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PUBLIC INFORMATION POLICY

Implementation report 2018



European Bank
for Reconstruction and Development

Public Information Policy
Implementation Report 2018

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Public Information Policy Implementation Report 2018

Executive summary

The 2014 Public Information Policy (PIP) sets out how the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the “EBRD” or the “Bank”) discloses information and consults with its stakeholders to promote awareness and understanding of its activities. The full text of the PIP is published on the Bank’s website.¹

The PIP requires the Secretary General to report to the Board annually on its implementation and that the report be published on the Bank’s website. This report covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2018.

The PIP was agreed by the Board of Directors in 2014 and its mandated five-year review cycle was recently completed in parallel with a review of the Bank’s Environmental and Social Policy and the Project Complaint Mechanism (PCM) rules of procedure.

Information in this report

This report sets out all activities undertaken by the Bank to implement the PIP during the reporting period. Section numbers in this report mirror the section numbers of the PIP on which implementing information is being reported.

Highlights of 2018

During the reporting period:

- **The Bank launched a review and revision of the PIP**, marking the start of intensive consultations with internal and external stakeholders, including EBRD clients and shareholders, civil society organisations (CSOs), other international financial institutions and international organisations with an interest in transparency and disclosure practices (such as the Publish What You Fund campaign, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Aarhus Convention Secretariat and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights). This process concluded in the approval of a new Access to Information Policy and Directive on Access to Information in April 2019, to become effective on 1 January 2020.
- **The Bank complied with the PIP**, except for the late disclosure of one project summary document (PSD), as explained in section 3 of this report.
- The Bank continued to enhance the environmental and social information contained in PSDs for Category A and B projects – imparting meaningful information to stakeholders by including more material on environmental and social due diligence findings, agreed mitigation measures and stakeholder engagement plans.
- The Bank continued to report its activity to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), augmenting the Bank’s IATI submissions with new indicators published in the first half of 2018. The 2018 Aid Transparency Index,² compiled by the Publish What You Fund non-governmental organisation, reported that the EBRD had made some good progress since the publication of its last index, achieving a score of 57 in the 2018 edition, up from 49.5 in 2016. This placed the Bank slightly ahead of sister institutions such as the European Investment Bank and the International Finance Corporation. Notably, Publish What You Fund highlighted the Bank’s addition of new transparency indicators during the period and its increased reporting frequency. To spur further improvement, Publish What You Fund made several recommendations on the provision of information and general expansion of the Bank’s transparency efforts, both in terms of content and online accessibility. Bank officials analysed and discussed these recommendations in the context of the PIP review.

¹ EBRD (2019a)

² Publish What You Fund (2018)

- The Bank received one appeal under the PIP relating to project-level environmental information on the Krapaska River small hydropower plant (a sub-project under a loan to the Aktuel Energy Group in North Macedonia). The appeal resulted in the release of the relevant information to the applicant.
- The Bank received one PIP-related PCM complaint in relation to the Agro Invest Bank Equity Investment Project, alleging a breach of the Bank's PIP. The complaint was closed in July 2018 following an eligibility assessment report, which concluded that the complaint did not meet the eligibility criteria for a problem-solving initiative or a compliance review.

Information disclosure as required by the PIP

Details of information disclosed during the reporting period pursuant to Section D of the PIP are outlined below.

2. Institutional information

- The schedule of Board discussions, including on country and sector strategies, was updated monthly on the Bank's website. Agenda items were published for the following two Board meetings.
- The minutes of 25 Board meetings held in 2018 were posted online after approval by the Board. Minutes were published for the following Board meetings: 17, 22 and 31 January; 14, 16 and 27 February; 14 and 28 March; 11, 26 and 30 April; 23 May; 6 and 20 June; 4, 16 and 17-18 July; 5 and 19 September; 3, 17 and 31 October; 14 and 28 November; and 12-13 December.
- The terms of reference and membership of committees of the Board of Directors were posted on the website.
- The Bank publishes an organisational chart on its website, which is regularly updated to reflect changes to key Bank staff.
- The salaries of senior management and directors are included in the 2017 Annual Financial Report, which was published online in 2018.
- Information on the work of the EBRD Administrative Tribunal was posted online and kept updated during the reporting period, as required.

3. Information on strategies and policies

3.1. Sector strategies

The Board also approved the following sector strategies during the reporting period:

Table 1: Sector strategies approved in 2018

Sector	Board approval date (2018)	Date posted online (2018)
Agribusiness sector	3 October	4 October
Local currency and capital markets development (LC2)	28 November	28 November
Energy sector	12 December	12 December

3.2. Country strategies

In 2018, five draft country strategies were posted for comment on the Bank's website and translated into the corresponding official national language, as required by the PIP. Five country strategies were approved. A summary of public comments received was made available on the EBRD website.

