

Civil Society Programme at the Annual Meeting 2017



The Role of Civil Society in Promoting Transition Resilience

Roundtable discussion

Wednesday, 10 May, 11.00 – 12.30

CSO Meeting Room 1

Transition to a sustainable market economy is not a linear process and there can be setbacks and reversals along the way. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is committed to strengthening transition resilience, by supporting policies that advance economic inclusion and social cohesion, and improve the investment climate. As such, the EBRD considers transition resilience as progress that is built on solid institutional foundations, economic stability and social acceptance (*EBRD Strategic and Capital Framework 2016-2020*).

A well-functioning market economy needs ‘shock absorbers’ that can ensure broad support for market institutions during a downturn. Civil society organisations (CSOs), operating in the space between the public and private sectors, can play an important role in this. In countries with a strong civil society, transition reforms tend to be more resilient and there is a lower risk of backtracking to the pre-transition economic and socio-political landscape.

An active, strong civil society can act as an important watchdog and reinforce economic development by encouraging sound governmental policies and by increasing the flow of knowledge and information within a society. CSOs can moreover provide useful input on economic policy issues, facilitate the growth of private enterprises, and help ensure that the state does not suffocate the economy. On the other hand, an active and diverse civil society can play a valuable role in helping advance democratic policymaking by fostering greater civic and political participation, and ensuring that citizens’ interests are taken into account.

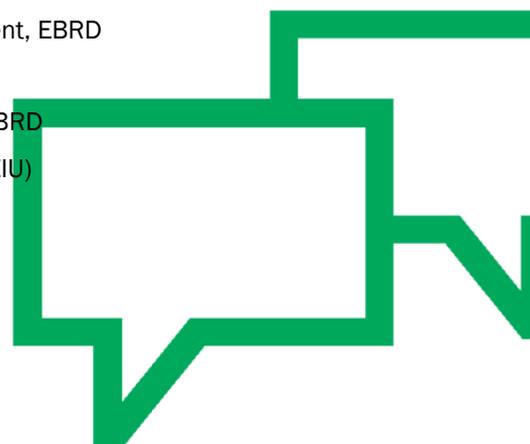
The panel will look into the role of civil society in promoting transition resilience in the EBRD region. The discussion will focus on the link between different levels of civil society development and the sustainability of reforms in various countries, with a focus on Central and Eastern Europe. The panellists will give their views on how the strength and vibrancy of civil society influences the pace and resilience of transition reforms in a given country.

“How can CSOs contribute to minimizing the risk of transition reversals and promote the stability of market economy reforms? What have CSOs been doing to support the vulnerable communities that are negatively affected by transition? How to build and maintain constituencies in support of reform programmes and foster the local ownership of transition reforms?”. The event will be open to all participants of the Annual Meeting and Business Forum.

Moderator: Cristina Buzasu, Acting Principal Manager, Civil Society Engagement, EBRD

Speakers

- ▶ Alan Rousso - Managing Director, External Relations and Partnerships, EBRD
- ▶ Joan Hoey - Regional Director, Europe, The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)
- ▶ Faryal Sajjad - School of Public Policy, Central European University
- ▶ Hanh Nguyen - School of Public Policy, Central European University
- ▶ Michele Massacesi - School of Public Policy, Central European University



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Alan Rousso, Managing Director, External Relations and Partnerships, EBRD

Alan Rousso is Managing Director for External Relations and Partnerships at the EBRD. This role sits within the Vice Presidency, Policy and Partnerships, and comprises the Donor Co-Financing, Nuclear Safety, Technical Cooperation and Civil Society Engagement teams. The group promotes strong partnerships between the EBRD and external organisations providing grant or investment co-financing resources. Dr. Rousso joined the EBRD in 2001, and prior to this he served as Director of the Carnegie Endowment's Moscow Centre. He also taught on the political science faculties at Dartmouth College, Cornell University, and Columbia University. He has published and lectured widely on

the political economy of transition in the post-communist countries, Russian domestic politics and foreign/security policy.



Joan Hoey, Regional Director for Europe, The Economist Intelligence Unit

Joan Hoey heads a large team of analysts covering Europe, in the Economist Intelligence Unit's Country Analysis division, and is personally responsible for compiling political and economic forecasts for several countries in the region. Joan is an expert on Greece, the Balkans and Eastern Europe, and has specialised in political risk, democracy and post-communist transition. She often presents at conferences, and has often frequently been invited to share her perspectives on Europe with senior corporate executives, academics and diplomatic officials. Joan is also the Editor of the EIU's flagship annual

Democracy Index. The 2016 edition, *Revenge of the "deplorables"*, was published in January 2017.



Cristina Buzasu, Acting Principal Manager, Civil Society Engagement, EBRD

Cristina Buzasu currently works as an Acting Principal Manager at the EBRD, where she coordinates the Bank's engagement with civil society stakeholders in Central and Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans. Cristina also manages technical cooperation projects aimed at enhancing the capacity of civil society organisations in the area of investment climate and governance. She has previously worked as a Policy Advisor for the European Parliament in Brussels. Cristina holds a Master's degree in European Political Economy from the London School of Economics (LSE), and

has also undertaken specialisation courses at Georgetown University and Cambridge University.



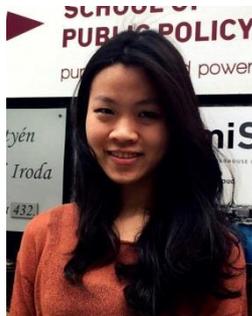
Faryal Sajjad - School of Public Policy, Central European University

Faryal Sajjad is a Master of Public Administration (MPA) candidate at the School of Public Policy at the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. She has a Bachelor degree in Economics and is driven by her strong normative and intellectual commitment to inclusive policy making. Her study focuses on corruption and whistleblowing in the public sector. She is working on a project to develop a quantitative indicator which measures the impact of institutional quality on the effectiveness of a whistleblowing scandal. Faryal is also interested in conflict-resolution, particularly involving children and youth. She has worked for UNICEF in Tajikistan doing monitoring and evaluation for

youth initiatives designed to promote peace-building on the Tajik-Kyrgyz border.



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Hanh Nguyen - School of Public Policy, Central European University

Hanh Nguyen is a Master of Public Administration (MPA) candidate at the School of Public Policy, Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. Her studies focus on climate change policy process in emerging economies. She is the winner of a bronze medal from the Centre for International Sustainable Development Law for her essay on harmonizing domestic policies with international agreements on climate change mitigation, presented at the 2016 Conference of Parties (COP) 22 in Morocco. Hanh has worked on several regional climate change and environment related projects in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. She is currently an off-site research associate with the G20 Research Group and the G7 Research Group based in Toronto, Canada. She is recently contributing to the climate change compliance report aiming at assessing the commitment of G20 members.



Michele Massacesi - School of Public Policy, Central European University

Michele Massacesi is a Master of Public Administration (MPA) candidate at the School of Public Policy at the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. His academic background is in Political Science and International Relations, with a particular focus on European affairs. His studies focus on the progress of structural reforms in Central and Eastern Europe, and are underpinned by his extensive academic and professional experience, including an internship at La Repubblica's newsroom. He is also undertaking comprehensive analyses on the way political economic institutions work, policy design and implementation, and political communication from different angles and perspectives. Currently, Michele is conducting research on the relationship between media freedom and transition reforms in CEE.

