazakhstan (41.7) Uzbekistan (11.7)
New Business Density ⁴ (New registrations per 1,000 population, 2020)	0.2 (2018)	Kazakhstan (3.5) Uzbekistan (2.7)
Unemployment, modelled ILO estimate (%) ⁵ (2024)	11.6	Kazakhstan (4.8) Uzbekistan (4.5)
Youth unemployment, modelled ILO estimate (%) ⁵ (2024)	27.1	Kazakhstan (3.8) Uzbekistan (10.9)
Female labour force participation modelled ILO estimate (%) ⁵ (2024)	31.8	Kazakhstan (66) Uzbekistan (39.4)
Energy intensity TES/GDP (MJ/2017 \$) ⁶ (2021)	5	Kazakhstan (6) Uzbekistan (8)
Emission intensity/GDP (kgCO2/2017 \$) (2021) ⁷	0.19	Kazakhstan (0.45) Uzbekistan (0.43)

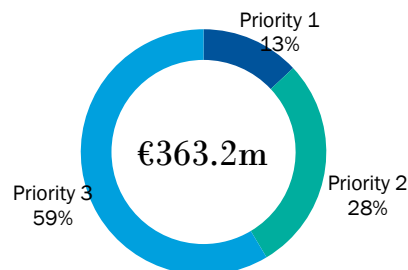
1 Cumulative Bank Investment: 5 year rolling basis on portfolio; 2 Cf. EBRD Transition Report 2024-2025; 3 IMF WEO; 4 WB Entrepreneurship Survey and database; 5 ILO via WB WDI; 6 IEA; 7. United Nations Global SDG Database

1. Implementation of Previous Strategy (2020-2024)

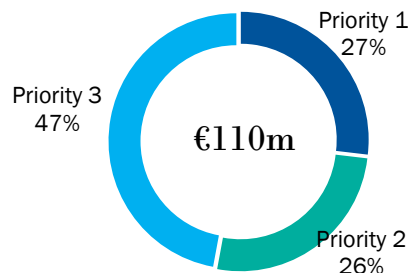
1.1. Key Transition Results Achieved during Previous Strategy (1/2)

Strategic alignment 2020-2024

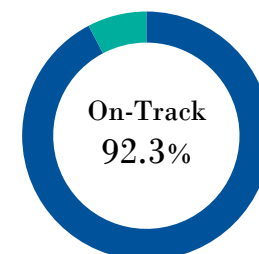
Cumulative Business Investment



Technical assistance and investment grants¹



Transition impact performance²



Priority 1 Strengthen competitiveness and improve business environment

Key quantitative results

Results indicators 2020-2024

Number of ASB clients reporting increased employment

178

Number of ASB clients reporting increased turnover

202

Key transition results

- Launched Star Venture Programme in the country and initiated 270 ASB projects between 2020-2024, accompanied by training and mentoring programmes targeting digitalisation, green economy, business skills development in Dushanbe and rural regions.
- Supported expansion of trade finance through extension of TFP (€14.3m) and capacity building (workshops and training) for NBT, FIs and businesses, in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce.
- Supported Tajik Investment Council to enhance dialogue between government and private sector and adopt policies such as the first e-commerce law.
- Facilitated access to finance to SMEs in the M&S and Agribusiness sectors through 14 RSF transactions for a total of €8.1m.
- Provided a €2.5m loan to flour and animal feed producer Farovon Group to finance the purchase of equipment for edible oil refinery.
- Assisted in the development of local government bond regulation and facilitated the first bond issuance.
- Supported the NBT to develop an insurance supervisory system and the national insurance market and join the Alliance for Financial Inclusion.
- Supported capacity building of the Council for tourism development of Tajikistan to strengthen SME infrastructure, develop new tourism strategy and train SMEs in the tourism sector.
- Supported capacity building and awareness raising of Tajik SMEs in the agribusiness sector to acquire innovative farm management skills and strengthen agricultural value chains.

1. The chart refers to amounts earmarked in the period 2020-2024

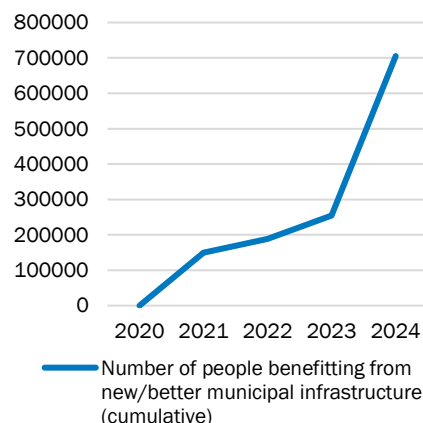
2. Transition impact performance reflects how likely projects are to achieve the transition impact expected of them at signing. Calculated based on active mature (> 2 years) portfolio

1. Implementation of Previous Strategy (2020-2024)

1.1. Key Transition Results Achieved during Previous Strategy (2/2)

Priority 2 Foster regional integration, energy reform, and infrastructure connectivity

Key quantitative results



Key transition results

Strengthened reliability and stability of the transmission network and capacity of the electricity system through:

- Two sovereign loans of €20m and €22m to finance low- and medium-voltage grid enhancement in nine cities and development of an advanced metering infrastructure.
- Two sovereign loans of €10.2m and €12.8m for the rehabilitation of an existing transformer and construction of a new one in the Sugd transmission grid substation.
- Facilitated energy reforms unbundling of the national power utility in generation, transmission and distribution, support capacity building to the electricity regulator. Continued policy dialogue with the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources to foster private sector investment in solar PV energy and accelerate electricity sector reforms.

Continued implementing Green Cities Action Plan for Dushanbe, including:

- Rehabilitation and expansion of District Heating network.
- Development of infrastructure for sustainable mobility, including dedicated bus and trolleybus lanes as well as infrastructure for active (walking and cycling) and electric mobility.
- Extended GEFF credit lines for a total of €23m, supporting Partner Financial Institutions and micro-finance institutions expand their green product offering while promoting gender-responsive practices.

Priority 3 Support wider access to better infrastructure and business services for women, youth and less developed regions

Key quantitative results

Results indicators	2020-2024
Number of people enhancing skills as a result of training	806
Number of WiB subloans disbursed	44,165
Volume of WiB subloans disbursed	€87.3m

Key transition results

- Launched YiB programme and expanded WiB programme with Partner Banks and micro-finance institutions, supporting women-led and youth-led MSMEs in Tajikistan by providing financing opportunities for their business activities and access to know-how.
- Promoted skills development including through a training programme for up to 1200 students in the Khatlon region in collaboration with 4 universities under the Regional Small Business Programme
- Launched the Integrated Water Resources Management Framework in Dangara (€4m) and Bokhtar (€4m), addressing the critical water infrastructure rehabilitation needs and contribute towards improving the quality and reliability of potable water supply and treatment services
- Supported improvement in water and wastewater services in Khujand, Kulob (€7.5m) and Fayzobod (€3.1m) by financing rehabilitation of the water network and pump stations, and rehabilitation and modernisation of wastewater treatment plants.
- Provided €122m financing for the construction of the Obigarm-Nurobod road, part of the CAREC corridor, facilitating access to economic opportunities of local populations in areas with low or no access points, and building necessary institutional capacity and procedures for sustainable and efficient infrastructure asset management.
- Extended €38m financing for the upgrade of Dangara-Guliston road, part of the CAREC corridor, including the construction of EV charging infrastructure.

