

EBRD-CSO Newsletter

Keeping you up to date with the EBRD

Welcome to the
CSO Newsletter

January 2025

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Foreword

Dear readers,

Happy New Year and welcome to the first issue of 2025!

As we embark on this new year, we are excited to share with you the impactful initiatives and significant milestones from the end of 2024.

In late 2024 we renewed our commitment to fighting corruption by strengthening our partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. This collaboration heralds the launch of the Central Asian Business Integrity Network (CABIN), an endeavour that embodies our dedication to fostering ethical business practices and transparency in the region.

Our efforts to support local and refugee women in southern Türkiye have been particularly rewarding. In response to the Syrian civil war, the Covid-19 pandemic and the 2023 earthquakes, we have successfully empowered women-led businesses through targeted initiatives in Gaziantep, Hatay, Şanlıurfa, and Mardin.

Moreover, the EBRD has introduced the updated Environmental and Social Policy and Access to Information Policy, reflecting our

unwavering commitment to sustainability and transparency. These policies form the backbone of our efforts to ensure accountability and deliver positive impact across our regions.

Looking ahead, we anticipate a year of continued growth and collaboration. We invite you to join us on this journey, and we thank you for your ongoing support.

Happy reading, and best wishes for a prosperous 2025!

The CSE team

POLICY ACTIVITY

EBRD strengthens partnerships to improve business integrity

In late 2024, the EBRD renewed its commitment to tackling corruption by renewing its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime \(UNODC\)](#) in Vienna. Signed by Nadia Petkova, EBRD Managing Director for Impact and Partnerships, the MoU underscores the Bank's role in fostering transparency and accountability.

Timed with International Anti-Corruption Day on 9 December, this renewed partnership also marked the launch of the [Central Asian Business Integrity Network \(CABIN\)](#) – an initiative aimed at promoting ethical business practices in the region. CABIN seeks to establish a network of businesses committed to ethical standards and compliance, aligning with the broader goal of creating a sustainable, transparent and accountable business environment in Central Asia.

Through CABIN, private sector businesses and associations in Central Asia will:

- advocate for fair competition and transparent business practices

- promote ethical conduct via knowledge-sharing platforms
- enhance **corporate compliance and integrity standards**
- collaborate with **governments to establish level playing fields for businesses**
- foster a culture of **integrity and ethical practices across the region.**

This project builds on previous collaborations between the EBRD and the UNODC in the region, such as the 2020 initiative [Enhancing the Capacity of Civil Society on Good Governance in Central Asia](#), which supported anti-corruption programmes involving civil society and the private sector. It also aligns with the Bank's Civil Society team's Capacity Enhancement Framework, encouraging cooperation with civil society to promote good governance and anti-corruption efforts.

The alliance between the EBRD and UNODC aims to drive transformative change, with CABIN marking a critical step forward in establishing governance frameworks where integrity is standard practice.



Supporting local and refugee women in southern Türkiye

In response to the Syrian civil war, the Covid-19 pandemic and the February 2023 earthquakes, the EBRD, in partnership with Kadın Emegini Değerlendirme Vakfı (KEDV) Oxfam TR, launched a project to empower and rebuild women-led businesses in southern Türkiye.

The initiative focuses on technical business skills, financial grants and decision-making at household and local economy levels. It operates in Gaziantep, Hatay, Şanlıurfa and Mardin.

The project's launch in Gaziantep in November 2024 generated support



from key stakeholders and provided a platform for project participants to share their reflections and evolving needs with the EBRD and other similar actors.

To date, 289 local and 176 refugee participants have completed training in entrepreneurship, financial literacy and digital skills for business. Food and beverage businesses also received specialised hygiene training and certifications.

In collaboration with the Gaziantep mayoral office, the project will provide mentorship opportunities to address ongoing business challenges and promote women's businesses in the local and regional economies.

POLICY ACTIVITY

EBRD approves new Environmental and Social Policy and new Access to Information Policy

The EBRD has published its updated Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) and a revised Access to Information Policy (AIP), both set to reinforce the Bank's dedication to sustainability and transparency. **The new ESP introduces a more rigorous risk-based approach to project assessment, ensuring all projects meet high sustainability standards and deliver positive results.** Strengthening supply chain requirements will hold borrowers accountable for compliance with international labour, human rights and environmental standards.

Meanwhile, **the updated AIP enhances the transparency and accessibility of the Bank's information.** The updated rules align with international best practice on transparency and information sharing, strengthening the EBRD's commitment to openness. Key

changes include the adoption of new principles for proactive disclosure and a more narrowly defined set of exceptions, guided by clearer criteria based on the potential harm caused.

The new framework also **enhances transparency in relation to the Bank's decision-making process and information sharing on its operations,** all while balancing the EBRD's unique mandate with client needs across its regions.



ACCESS THE ESP DOCUMENT



ACCESS THE AIP DOCUMENTS



Civil Society Programme at the 2025 EBRD Annual Meeting



Join us for our Civil Society Programme at the 2025 EBRD Annual Meeting from **13 to 15 May in London**, United Kingdom.

This year, the theme of the Business Forum is **Expanding Horizons, Enduring Strengths**. Our programme, which will take place in hybrid format, provides an opportunity for dialogue between civil society stakeholders and the EBRD Board of Directors, the President, senior management and staff.

More information will be available in February. Stay tuned and check out our social media accounts.

Project supporting Ukrainian refugee families wins silver PR award



Our initiative to support Ukrainian and Romanian families based in Bucharest has won the **Silver Award for Inclusivity and Diversity** at the Romanian PR Awards. The project was carried out in collaboration with [Jobs for Ukraine](#), [Save the Children Romania](#) and [Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth](#).

We are happy to see our project recognised. You can read more about it in the July edition of this newsletter.

JULY 2024 CSO NEWSLETTER



OVERVIEW OF CSE ACTIVITY

In 2024 the CSE team conducted the following activities:

- 24** country/sector strategy consultation meetings
- 11** senior management CSO meetings
- 10** presidential CSO meetings
- 4** Board meetings with CSOs

EBRD PUBLICATIONS



**NEW COUNTRY
STRATEGY FOR
TÜRKIYE**



**NEW
INFRASTRUCTURE
STRATEGY**



**NEW FOOD AND
AGRIBUSINESS
STRATEGY**



Contacts

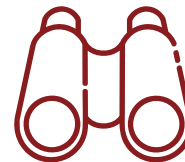
Civil Society Engagement

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LOOKING AHEAD



- The consultation on the **draft Armenia country strategy** runs until 31 January 2025.
- The consultation on the **draft Albania country strategy** runs until 3 February 2025.
- The consultation on the **draft Jordan country strategy** runs until 9 March 2025.
- Our **current and upcoming country and sector strategies** will be available on our dedicated consultation page.

**HAVE
YOUR
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Review our open consultations



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PROJECT
INFORMATION**



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PRIZE**



**EBRD MARKS
RECORD YEAR OF
INVESTMENTS**



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