The country strategies approved by the Board in 2018 were posted online with the summaries of public comments:

Table 2: Draft, Board-approved and translated country strategies in 2018

Country	Dates of public consultation	Board approval 2018	Posted on ebrd.com (date of translated version in brackets if later)
Serbia	13 December 2017 to 26 January 2018	27 February	5 March 2018
Poland	15 January to 19 March 2018	11 April	12 April 2018 (4 July 2018)
Uzbekistan	5 July to 19 August 2018	19 September	26 September (30 October 2018)
Ukraine	2 August to 10 September 2018	3 October	5 October 2018 (21 January 2019)
Tunisia	5 October to 19 November 2018	12 December	18 December 2018
Slovenia*	5 December 2018 to 19 January 2019		

* This strategy was approved by the Board on 13 February 2019 and will be included in the Public Information Policy Implementation Report 2019.

4. Project-related information

4.1. Project summary documents

The Bank informs the public of project developments in PSDs published on ebrd.com. PSD alerts were received by 8,418 subscribers in 2017. This increased to 9,149 subscribers in 2018. The ebrd.com PSD page received a total of 68,006 views during the reporting period.

In 2018, 181 projects (130 private-sector and 51 public-sector) were prepared for Board consideration. With one exception, PSD disclosure on all of these complied with the PIP:

Non-compliant PSD: Bulgaria – a European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)/EBRD Water Sector Financing Framework (a public-sector project with high visibility, both within the EBRD and among the Bulgarian authorities). As Board approval in July was deemed a prerequisite to proceeding with the project, it was considered by the Board only 27 days after the PSD was published (rather than the prescribed 60 days).

PSDs for non-transactional technical cooperation (TC) projects over €300,000

As required by section 3.1.6 of the PIP, all 25 PSDs for non-transactional TC projects over €300,000 were published online in 2018.

Table 3: PSDs published for Board approval in 2018

PSDs for private-sector projects	Number
Compliant with policy	130
Non-compliant with PIP	0
Total number of private-sector PSDs	130
Deferrals in accordance with PIP,* due to:	45
Capital markets transaction	31
Legitimate sponsor concerns over confidentiality	19
Likelihood of substantial changes at final review	6
PSDs for public-sector projects	Number
Compliant with policy	50
Non-compliant with PIP	1
Total number of public-sector PSDs	51
Deferrals in accordance with PIP, due to:	3
Capital markets transaction	3
Legitimate sponsor concerns over confidentiality	0
Likelihood of substantial changes at final review	0
Other	Number
PSDs: non-transactional TC projects over €300,000 (section 3.1.6)	25
Cancelled, rejected or inactive PSDs removed from the website (section 3.3)	3

*Stated legitimate reasons for deferral exceed the number of actual deferrals because, in a few cases, there was more than one reason for the request.

Each PSD reflects EBRD financing of a project at the time of Board approval.

Of the 130 private-sector PSDs prepared during the reporting period, there were 45 deferrals of the standard 30-day PSD release timeframe imposed by the PIP. All deferrals were granted by Bank management in accordance with the terms of the PIP. Of the 45 projects granted PSD deferrals, two have been cancelled. PSDs have subsequently been published in relation to 23.

Of the 51 public-sector PSDs prepared during the reporting period, there were three deferrals of the standard 60-day PSD release timeframe imposed by the PIP. All three deferrals granted by Bank management were authorised in compliance with the terms of the PIP and PSDs have since been published.

Local-language translations were provided for all 181 PSDs published.

4.2. Public-sector projects

The PIP requires that Board reports on public-sector projects are made available to the public on request, once the project has been approved by the Board of Directors, subject to the removal of any confidential information.