1. Implementation of Previous Strategy (2020-2024)

1.2. Challenges to Implementation and Key Lessons

Context for implementation

Tajikistan faced significant economic challenges following its civil war (1992-1997), which led to a collapse in industrial capacity and public services. Chronic underinvestment in infrastructure, reliance on subsistence agriculture, captured markets, gaps in gender equality and inclusion, and emigration further exacerbated these issues. Despite recent growth, income convergence remains slow due to high informality and low productivity in agriculture and services. The country's productivity is low by regional standards, with high fragmentation, poor irrigation systems, limited access to modern equipment, and outdated practices restricting agricultural productivity. The business environment is challenging, with issues such as limited market access, inadequate infrastructure, and a regulatory environment that hinders competitiveness. Taxes and informality are among the most pressing issues for firms, and there is a need for an effective public-private dialogue platform. Governance issues, including corruption and inefficiencies in SOEs, pose significant obstacles. Many SOEs have low productivity and profitability, and there is a lack of transparency and accountability in their operations. The financial sector is underdeveloped, with high levels of NPLs and dollarisation. The banking sector requires significant development and growth, and there is a need for better access to finance, particularly for SMEs. The energy sector faces challenges such as high energy losses, inadequate maintenance, and financial distress due to below-cost recovery tariffs. The water sector also faces issues, including outdated infrastructure, high levels of non-revenue water, and low metering coverage. Tajikistan is highly vulnerable to climate change risks, including floods, earthquakes, landslides, and heatwaves. The country's reliance on hydropower further exacerbates its vulnerability to climate change.

Implementation challenges

- Limited implementation capacity for public sector projects and lack of reform champions in key areas
- Sovereign repayment capacity and limited fiscal space for public sector projects
- Requirement for grant financing component of 35% in sovereign and sovereign guaranteed loans
- Challenging business environment for private sector investments
- Impact of War on Ukraine and related sanctions on remittances and trade affecting financial sector, private consumption and exports
- Limited interest of foreign investors combined with difficult business environment for FDI
- Underdeveloped regulatory and legal framework for investments in renewables

Key lessons & way forward

- Capacity building initiatives and activities for relevant ministries, public sector clients and implementing partners in cooperation with other IFIs and donors
- Prioritisation of public sector projects to achieve maximum transition impact and ensure timely implementation
- Expanded donor mobilisation efforts to allow for better project preparation, stronger monitoring, and realistic budgeting
- Private sector financing, including for SMEs through PFIs, combined with relevant business advisory, technical assistance, and policy engagement on business environment in coordination with other IFIs
- Work with the authorities and private sector counterparts on diversifying trade partners and supporting growth of local economy
- Policy advocacy to improve conditions for FDI in coordination with other IFIs
- Policy engagement to progress with energy sector reform to facilitate investments in renewable power generation and introduction of wind and solar power plants

2. Economic Context

2.1. Macroeconomic Context and Outlook for Strategy Period

Tajikistan – Main Macroeconomic Indicators

	2021	2022	2023	2024
GDP growth (% y-o-y)	9.4	8	8.3	8.4
CPI inflation (% avg.)	9	6.6	3.8	3.6
Government balance (% of GDP)	-0.6	-0.2	-0.9	0.3
Current account balance (% of GDP)	8.2	15.6	4.8	6.2
Net FDI (% of GDP) [minus indicates inflow]	-0.4	-1.6	-0.8	-1.3
External debt (% of GNI)	61.3	47.3	45.4	na
Gross reserves (% of GDP)	28	35.5	29.5	30.9
General government gross debt (% of GDP)	42.0	31.8	29.9	24.9
Unemployment rate (%)	12.3	11.6	11.5	11.6
Nominal GDP (\$bn)	8.9	10.7	12.2	14.2

Source: National authorities, IMF, World Bank, ILO via WB WDI

The economy posted strong growth in 2024. Real GDP rose by 8.4 per cent year on year, with domestic demand being the key driver. Growth in real wages boosted demand for hotel, restaurants and catering and retail and wholesale trade sectors. Increases in minimum wages, public sector salaries, pensions and stipends which took effect in 2024 provides further support for domestic purchasing power. Production was another driver of growth, supported by gains in mining and manufacturing. On the expenditure side, fixed capital investment was up 8.1 per cent year on year, reflecting ongoing Rogun-related construction work and progress with other infrastructure projects.

Inflation is low. Price controls and a conservative monetary policy have helped bring inflation down, prompting the central bank to lower its policy rate from 13.5 per cent in August 2022 to 8.25 per cent in May 2025, with inflation rate of just 3.8 per cent in May 2025. Supported by strong foreign exchange inflows, the Tajik somoni slightly appreciated. Gold-based international reserves are estimated to be high.

The country's fiscal position has improved. Effective revenue mobilisation backed by measures to improve tax administration allowed to comfortably meet budget expenditure that was mainly allocated to education, social security and energy. The 22-month IMF PCI, approved in February 2024 with the second review concluded in June 2025, supports fiscal discipline which is needed in light of Rogun financing, and assists the authorities with structural reforms. On the back of strong growth and good fiscal performance, public debt to GDP decreased by more than 20 percentage points in 2020-24. In 2024, citing the country's strong economic and fiscal performance and improving dialogue with international partners, the ratings agency Standard & Poor's upgraded Tajikistan's long-term rating from "B-" to "B" (Stable outlook), while Moody's changed outlook to positive (rated "B3").

The strong growth is set to continue, on the back of sustained domestic demand, robust remittances and export revenues and ongoing investment in infrastructure. Commitment to structural reforms and intensified international engagements bodes well for the economic growth. At the same time, the country remains highly vulnerable to external shocks, such as interruptions in remittance inflows.

2. Economic Context

2.2 Key Transition Challenges (I/II)

Competitive (3.24)

- Following the end of the civil war (1997), the **country's productivity** started to gradually increase but is still **low by regional standards**.
- Capacity for innovation is subdued** due to the lack of high-tech industries, limited investment in R&D, and insufficient access to finance.
- SMEs play an important role in the economy but face a **variety of challenges** that limit their development and competitiveness, including **limited market access, inadequate infrastructure, complex regulatory environment, lack of level-playing field, and presence of protected industries**.
- Taxes and informality** were identified among the most pressing issues by firms surveyed in BEEPS VI (2018-2020). **Skills** are a challenge for medium and large businesses.
- Improving the business environment requires rebalancing private and public sector roles and developing effective public-private dialogue.

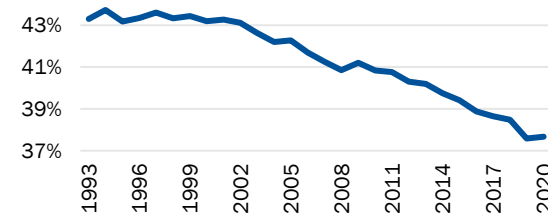
Well-governed (4.56)

- Since 2017, the country's scores on the World Bank's regulatory quality and control of corruption indicators have slightly deteriorated. Voice and accountability, political stability, and rule of law saw limited improvements, while the government effectiveness has notably increased. Nevertheless, **Tajikistan has the second-lowest overall score in the region on the World Bank governance indicators**.
- Corruption perceptions have worsened, and the **country was ranked 162 out of 180 countries by Transparency International in 2023**: the lowest ranking for the past decade.
- Many **SOEs remain inefficient and loss-making**. Comprehensive efforts are required to improve their performance.
- Tajikistan **improved on the e-governance dimension**. Further efforts in this direction are vital to reduce bureaucracy, corruption and strengthen the government efficiency.

Green (5.16)

- The country accounts for only 0.04% of global GHG emissions. However, in last the decade, **total emissions have significantly increased due to the increased use of fossil fuels** in power and heat generation.
- Energy intensity has been trending downward, but **energy consumption in residential and transport sectors significantly increased since 2000**.
- Being prone to flood, earthquake, landslide, and heatwave hazards, **Tajikistan is the most vulnerable in terms of future climate change risks** in the region of Europe and Central Asia.
- Authorities actively work on strengthening climate resilience across the country and fostering low-carbon development but **achieving the unconditional 2030 NDC commitments requires ample financial resources**, with an estimated overall gap of around \$1.65 billion in funding for investment projects.

