

Civil society to strengthen the transparency of Ukraine's public procurement



On 24 January, the Bank launched a two-year technical cooperation project, together with the Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF) and the Kiev School of Economics (KSE), to monitor the public procurement of goods and services using the national electronic procurement system, ProZorro. An application for collecting feedback on the new system was launched at the same time, developed by Transparency International (TI) Ukraine.

Increasing transparency and reducing corruption in public procurement is a priority for the Ukrainian government. TI Ukraine and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine (MEDT) led the development of ProZorro, which was implemented with support from the EBRD, the Open Contracting Partnership and other public and private international and Ukrainian institutions.

Under a new public procurement law, ProZorro, operated by the MEDT, is mandatory for all public tenders conducted in Ukraine. The new system will make it easier for CSOs operating in Kiev and at the regional or municipal level to monitor all phases of procurement, whereas CSOs previously monitored procurement on a case-by-case basis.

However, monitoring requires technical knowledge of the procurement process as well as a good understanding of the legal and institutional environment in which procurement decisions are made. The EBRD project, which complements CSO training provided by TI and an EU-funded project, will offer the necessary capacity-enhancement training and assistance for CSOs, along with effective monitoring tools to help identify irregularities and bring evidence-based reports of abuse to the attention of the authorities.

“Public procurement is one of the most critical aspects of good governance in Ukraine, where the involvement of civil society can add real value, enhancing transparency and addressing corruption. The EBRD-supported project aims to ensure that independent observers can monitor public procurement,” said Cristina Buzasu, EBRD operational leader of the technical cooperation project.

“ProZorro is now well equipped to give civil society unrestricted access to public procurement information. We are working with TI, the PTF and KSE on new methodologies that will help monitor procurement effectively at national and municipal levels. It is important to provide

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Welcome to the CSO Newsletter

In this issue we cover a new two-year project



launched in Ukraine that aims to strengthen public procurement in cooperation with civil society. We also look at the 2017 EBRD Civil Society Programme, for which CSOs have an opportunity to shape the agenda. This year, the Civil Society Programme will take place on 9-11 May in Nicosia, Cyprus, alongside the 26th EBRD Annual Meeting and Business Forum.

In addition, we outline the EBRD's forthcoming first Economic Inclusion Strategy and report back from the Board of Directors' meetings with civil society representatives in Albania and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As always, we bring you the latest news about the Bank's dialogue with CSOs on country strategies, recent projects and initiatives.

→ For more information visit:
www.ebrd.com/who-we-are/civil-society/news-and-events

contracting entities with a red flag system on ProZorro so they can monitor their own organisations and promote best practice. Enhancing the monitoring of public procurement will help to improve the business climate for the private sector in the country,” said EBRD Senior Counsel Eliza Niewiadomska, who worked on the creation of ProZorro.

This project is funded by the Ukraine Stabilisation and Sustainable Growth Multi-Donor Account and is expected to have an impact beyond the findings of the monitoring process. It will give CSOs tools to engage and influence government in reducing corruption and inefficiencies.

2017 Annual Meeting Civil Society Programme

This year the Civil Society Programme will take place from 9-11 May in Nicosia, Cyprus. It will be an opportunity for dialogue between civil society and EBRD staff, senior management, the President and Board Directors about the EBRD's policies and investment projects. The Programme will also feature the roundtable sessions detailed below.

Supporting reconciliation

The first panel of the 2017 Civil Society Programme will be led by CSOs which have been selected following a call for proposals for the organisation of a thematic panel. This year, the CSO panel will focus on the importance of economic development for long-term, sustainable reconciliation and the role of CSOs in this process. The event will take place at the Home for Cooperation (H4C), a site for civil society dialogue located in the UN buffer zone in Nicosia and open to all Cypriot communities. The panel will discuss ways of encouraging separated communities in the EBRD region – including Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots – to build bridges and cooperate with each other.