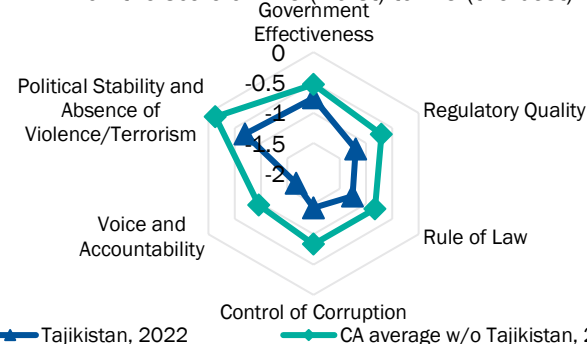
Estimates of informal output (% of official GDP)



Source: World Bank

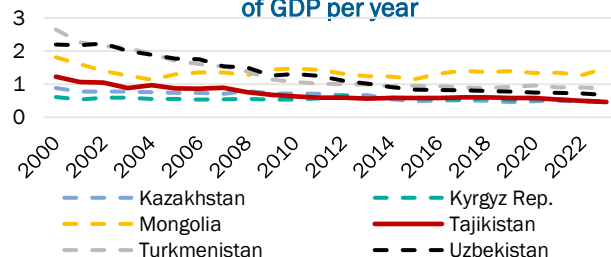
WB governance indicators, 2022

on the scale of -2.5 (worst) to 2.5 (the best)



Source: World Bank

GHG emissions, tonnes of CO2 equivalent per thousand of GDP per year



Source: European Commission's Directorate-General for Joint Research Centre

2. Economic Context

2.2 Key Transition Challenges (II/II)

Inclusive (3.54)

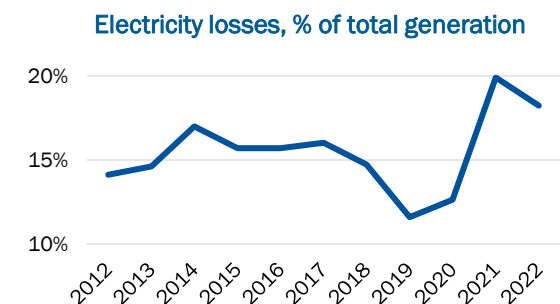
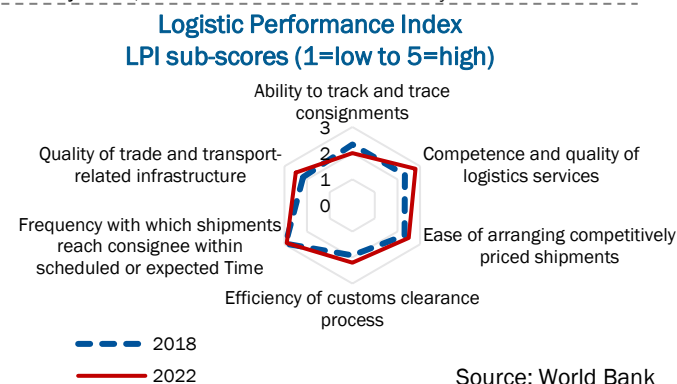
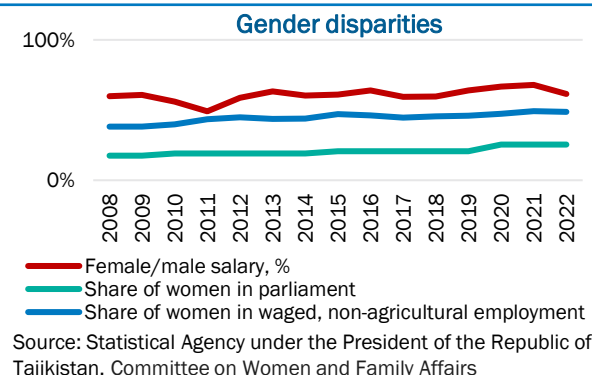
- **Poverty rates declined** on growing remittances and GDP. However, most people are employed in agriculture and publicly funded activities (education and healthcare), that offer the lowest pay.
- **Job creation does not keep up with population growth.** Many young workers migrate due to lack of decent jobs and low wages.
- The formal educational enrolment rate is high, but many **workers remain underskilled** for technically demanding service and manufacturing jobs.
- **Women are underrepresented in the labour market** due to **traditional gender stereotypes** and a **lack of childcare facilities**. Preschool enrolment rate stood at just 9.3% in 2023.
- **Access to finance remains a challenge** and is particularly acute for women and youth entrepreneurs.

Integrated (3.51)

- As a landlocked and mountainous country, Tajikistan faces significant connectivity challenges due to **limited market access, high transportation costs, aging infrastructure, and inefficient border-crossing procedures.**
- Road is the main mode of transport. Nevertheless, despite heavy reliance, **Tajikistan's road sector remains largely underfunded**, though benefitting from IFI funding.
- Rail transport would benefit from **greater connectivity and enhanced efficiency.**
- The development of **air transport requires improved connectivity, better airport infrastructure, and greater competition in the aviation sector.**
- Tajikistan ranked **97th out of 139 countries** on **Logistic Performance Index** in 2023. In 2023, the score increased to 2.5 from 2.34 in 2018, but there is much room for improvement, including strengthening **warehouse and (cold storage) facilities, developing multimodal transport corridors.**

Resilient (3.51)

- Since 2021, the banking sector has been showing healthier indicators, but **NPL and dollarisation levels remain high.** Overall, **risks to financial stability are relatively contained**, but the financial sector requires significant development and growth.
- Notable **progress was made in the development of the government securities market**, but corporate bonds are almost non-existent.
- Tajikistan relies heavily on hydropower to meet its energy needs. The **water and energy sectors** face multiple challenges including **aging infrastructure, high losses, low metering rates, inadequate financing, below cost-recovery tariffs, governance issues and exposure to climate shocks.** Addressing these obstacles requires a combination of capital investments, regulatory reforms, capacity building, and enhanced financial sustainability to improve resilience.



3. Government Priorities and Stakeholder Engagement

3.1 Government Reform Priorities

Tajikistan's economic reform strategy is detailed in its National Development Strategy for the Period up to 2030 (NDS-2030), which outlines the country's vision for sustainable economic growth and development.

In 2024, the IMF approved a Policy Coordination Instrument for Tajikistan to assist in implementing NDS reforms. The reform priorities under the PCI are organized around three main pillars: (i) strengthening fiscal resilience to create space for priority social and development spending, (ii) modernizing the monetary, exchange rate, and financial sector policy frameworks, and (iii) advancing governance and transparency reforms to achieve more sustainable and inclusive growth. Key structural reform targets include improved governance and transparency of SOEs, control of corruption and transparency (also included in the 2021-2030 anti-corruption strategy), and fostering financial inclusion and resilience to climate change.

Regarding financial inclusion, the National Financial Inclusion Strategy for 2022-2026 focuses on removing barriers to accessing financial products and broadening the availability of financial services. Key priorities include strengthening digital infrastructure, diversifying the financial services offered by banks, supporting innovative financial solutions that address the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises (including female-led businesses), and improving financial literacy.

The Strategy for the Development of the Green Economy (2023–2037), approved in December 2022, outlines Tajikistan's roadmap for transitioning to a green economy. This strategy focuses on areas such as compliance with international norms, institutional adaptation, innovation in efficiency and conservation, international cooperation, raising living standards, equal access to environmental services, sustainable consumption and production, linking economic development with environmental sustainability, climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation, and efficient use and growth of natural capital.

3.2 EBRD Reform Areas Broadly Agreed with Authorities

- Support private sector development and access to finance, with a focus on improving the business environment, enhancing financial inclusion, and accelerating digitalisation.
- In the energy sector, expand RES, particularly solar and wind, and explore private sector participation in generation, transmission, and distribution.
- Enhance municipal infrastructure and regional connectivity, with investments needed in urban services, public transport modernisation, and regional integration via the CAREC corridor.

3.3 Key Messages from Civil Society to EBRD

- Sustainability of CSOs remains challenging due to limited financing, compounded by stricter registration and financial reporting requirements as well as increased inspections under recent national legislation.
- Tajikistan has made progress in gender equality, but significant challenges persist. CSOs highlight the need to address unequal opportunities for boys and girls, worsened by early marriages and limited access for people with disabilities.
- CSOs call for greater support for people with disabilities, particularly women, to tackle isolation and violence.
- Policy reforms are needed to enhance e-governance, transparency, and efforts to fight corruption.
- More attention is required for improving air quality, water resources, and the sustainability of municipal and energy infrastructure, including waste management.