Fostering green and resilient market economies

Promoting resilience in the transition process

The second panel will look into how civil society can promote resilience in the EBRD region as countries undergo transition to market economies. Transition is not a linear process and a well-functioning market economy needs 'shock absorbers' that can ensure broad support for market institutions during a downturn. Civil society, operating in the space between the public and private sectors, can play an important part in this regard.

Working towards a green economy

The third panel discussion will focus on green cities and the role of civil society in promoting green economic practices. Many EBRD countries of operations face low levels of energy efficiency and resource efficiency as well as limited awareness of climate-change adaptation. It is vital for businesses and authorities to integrate sustainability into their core priorities and to promote community involvement, with CSOs as a crucial link in these efforts.

This year, the Civil Society Programme will introduce World Café Roundtables, where EBRD teams will host discussions on topics such as transition to a green economy, the updated EBRD transition concept, evaluation and results management, and the Civil Society Capacity Enhancement Framework. Most sessions of the Programme, including facilitated discussion panels, are open to all Business Forum guests. Several project-specific sessions and meetings with the EBRD President and Board are reserved for civil society representatives only.



Increasing engagement with Uzbekistan

The EBRD has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the government of Uzbekistan, concluding a visit to the country by EBRD President Suma Chakrabarti and a senior delegation from the Bank on 15- 17 March. In addition to meetings with senior officials, chiefly Uzbekistan's President, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the visit included discussions with representatives from private sector companies, the diplomatic community, international financial institutions and CSOs. The MoU sets out areas for potential cooperation: a programme of advice and finance for SMEs, a trade finance programme to support cross-border trade and cooperation, and measures to improve the competitiveness of the Uzbek economy, including through attracting foreign direct investment that will result in the transfer of technology and know-how. In addition, the Bank is planning to address the legacy of Soviet-era uranium mining and processing in the region.

Send us your photos of how you keep your #EBRDcity green

The EBRD is tackling the challenge of climate change in urban centres through its new Green Cities Framework, as part of our municipal infrastructure investments.

We invite you to share your photos of your green city using the hashtags #GreenCity #EBRDcity, and/or #EBRDgreen and tag us on Instagram (@ebrd_official), Facebook or Twitter (@ EBRD). We will repost the best photos and display them at the Civil Society Programme.



More information about the Civil Society Programme is available at www.ebrd.com/who-we-are/civil-society/news-and-events.html

For more details about the EBRD Annual Meeting and Business Forum 2017 see www.ebrd.com/am

DIALOGUE

Country strategy consultations



EGYPT

A consultation workshop was held with international CSOs on 25 January in London to provide input on the draft Country Strategy (CS) for Egypt. Several EBRD officials responsible for Egypt attended the meeting, including the Managing Director for the southern and eastern Mediterranean (SEMED) region. Participants discussed topics related to civic participation, public oversight and the political assessment in the CS as well as its main priority areas. The consultation meeting was attended by the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, the Charity Commission, CIVICUS, Human Rights Watch, the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, the International Commission of Jurists, Reporters without Borders and Transparency International.

The final CS for Egypt and the Report on the Invitation to the Public to Comment, approved on 8 February, have been published on the EBRD website at www.ebrd.com/what-we-do/strategies-and-policies.html

Board consultation visits

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

On 28 March, EBRD Board Directors met representatives of civil society in Sarajevo. The topics covered included the business and political environment in the country, economic inclusion, the rule of law, governance, EU accession and strengthening democratic processes. Civil society participants attended the meeting from Transparency International Bosnia and Herzegovina, Regional Environmental Center, Eko Akcija, the agency for economic development of the city of Prijedor (Preda), and PI Consulting.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

On 15 March the EBRD Resident Office in Sarajevo hosted a consultation with civil society representatives to discuss the Bank's forthcoming CS for Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is currently in the drafting stage. Representatives from national and regional CSOs, including the Mozaik Foundation, Social Inclusion Foundation, Center for Environment, and Initiative for Better and Humane Inclusion attended the roundtable. Participants discussed the operational priorities of the forthcoming Strategy period. Other topics included the operating environment for CSOs, transparency and governance, economic competitiveness and private sector development, sustainable energy and environmental issues, as well as economic and social inclusion. The draft Strategy is expected to be released for public comment for 45 calendar days at the end of April. The final document is due to be adopted in July 2017.