4. Defining Tajikistan Country Strategy Priorities

What needs to change? (Country Diagnostic)	Can it be changed? (Political Economy)	What can the Bank do? (Institutional Capabilities)	Strategic Priorities (2025-2030)	What We Want to see in 2030
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic activity and employment continue to be concentrated in seasonal agriculture Non-commodity exports and private sector investments remain limited, and industrial base is focused on low-value-added activities SMEs face many challenges including restricted market access, inadequate infrastructure, weak regulatory environment, insufficient access to finance, and skills deficiencies Job creation is inadequate, and women continue to be underrepresented in the labour market SOEs are inefficient and loss-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authorities are keen on attracting FDI outside of the extractive sector and give preference to investments in processing Reform of the educational system and training programmes is progressing Recently introduced Business Support Programme for 2023-27, as well as reforms to the tax administration and construction licensing, are steps in the right direction Some steps to ensure transparency, efficiency and accountability in the use of public funds were taken Digitalisation in the public sector is advancing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A broad and flexible suite of SME financing and advice is available, including products for corporates and financial institutions Bank assists with the access to skills and employment, finance and entrepreneurship and services for underserved groups working with and through the private sector. Priority client segments include women, youth and less developed regions Expanded range of digital transition products became available Increased focus on governance improvements, including working with the SOEs and public stakeholders 	<p>Strengthen competitiveness and governance by fostering a more inclusive and larger private sector and improving public institutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened competitiveness and increased access to finance Increased gender equality and inclusive economic participation Improved governance and business environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total emissions have significantly increased in the last decade due to the higher use of fossil fuels in power and heat generation Total energy consumption is dominated by fossil fuels Tajikistan is the most vulnerable in terms of future climate change risks Heavy reliance on hydropower for power generation further increases climate change vulnerability Connectivity challenges include limited market access, high transportation costs, aging infrastructure, and inefficient border-crossing procedures Water and energy sectors face multiple challenges including aging infrastructure, high losses, low metering rates, inadequate financing, and governance issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authorities actively work on strengthening climate resilience across the country and fostering low-carbon development based on ambitious 2030 NDC commitments including mitigation and adaptation, as well as investments in renewables Public transport sector is planned to transition to EVs by 2028 Adoption of Green Taxonomy is under discussion and further steps to green financial sector are planned Integrated Road Asset management System is to be introduced, and Road Fund is expected to ensure adequate maintenance budget Rogun HPP is under construction to increase currently very low hydropower utilisation rate compared to potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for the transition to a green, low carbon economy, including financing climate resilient infrastructure, scaled-up renewable energy, smart grids, and enhanced energy storage Support for Paris Alignment and meeting NDC commitments Emphasis on attracting private sector investment to support the path to a zero-carbon future and promoting energy security, deploying innovative financial instruments and approaches Promoting sustainability and innovation through the application of digital technology in infrastructure design and implementation, including integrating smart infrastructure elements 	<p>Enhance green and sustainable energy and transport networks and municipal service delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased renewable energy, resource and energy efficiency, and climate resilience Improved transport and digital connectivity Increased sustainability of municipal services

5. Activities and Results Framework (1/2)

Priority 1: Strengthen competitiveness and governance by fostering a more inclusive and larger private sector and improving public institutions

Key Objectives	Activities	Tracking Indicators
Strengthened competitiveness and increased access to finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to finance corporates and SMEs through direct and indirect lending, including via RSFs, credit lines (under GEFF, WiB, YiB, Agri and other targeted frameworks, such as digital), trade finance, and targeted equity, with a particular focus on agribusiness, exports and value chain development, combined with non-financial services and advisory support for SMEs to strengthen their corporate governance, operational/financial management, export capacity, value chain integration and digital and green transformation Continue Star Venture programme and support for start-ups Explore opportunities to support beneficial investments, inbound FDI, and knowledge transfer, including in agribusiness, natural resources / critical raw materials, and green investments (e.g., renewable energy) Look for ways to expand local currency finance, including by exploring alternatives to hedging, and provide PFI capacity building in conjunction with the banking regulator Continue to support the authorities in developing money and capital markets, green financial systems (e.g., green reporting, green instruments) and options for non-bank finance (e.g., insurance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number/volume of targeted loans extended by PFIs Number of ASB client reporting increased exports, employment and/or productivity
Increased gender equality and inclusive economic participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote greater financial inclusion and entrepreneurship by women, youth, and other underserved groups, coupling financing with technical assistance, delivery of non-financial services, and work with the regulator. Maintain policy dialogue with key stakeholders in the financial sector to improve collection and use of sex-disaggregated SME data to increase financial inclusion Strengthen policy engagement in support of gender equality, including the removal of barriers that exclude women from certain professions, implementation of action plans to reduce sexual harassment and violence, and potentially development of childcare facilities Strengthen human capital development by supporting skills initiatives, in particular, digital (including cybersecurity) and green skills, collaborating with private and public stakeholders (e.g., National Skills Standards, curriculum development), and exploring new programs to address skill gaps, including in rural areas (e.g. the Regional Small Business Programme to develop future professionals) Consider further enhancements to regional inclusion, including digital initiatives in rural areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of people receiving new/improved skills (incl. green/digital) after completion of training
Improved governance and business environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support greater commercialisation, operational efficiency, and institutional capacity and governance at select state bodies and SOEs, including in the energy sector, and explore opportunities to advance related reforms Promote greater private sector participation and service delivery, at both the national and sub-national level, including via reforms to procurement and local content rules Promote digitalisation to improve governance, enhance service delivery and strengthen cybersecurity Explore additional ways to support the business environment, including measures to reduce informality and advance e-governance initiatives, and strengthen corporate governance regulatory frameworks Continue focusing on improving corporate governance of clients and strengthening of their compliance functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of clients improving operational performance Legal, institutional, and regulatory improvements to the business climate

5. Activities and Results Framework (2/2)

Priority 2: Enhance green and sustainable energy and transport networks and municipal service delivery

Key Objectives	Activities	Tracking Indicators
Increased renewable energy, resource and energy efficiency, and climate resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to finance the rehabilitation and upgrade of generation capacity, and transmission and distribution networks Provide support for the legal and regulatory framework in the energy sector. Seek and foster opportunities to finance renewable energy projects (primarily solar, hydro and wind) Look for opportunities to promote the development of regional energy markets Increase the financial sustainability and climate resilience of energy, water resources and networks, transport, agribusiness, irrigation, and look to increase disaster risk preparedness. Consider policy support for other initiatives to increase climate resilience and advance low carbon transition, including government initiatives Explore opportunities to support greater energy and resource efficiency across sectors through green investments (e.g., buildings), continue providing green finance, including via GEFFs, and development of transition planning at PFIs, alongside potential policy engagement to support for relevant legal and regulatory frameworks and strengthening climate corporate governance Support the implementation of eligible uranium remediation projects under the EBRD Environmental Remediation Account (ERA) for Central Asia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total CO2e reduced (tons/y) Total primary energy saved (GJ/y) Renewable energy capacity installed (MW) Number/volume of EE/RE loans extended by PFIs supported by EBRD Improvements in energy sector institutional capacity and regulatory framework
Improved transport and digital connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the rehabilitation and expansion of key road networks and other linkages to international corridors, including potential investments in airports, alongside advisory to strengthen operational and financial management (e.g., RAMS) and climate resilience, and related policy engagement Explore opportunities to strengthen logistics networks and services to facilitate international trade Look for opportunities to enhance the quality, security and availability of digital infrastructure and related digital services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements in transport and digital infrastructure usage and/or capacity
Increased sustainability of urban services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support further upgrading and expansion of sustainable infrastructure and services, primarily water/wastewater, including by increasing operational and financial efficiency through commercialisation (e.g., tariff reforms), digitalisation, and strengthen institutional capacity Look to expand the Green Cities, including as district heating, energy and urban transport (e.g., e-mobility). Strengthen local capacity on sustainable urban planning and implementation Explore opportunities to finance irrigation systems and promote sustainable water use, including policy engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of beneficiaries from improved services % of GCAP actions implemented

6. Mapping of International Partners' Complementarity in EBRD Business Areas

EBRD Business Areas

		Sectors								Cross-cutting Themes				
		Corporate Sector					Sustainable Infrastructure		FI		Strategic Initiatives			
Indicative annual average annual investments/ grants (€m, 2020-2023)		Food and Agribusiness	Manufacturing & Services	Real Estate	TMT	Natural resources	Energy	Infrastructure	Banking	Non-Bank FIs	Green Economy	Inclusion & Gender	Local Currency & Capital Markets	Small Business
WB	245	🇪🇺			🇪🇺		🇪🇺	🇪🇺			🇪🇺	🇪🇺		
ADB	148						🇪🇺	🇪🇺	🇧🇪		🇪🇺	🇪🇺	🇧🇪	🇧🇪
EU	40				🇪🇺	🇪🇺	🇪🇺	🇪🇺			🇪🇺	🇪🇺		
KfW	25						🇪🇺		🇩🇪		🇩🇪	🇩🇪		🇩🇪
IFC	9	🇪🇺	🇪🇺						🇩🇪	🇩🇪	🇩🇪		🇩🇪	🇩🇪
EBRD	57	🇪🇺	🇪🇺				🇪🇺	🇪🇺	🇪🇺		🇩🇪	🇪🇺	🇩🇪	🇪🇺

€ Area of significant investments

● Focus mostly on private sector

P Area of significant policy engagement

○ Focus mostly on public sector

Potential Areas of Cooperation



Green

- Pursue opportunities for collaboration to promote energy and water resource efficiency investments and climate resilient measures across all sectors, with WB, ADB, and others. Explore RES investments in collaboration with IFC



Inclusive

- Cooperate with the WB to promote youth and women entrepreneurship, human capital and skills development



Integrated

- Enhance coordination with ADB, EU and WB to co-finance sustainable infrastructure



Resilient

- Step up policy coordination on financial sector reforms with the IMF, and donors



Well-Governed

- Work closely with other IFIs on governance improvements across all sectors, and especially with public sector clients and counterparts

Note: IFI activity mapping based on publicly available information. Significant IFI investment defined as projects exceeding 5% of annual investment

7. Implementation Risks and Environmental and Social Implications

Risks to the strategy implementation	Probability	Effect	Environmental and social implications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geopolitical situation affecting key trading partners and sources of remittances, and sanctions related risks 	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment and Management of Environmental & Social Impacts: Tajikistan, a mountainous country with only 6% arable land, faces significant challenges such as overgrazing, land degradation, and limited forest cover in the agricultural sector. Energy supply is inconsistent, with fuelwood as a primary source. Capacity building in environmental and social assessments and management systems, and contractor management, may be required to support the adoption of good international practice. Labour and Working Conditions: EBRD ensures clients' HR policies align with its standards, focusing on labour terms, contractor management, anti-discrimination measures, and equal opportunities. Addressing gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) in projects and enhancing clients' capacity to manage such concerns are key priorities. Resource Efficiency, Natural Hazards, and Pollution Prevention and Control: Tajikistan is prone to natural hazards, including earthquakes, floods, and landslides which affect hydropower and irrigation. Modernizing hydropower infrastructure and mining, promoting energy-efficient technologies, and adopting sustainable agricultural methods can reduce resource loss. Capacity-building efforts in waste management, irrigation, and water efficiency are vital to addressing these challenges. Health and Safety: Occupational, health, and safety standards are in place, but enforcement can vary. Contractor management, and migrant workers may especially face health and safety concerns. Workers in agriculture also face challenges with limited access to modern safety equipment and exposure to hazardous materials. Land Acquisition, Involuntary Resettlement and Economic Displacement: As the country undertakes infrastructure and energy projects with limited arable land there may be significant challenges. EBRD ensures compliance with compensation and livelihood restoration requirements of the Bank, with special attention on informal land users, vulnerable groups, and monitoring provisions. Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources: Development projects and shifting livelihoods challenge Tajikistan's biodiversity. Ecosystems are affected by infrastructure expansion, and communities depend on limited forest resources for fuel and grazing, which adds pressure. Promoting sustainable resource management, such as rotational grazing and forest conservation, and enhancing biodiversity assessment capacities are key strategies for balancing development with conservation. Cultural Heritage: Tajikistan's heritage, influenced by Persian, Turkic, and Islamic traditions, faces risks from infrastructure projects and limited conservation resources. EBRD works to protect culturally significant sites by engaging stakeholders and supporting clients in managing cultural resources according to best practices. Financial Intermediaries: The EBRD actively promotes the adoption of sound environmental and social risk management practices, including capabilities commensurate to their size and activities. EBRD strengthens human resources, gender equity, and health, safety, within their operations. EBRD has also supported some partner financial institutions in developing their climate transition plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation capacity of public sector counterparts 	High	Medium	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited borrowing capacity for public sector projects 	Medium	High	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of donor support for investment cofinancing (to meet grant cofinancing requirement) and for technical assistance 	Medium	High	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenging environment for implementing economic reforms 	High	High	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small size of the private sector 	Medium	Medium	

● High
 ● Medium
 ● Low

8. Donor Partnerships Assessment

Needs Assessment for the New Country Strategy Period

To achieve the objectives of the new country strategy, donor funds may be needed to support several key activities:

- Supporting advisory services and capacity building for corporates and SMEs focusing on agribusiness, digital, and green initiatives through TC. Risk-sharing instruments to advance local finance, capital markets, and sustainability efforts.
- Utilising concessional finance to promote financial inclusion and skills development for underserved groups. Advance gender equality, address skill gaps, and enhance inclusion through policy TC.
- Improving SOE reforms, private sector participation, e-governance, and business improvements in energy, infrastructure, and housing through concessional finance and TC.
- Promoting renewables, energy upgrades, and climate resilience while scaling green finance and advancing low-carbon transitions through concessional loans, capex grants, TC and investment incentives.
- Financing capex grants and TC to support sustainable municipal infrastructure, trade, and improve efficiency through commercialization and capacity building. As well as to incentivise climate-resilient water and irrigation projects.

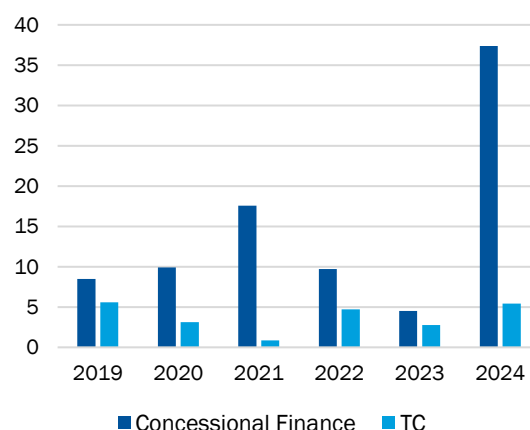
Potential Sources of Donor Funds

- EU and bilateral donors play an important role in the country. They include Switzerland, Austria, Canada, Taipei China, Japan, Korea. Most of these donors funding goes towards supporting project preparation and implementation, policy advice, research and dissemination, and business advice. Support may also be possible through the High-Impact Partnership on Climate Action (HIPCA), which is available for climate-related projects which leverage TC grants and co-investment instruments.
- The Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) are expected to remain key for Tajikistan's climate-related projects with funds to provide concessional loans and grants to support project preparation, implementation, and provide TC grants for research and policy advice, strengthening climate resilience and sustainability efforts.
- Risk sharing and investment incentives are expected through the Small Business Impact Fund and the SME Local Currency Fund, and TC through the Sustainable Infrastructure Fund. These funds will support various sectors fostering economic and sustainable growth in the country.