ALBANIA

On 30 March, EBRD Board Directors met civil society representatives in Tirana as part of the Directors' consultation visit to Albania. The following CSOs participated: Partners Albania for Change and Development, Regional Environmental Centre, Institute for Environmental Policy, Foreign Investors Association of Albania, and the Albanian-American Development Fund. Participants discussed how the operating environment for CSOs was evolving in Albania, and looked at rule of law and governance issues. The business environment, women in business, and the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) also formed part of the discussion.

The EBRD's first Economic Inclusion Strategy

The EBRD held a series of public consultation meetings bringing together civil society stakeholders from across the Bank's region to discuss the forthcoming EBRD Economic Inclusion Strategy. The Strategy builds on four years of implementing inclusion efforts in the Bank's operations. It shows how economic inclusion is among the key qualities of a market economy, and how the Bank proposes to apply inclusion through its core operations from 2017-21.

Five consultations took place throughout the 45-day consultation period. These enabled a wide range of stakeholders to provide input and discuss the draft Strategy with EBRD management. The meetings took place in Almaty (15 March), Istanbul (17 March), Amman (20 March), Belgrade (28 March) and EBRD headquarters in London (30 March).

The Economic Inclusion Strategy is due to be launched at the Annual Meeting and Business Forum 2017.

Meeting with think-tanks in Kosovo

The EBRD's Credit team held a meeting with think-tanks at the Pristina Resident Office on 19 January to discuss macroeconomic and political risks in the country. Riinvest Institute for Development Research, Pristina Regional Enterprise Agency, Kosovan Institute for Policy Research and Development, GAP Institute for Advanced Studies, KOS Investment and Management Group participated in the meeting.

IN BRIEF

Green Economy Financing Facility launched in Egypt

The EBRD, in cooperation with the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the EU, launched a new €140 million programme that will contribute to energy security. The Green Economy Financing Facility (GEFF) will provide loans for private companies through participating banks, for energy efficiency and small-scale renewable energy investments as well as for projects in water and resource efficiency.

Total project value/EBRD finance: €140 million

Building bridges between Georgia and Armenia

The EBRD is providing a loan of up to €6 million to Georgia for co-financing works to improve the cross-border bridge connecting the country with Armenia. The project is part of the EU's regional integrated Border Management Strategy. It supports Georgia's plans to upgrade its infrastructure to EU standards and will increase regional connectivity.

Total project value: €10.3 million (financed by the EBRD for Georgia and for Armenia as part of the Northern Corridor Modernisation Project).



Welcome to: Social Innovation Forum, 6 April 2017, Belgrade

At the Social Innovation Forum, a day of sessions on "The Social Enterprise Ecosystems in Croatia and the Western Balkans" will be held, with support from the EBRD and the TaiwanBusiness-EBRD Cooperation Fund. The event will bring together regional and global leaders from the sector to discuss the challenges and opportunities for social enterprises in the region. The session will launch a report that includes a comprehensive mapping study of these ecosystems in seven countries, conducted with support from the EBRD and TaiwanBusiness-EBRD Cooperation Fund.

Key dates and contacts

Country strategies

Montenegro	March – April 2017
Mongolia	March – May 2017
Kazakhstan	April – May 2017

Other strategies

Economic Inclusion Strategy	March – April 2017
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Board consultation visits

Bosnia and Herzegovina	March 2017
Albania	March 2017



To have your say on strategies visit:
www.ebrd.com/strategies-and-policies/have-your-say.html

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