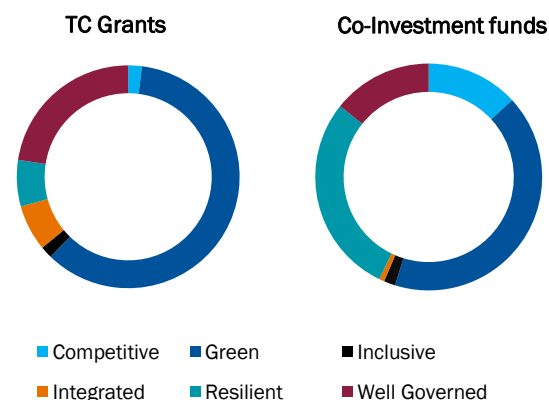
Selected Affordability Indicators

	EBRD regional percentile rank ¹	
GDP per capita (PPP, current. \$) ²	4,964	0
ODA Country	yes	N/A
ODA as share of Gross National Income (%) ³	3.49	52%
ODA per capita (\$ - current prices) ³	52.06	29%

Donor finance during last strategy period(€m)⁴



Use of funds in 2019-2024⁵



1. Simple percentile rank reported as the share of EBRD economies represented below Tajikistan. 2. WEO (2024) 3. OECD (2023) 4. Amounts are based on earmarks at commitment level, 5. Based on the primary Transition Quality of concessional resources.

Annex



European Bank
for Reconstruction and Development

Annex 1 – Political Assessment in the Context of Article 1 (1/10)

Tajikistan's commitment to and application of the political principles of Article 1 as stated in the Agreement Establishing the Bank has been marked by international concerns during the previous Country Strategy period over protection of fundamental civil and political rights.

Since independence in 1991, Tajikistan has faced severe challenges in establishing an independent state and achieving civil peace. The country was wracked by a civil war from 1992-97 in which between 50,000 and 100,000 people died. The 1997 Peace Accords, brokered by the UN and the OSCE, envisaged an inclusive, democratic peace settlement, but in practice the political system has become highly centralised and the government has focused on ensuring political stability. This shift towards centralisation has intensified in the period since the last Country Strategy was adopted. The country has faced renewed security challenges since the adoption of the previous Country Strategy, including the return of the Taliban to power in 2021 in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Since the adoption of the previous Country Strategy, Tajikistan engaged widely with UN and other international human rights mechanisms, including an annual human rights dialogue with the EU. Tajikistan also hosted a series of visits by UN Special Rapporteurs in several thematic areas.¹ Reports and communications from these bodies highlighted growing concerns over electoral processes and restrictions on civil and political rights. In 2023, partly in response to these criticisms, the government launched a National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights until 2038. An accompanying action plan aims to implement recommendations proposed by the UN and other international bodies. There has also been positive progress in adopting new equality legislation.

Free Elections and Representative Government

Free, fair and competitive elections

Since independence in 1991, elections in Tajikistan have been conducted on a regular basis and the principle of universal suffrage has been observed. Elections for the 63 deputies of the Majlisi Namoyandagon, the lower chamber of the bicameral Supreme Assembly (Majlisi Oli), take place every five years, with 41 members elected from single-mandate constituencies and 22 through a proportional list system with a 5% threshold. The 33 members of an upper chamber, the National Assembly (Majlisi Milli), are appointed by regional assemblies and by the president. Presidential elections are held every seven years.

1. Including the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking, especially women and children (2021), UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders (2022), the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief (2023), the UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues (2023).

Annex 1 – Political Assessment in the Context of Article 1 (2/10)

The Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan sets out the legal basis for the conduct of free elections. Article 6 states that, “The highest direct expression of the power of the people is a national referendum and elections.” Articles 49 and 65 state that elections for the lower house of parliament (Majlisi Namoyandagon) and the presidency are conducted on the basis of an equal and direct franchise with a secret ballot. The lower house of parliament (Article 57) is responsible for the formation of the Central Commission for Elections and Referendums (CCER) and the election and dismissal of its members (and the appointment of the Chair and Deputy) as proposed by the President.

The OSCE/ODIHR has regularly sent missions to observe or assess elections in Tajikistan but has given a mixed assessment of their conduct. The Final Report of the OSCE/ODIHR Election Assessment Mission (EOM) on the most recent presidential election in 2020, which was won by President Rahmon with 92% of the vote, concluded that “There was no genuine political alternative offered to voters, with only contrived debate between formal candidates and lack of independent media covering the campaign”. OSCE/ODIHR called for “comprehensive reforms [...] in order to align the electoral process with Tajikistan’s OSCE commitments and other international obligations and standards for democratic elections.”²

OSCE/ODIHR did not send a mission to assess parliamentary elections held in March 2025, after a dispute over accreditation of observers. The OSCE had observed all previous elections since 2000. A pre-election needs assessment by ODIHR noted concerns over “an ongoing lack of independence of the judiciary, election administration and law enforcement bodies, and a clear deterioration in respect for the rights to freedom of expression, association, and assembly.”³ No opposition parties were permitted to contest the elections, and the authorities did not accredit independent media to cover the vote. Only candidates from the ruling People’s Democratic Party of Tajikistan (PDPT) and four other pro-government parties were awarded seats in the Majlisi Namoyandagon.

Separation of powers and effective checks and balances

The Constitution sets out the legal basis for the separation of powers. Article 1 states that Tajikistan is a presidential republic and Article 9 states that, “State power is implemented on the basis of its division into legislative, executive and judicial branches.” The relevant chapters of the Constitution clearly set out the roles and prerogatives of Parliament (“the highest representative and legislative body”), the President (“the head of state and the executive”), the Government (essentially an implementing body subordinate to the President with parliament exercising oversight) and the Courts (the independence of the judiciary is dealt with below).

2. OSCE/ODIHR, Republic of Tajikistan, Presidential Election, 11 October 2020, Election Assessment Mission. Final Report. 19 January 2021, p. 1.

3. OSCE/ODIHR, Lack of accreditation by Tajikistan less than a month before elections makes continuation of OSCE observation mission impossible, Press-release 4 February 2025.

Annex 1 – Political Assessment in the Context of Article 1 (3/10)

The formal powers of the President are extensive. The President sets the principal directions of the country's internal and external policies, appoints and dismisses the Prime Minister and other ministers as well as the heads of executive bodies at the national and regional level, with post factum confirmation by parliament or regional assembly, and appoints and directs the Security Council. Perhaps more significantly, the incumbent President Emomali Rahmon has been in office since 1994 and has accumulated considerable informal power independent of constitutional and legal provisions. He has become closely associated with the country's political stability since the end of the Civil War and has established unrivalled authority within the broader political system and society.

The de facto dominant role of the President has increasingly been given de jure expression. Constitutional referendums in 1999 and 2003 increased the presidential term from five to seven years and the term limit from one to two. A referendum in May 2016 removed all term limits from the presidency and in November 2016, Parliament approved a constitutional law which granted President Rahmon the title, Founder of Peace and National Unity – Leader of the Nation, and also a series of life-time prerogatives, including the right to address the nation on important issues, take part in sessions of parliament and the Security Council and be consulted on major policy issues. In April 2020 Rustam Emomali, the President's eldest son, became Chairman of the National Assembly, the second most powerful post in the Constitution.

Effective power to govern of elected officials

The Constitution sets out the legal basis for Tajikistan's elected officials to have effective power to govern. Article 6 states that the "usurpation of power or its appropriation is forbidden." The Constitution describes clearly the powers of the Parliament, President and other elected bodies. Article 6 also states that, "No public organisation, political party, group of people or specific individual has the right to usurp state power." Article 8 continues, "The ideology of no party, public or religious organisation or group can be recognised as a state ideology." It also states that, "Religious associations are separate from the state and cannot interfere in state affairs," and "the financing of political parties by foreign states and organisations, foreign juridical persons and citizens [is banned]." In practice, as noted above, the elected President has extensive formal powers and full capacity to govern. The Tajik armed forces and security services are under the direct control of the President and do not play an autonomous role in the country's decision-making processes.

Annex 1 – Political Assessment in the Context of Article 1 (4/10)

Civil Society, Media and Participation

Scale and independence of civil society

The Constitution sets out the legal basis for a free and active civil society. Article 8 states that, “Public associations... can be set up and operate in the framework of the Constitution and laws.” Article 28 states that, “Citizens have the right to form associations. The citizen has the right to participate in the creation of political parties, trade unions and other public associations, to voluntarily join them and leave them.” Since independence, civil society organisations (CSOs) in Tajikistan have played an important part in the country’s public life. As of April 2024, according to official statistics, there were 1,813 public associations operating in the country.⁴

A series of laws have incrementally created a more restrictive legal environment for CSOs. Amendments to the law on public associations adopted in 2015 and 2019 imposed new requirements on CSOs to report on their finances and on their activities to the authorities. UN reports have expressed concern that these amendments have made it more difficult for CSOs to carry out their work.⁵ According to the UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues, a Law on countering extremism (2020) and the Law on combatting terrorism (2021) are drafted very broadly and may be used to restrict CSO activities.⁶ According to UN reports, legal constraints have been accompanied by cases of harassment through tax audits and other regulatory and administrative checks.⁷

International bodies have regularly expressed concern over deteriorations in the operating environment for CSOs in Tajikistan. The UN Working Group on Disappearances in September 2024 reported that it was concerned about “information received concerning a progressively shrinking civic space, whereby human rights defenders, journalists and other members of civil society organizations are subjected to surveillance, threats, intimidation, harassment and often arbitrary detention.”⁸ A press-release issued after the 14th Human Rights Dialogue with the EU in December 2023, noted that ‘The EU expressed concerns about restrictions on freedom of political participation and freedom of expression – especially on increasingly restricted space for civil society and independent media’.⁹

4. Permanent Mission of the Republic Tajikistan to the UN in Geneva, Information related to the appeal by the Special Rapporteurs, 6 May 2024.

5. Report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Siobahn Mullaly UN Human Rights Council, 5 May 2022, p. 14

6. Report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Fernand de Varennes, UN Human Rights Council, 13 February 2024, p. 7.

7. United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Mary Lawlor: Preliminary observations and recommendations, 9 December 2022.

8. Follow-up to the recommendations made by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances in its report on its visit to Tajikistan from 1 to 5 July 2019, Report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, UN Human Rights Council, 12 July 2024, p. 3.

9. EU, ‘Tajikistan: 14th Human Rights Dialogue with the EU, Press Release, 14 December 2023.

Annex 1 – Political Assessment in the Context of Article 1 (5/10)

In November 2023 the Minister of Justice announced that 700 NGOs had been dissolved in Tajikistan during the previous 18 months. Many of these were already inactive because of a lack of funds or for other reasons. But some appear to have been effectively forced to close following pressure from the authorities. In March 2024 Mary Lawlor, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, criticised the forced dissolution of human rights NGOs.¹⁰ In practice, restrictions varied by region. According to the UN, of some 300 registered organisations in the Mountainous Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO) in early 2022, only around 10% were reported to be still operating in 2024.¹¹

The legal framework for independent trade unions and the defence of labour rights is in place. In practice, the only national-level trade union permitted to operate was the government-controlled Federation of Trade Unions of Tajikistan.

Independence and pluralism of media operating without censorship

The Constitution sets out the legal basis for free media to operate. Article 30 states, “Everyone is guaranteed freedom of speech, press and the right to use mass media.” It goes on to stipulate that, “State censorship and persecution for expressing criticism is forbidden.” The state Human Rights Council, dominates television and radio broadcasting and controls many websites and newspapers, and an OSCE report concluded that “the media landscape is rich in numbers but not in pluralism and diversity of content, with the media market heavily dominated by the state”.¹²

International bodies have expressed concern over the banning of independent media outlets, and the detention and imprisonment of several journalists under security laws. According to a report by OSCE/ODIHR on media coverage during elections in 2020: “Public space for a pluralistic discourse is scant as media is subservient to the authorities and critical online sources are frequently blocked.”¹³ The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media criticised the imprisonment of journalists in a statement after a visit to Tajikistan in October 2022.¹⁴ In December 2022 the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders reported that around 20 journalists and bloggers had been detained in the previous six months and expressed concern about the reliability of the evidence on which they were held.¹⁵

Some 41% of the population had access to the Internet in 2023, which is low by regional standards, but represents a significant increase on previous years. The authorities block content promoting religious extremism or terrorism, but access to some political and news sites based outside Tajikistan is also restricted. At times the authorities have shut down access to the Internet during periods of conflict, especially in GBAO.

10. Tajikistan: UN expert criticises dissolution of 700 NGOs. UN OHCHR Press-Release 8 March 2024.

11. Tajikistan: UN expert criticises dissolution of 700 NGOs. UN OHCHR Press-Release 8 March 2024.

12. OSCE/ODIHR, Republic of Tajikistan. Parliamentary Election, 1 March 2020, Election Assessment Mission Final Report, 27 May 2020, p. 17.

13. OSCE/ODIHR, Republic of Tajikistan. Parliamentary Election, 1 March 2020, Election Assessment Mission Final Report, 27 May 2020, p. 5

14. Concluding visit to Tajikistan, OSCE Media Freedom Representative calls on authorities to address various media freedom issues, and offers assistance, Press-release, Dushanbe, 7 October 2022.

15. United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Mary Lawlor: Preliminary observations and recommendations, 9 December 2022.

Annex 1 – Political Assessment in the Context of Article 1 (6/10)

Multiple channels of civic and political participation

The Constitution sets out the legal basis for citizens to participate in the country's public life. Article 27 states that, "The citizens have the right to participate in political life and in managing the state either directly or through representatives." Article 25 states that, "State bodies, public associations, political bodies and officials are obliged to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to have access to and to familiarise themselves with documents, which concern their rights and interests, except cases which are stipulated in law." In practice, as set out above and below, the space for civic and public participation has been reduced, but involvement in CSOs, and to a lesser extent political parties, offer Tajik citizens limited opportunities to participate in public life.

Freedom to form political parties and the existence of organised opposition

The Constitution sets out the legal basis for citizens to form political parties and take part in organised political opposition. Article 28 states that, "Citizens have the right to form associations. The citizen has the right to participate in the creation of political parties... to voluntarily join them and leave them." In practice, according to the OSCE, no new political parties have been registered since 2005.¹⁶ There was a more diverse party-political scene in Tajikistan until 2015, when the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT), which had been represented in parliament since the end of the Civil War, was banned. At the most recent parliamentary elections in March 2025, six registered parties were permitted to contest the vote, but for the most part they avoided voicing any opposition to current government policies.

Rule of Law and Access To Justice

Supremacy of the law

The Constitution sets out the legal basis for the rule of law and access to justice from the outset. Article 1 states that Tajikistan is a "law-governed state", Article 10 sets out a series of basic principles to ensure the supremacy of the law.

The independence of the judiciary

The Constitution sets out the legal basis for the independence of the judiciary. Article 84 states that, "The judiciary is independent and its work is carried out by judges in the name of the state." This is confirmed by Article 87 which states that, "Judges in their activities are independent and are only subject to the Constitution and the law. Interference in their activity is forbidden." Article 91 confirms that, "Judges enjoy the right of immunity."

16. Republic of Tajikistan. Parliamentary Election, 1 March 2020. OSCE/ODIHR Election Assessment Mission. Final Report. 27 May 2020, p. 4.

Annex 1 – Political Assessment in the Context of Article 1 (7/10)

Tajikistan has conducted several rounds of judicial reforms, partly in response to recommendations made by UN and other international bodies. Nevertheless, in 2024 the UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues reported that “the judiciary in Tajikistan is still not seen as independent, with individual judges highly vulnerable to pressure from within or outside the judiciary”.¹⁷ In practice, the courts are under the strong influence of the executive and other non-judicial authorities. Prosecutors are reported to have significant influence over judicial proceedings. Despite reported improvements in appointment procedures, the OECD has warned that “the independence of the judiciary is limited due to the influence of the executive and legislative branches of government on the judicial appointment process, which poses a threat of political influence on judges.”¹⁸

Government and citizens equally subject to the law

The Constitution sets out the legal basis for equal application of the law to all citizens regardless of their status. Article 10 states that, “The state and all its bodies, officials, citizens and their associations are obliged to observe and fulfil the Constitution and the laws of the Republic.” Article 17 states that, “All are equal before the law and courts.” Article 19 states that, “Everyone is guaranteed legal defence. Everyone has the right to demand that their case is dealt with by a competent, independent and impartial court, formed on the basis of law.” In practice, there is a shortage of defence lawyers. There have also been incidents in which criminal cases were mounted against defence attorneys in politically sensitive cases.¹⁹

The Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) has collaborated closely with international organisations, including the OSCE and UN, but has faced obstacles in ensuring its independence and in resolving complaints. UN bodies have recommended that the Tajik authorities step up their efforts to ensure that the office of Ombudsman is fully compliant with international standards (the Paris Principles).²⁰

Effective policies and institutions to prevent corruption

The Tajik authorities are pursuing a “State Anti-Corruption Strategy in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period up to 2030” and an Action Plan for the first phase for 2021-25. The main body charged with fighting corruption is the Agency for State Financial Control and Combating Corruption (ASFCCC), which was established in 2008.

17. Report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Fernand de Varennes, UN Human Rights Council, 13 February 2024, p. 8.

18. OECD, Baseline Report Of The Fifth Round Of Monitoring Of Anti-Corruption Reforms In Tajikistan: The Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan, 18 September 2024, p. 11.20.

19. United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Mary Lawlor: Preliminary observations and recommendations, 9 December 2022.

20. UN Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Tajikistan, 20 February 2024, p. 7.

Annex 1 – Political Assessment in the Context of Article 1 (8/10)

Despite this strategic planning, Tajikistan's record in tackling corruption remains weak. Its score on the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index since the last country strategy was approved has declined from a score of 25 in 2019 to 20 in 2023; Tajikistan was ranked 162nd among 180 countries in 2023, the same level as Afghanistan and Myanmar.²¹ Tajikistan has actively engaged with the OECD's Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan, which assesses strategies and legislations to counter corruption. The OECD Monitoring Report of the Action Plan in 2023 highlighted several shortcomings, including "significant gaps" in the criminal legislation regarding corruption offences, unclear mandates for anti-corruption institutions, and a lack of independence of the judiciary and prosecutorial bodies.²²

Civil and Political Rights

Freedom of speech, information, religion, conscience, movement, association and private property

The preamble of the Constitution sets out a solemn commitment to "the inalienable freedom and rights of the person, respect for the equal rights and friendship of all nations and peoples, aiming to create a just society." The first two sections of the Constitution contain a range of guarantees of the fundamental civil and political rights of citizens, including free speech, access to information, freedom of religion and conscience, free movement, free association, legal protection for private property and the impermissibility of forced labour. Tajikistan has a long-standing and constructive engagement with UN human rights bodies and is a signatory to the main international human rights agreements.

Nevertheless, as noted above, UN and other international bodies have expressed concern over de facto implementation of constitutional provisions and have criticised a range of formal and informal restrictions on civil and political rights, including freedom of speech, conscience and religion.²³ Organised religious activity is illegal without permission from the Committee on Religion, Regulation of Traditions, Celebrations and Ceremonies. Young people under the age of 18 are not permitted to take part in religious activity. Smaller religious communities reported difficulties in registering places of worship.²⁴

Political inclusiveness for women, ethnic and other minorities

The Constitution sets out the legal basis for inclusiveness and equality, including in the areas of gender and ethnicity. Article 17 states that, "The state guarantees the rights and freedom of everyone, without regard to nationality, race, gender, language, religion, political convictions, education or social or economic status. Men and women have the same rights." International bodies have praised the adoption in 2022 of Tajikistan's first anti-discrimination law, the Act on Equality and Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination, which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity or sex.

21. Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions Index 2023, <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023/index/tjk>

22. OECD, Baseline Report Of The Fifth Round Of Monitoring Of Anti-Corruption Reforms In Tajikistan: The Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan, 18 September 2024, p. 11-12.

23. Including the Report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Fernand de Varennes, UN Human Rights Council, 13 February 2024 and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Mary Lawlor: Preliminary observations and recommendations, 9 December 2022.

24. Report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Fernand de Varennes, UN Human Rights Council, 13 February 2024.

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The government has taken steps to promote women in education and in public life, including a state programme adopted in 2022 designed to promote women in leadership positions. The authorities have increasingly recognised gender-based violence (GBV) as a major social problem, but the UN Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) has called for further measures to tackle GBV. CEDAW has also expressed concern about the limited representation of women in senior positions in public bodies and criticised provisions in the Constitution and the Labour Code that prohibit women from working in certain professions.²⁵ The UN Human Rights Committee has expressed concerns about social stigmatisation and discrimination reportedly faced by LGBTIQ communities.²⁶

According to the 2020 census, ethnic Tajiks comprise over 86% of the population, while ethnic Uzbeks (11%) form the largest minority. Smaller minorities include ethnic Kyrgyz (0.4%) and Mugat (or Roma). Article 2 gives Russian the status of “the language of inter-ethnic communication” and states that, “All nations and peoples inhabiting the territory of the republic have the right to use their native language.” According to the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, ethnic minorities are under-represented in political institutions, such as parliament and other state bodies. The Mountainous Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO), in the light of its historical and ethnic specificities, enjoys special administrative status. However, there have been outbreaks of conflict in GBAO, where many of the Pamiri population follow the Ismaili Shia branch of Islam. A security crackdown in 2022, characterised by the government as a campaign against organised crime networks, was accompanied by allegations of human rights violations, including detention of human rights defenders and other activists, according to reports by UN and other international human rights bodies.²⁷

Freedom from harassment, intimidation and torture

The Constitution sets out the legal basis to ensure that citizens are free from harassment, intimidation and torture. Article 5 states that, “Life, honour, dignity and other natural rights of the person are inalienable.” Article 18 states that, “The inviolability of the person is guaranteed by the state. No one can be subjected to torture, inhuman treatment and punishment.” Tajikistan is a signatory to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

25. UN Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Tajikistan, 20 February 2024, pp. 4, 11.

26. Human Rights Committee, ‘Concluding observations on the third periodic report of Tajikistan’, 22 August 2019, p. 3; Report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Siobahn Mullaly, UN Human Rights Council, 5 May 2022, p. 4.

27. Report of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Fernand de Varennes, UN Human Rights Council, 13 February 2024, p. 14; the situation in GBAO was also raised by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. See Experts of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Commend Tajikistan on Improved Treatment of Migrants and Asylum Seekers, Ask Questions on Discrimination against the Pamiri Minority and Human Rights Defenders’, 21 April 2024.

Annex 1 – Political Assessment in the Context of Article 1 (10/10)

Civil society, through the Anti-Torture Coalition, has worked to investigate cases of torture and other forms of mistreatment. The government adopted a 2019–2022 National Action Plan on Implementation of the Recommendations of the United Nations Committee against Torture (UN CAT) in 2019, after the UN CAT published a report detailing concerns about the situation in Tajikistan including “allegations that torture and ill-treatment continue to be routinely practiced by law enforcement officials”. Despite the National Action Plan, there have been continued reports of harassment, torture and ill-treatment of detainees, according to UN Special Rapporteurs and other international bodies.²⁸ The UN has also raised concerns over cases of “enforced disappearance in the context of transnational transfers” from foreign countries.

International bodies have raised prison conditions as a serious concern. Partly in response, the government launched a major penal reform strategy in 2020. The 10-year strategy is designed to address complaints of harsh living conditions, poor health facilities and overcrowding in prisons.²⁹

28. For example, Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Nazila Ghanea, UN Human Rights Council, 18 January 2024, p. 13.

29. Follow-up to the recommendations made by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances in its report on its visit to Tajikistan from 1 to 5 July 2019, Report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, UN Human Rights Council, 12 July 2024, p. 3.