The Bank continued to strengthen its internal processes in relation to such requests in 2018. The eight Board reports requested in 2018 were disclosed within the PIP response timelines. Responses to all eight requests complied with the PIP:

Table 4: Request for public-sector Board reports in 2018

	Project	Country	Date of request (2018)	Date of disclosure (2018)
1	ESIF/EBRD Water Sector Financing Framework	Bulgaria	24 July	5 August
2	Green Cities Facility (GrCF) Ulaanbaatar Solid Waste Modernisation Project	Mongolia	9 August	6 September
3	Enguri Hydro Power Plant Rehabilitation Project – Climate Resilience Upgrade	Georgia	23 July	15 August
4	PGE Grid Enhancement for Renewables	Uzbekistan	20 September	19 November
5	Tashkent District Heating (DH) – Tashteplocentral	Uzbekistan	20 September	19 November
6	Tashkent Water Improvement Project	Uzbekistan	20 September	19 November
7	Namangan Water Project	Uzbekistan	20 September	19 November
8	Horezm Water Project	Uzbekistan	20 September	19 November

Table 5: Requests for public-sector Board reports over the past six years

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Requests per year	0	3	1	1	6	4	8
Met PIP timeline: up to 40 working days	No requests	3	1	0	6	4	8

4.3. Cancelled, rejected or inactive projects

One Category A project that was in a disclosure process during the reporting period was cancelled and all information related to the project will be removed from the Bank's website after six months, in line with the PIP.

4.4. Project-related environmental and social information

Fourteen new Category A projects had Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs) disclosed in 2018. Full ESIA disclosure packages for all of these Category A projects were made available online in English and in local languages.

Links were provided to each project's ESIA on www.ebrd.com and on the client's website. PSDs are also cross-linked with ESIA for Category A projects.

Eleven of the fourteen Category A projects were submitted for approval by the Board of Directors in 2018. All of the Category A projects submitted for approval met the relevant minimum disclosure period required prior to the Board's consideration of the project (60 days for private-sector projects and 120 days for public-sector projects).

In 2018, PSDs for Category B projects had their environmental and social sections expanded to provide more detailed information. In addition, 26 PSDs for Category B projects had non-technical summaries attached.

As required by section 3.1.2 of the PIP, PSDs were published for 14 projects approved by delegated authority during the reporting period due to the significant environmental and/or social impact those projects were expected to have.

The EBRD published portfolio information on the environmental and social issues raised by projects approved during the 2017 calendar year in its 2017 Annual Sustainability Report, launched at the EBRD Annual Meeting in May 2018. Details of the disclosures made in relation to those projects are as follows:

Table 6: Summary of Category A disclosure/Board review in 2018

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Country	Project name	Public/private	Disclosure date	Target Board date	Days public before Board	Language
Turkey	Mersinli Wind Farm	Private	22 March 2018	23 May 2018	Cancelled	English Turkish
Belarus	GrCF: Minsk Vodokanal (VK)	Public	13 April 2018	31 October 2018	201	Russian English
Uzbekistan	Talimarjan Power Project	Public	29 June 2018	31 October 2018	125	English Russian
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Zivinice Regional Solid Waste Project	Public	5 July 2018	13 February 2019	93	English Bosnian
Poland	Potengowo Wind Project	Private	10 July 2018	27 March 2019	291	Polish English
Ukraine	East Renewable Energy Syvash Wind Project Ukraine	Private	16 July 2018	28 November 2018	136	English Ukrainian
Serbia	Serbia Route 7 Highway	Public	8 August 2018	22 May 2019	288	English Serbian
Kazakhstan	Kurty-Burybaital Road Project Extension II	Public	14 August 2018	22 May 2019	282	English Kazakh Russian
Georgia	Kheledula Hydropower Plant (HPP)	Private	25 September 2018	17 January 2019	115	Georgian English
Poland	Olsztyn Waste Management Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Project	Private	12 October 2018	11 December 2019	426	English Polish
Serbia	Belgrade Solid Waste PPP	Private	12 October 2018	27 March 2019	167	English Serbian
Egypt	Lekela North Build, Own, Operate (BOO) Project	Private	22 October 2018	27 February 2019	129	English Arabic
North Macedonia	GrCF: Skopje Wastewater Project	Public	11 December 2018	19 June 2019	191	English Macedonian
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Corridor Vc - Doboij Bypass	Public	20 December 2018	25 April 2019	127	Bosnian Croatian Serbian English

5. Accountability and governance-related information

5.1. Compliance

List of ineligible entities

Following the entry into force of the Agreement for Mutual Enforcement of the Debarment Decisions between the Bank, the African Development Bank Group, the Asian Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank Group,³ the Bank cross-debarred 336 entities and 54 individuals during the reporting period, in line with its obligation to recognise and enforce debarment notices from other parties to that agreement.

Furthermore, in 2018, following separate proceedings instituted under the Bank's Enforcement Policy and Procedures, the Bank issued debarment notices against one individual and two corporate entities.⁴

The Bank's Enforcement Policy and Procedures were amended effective 4 October 2017.⁵

Anti-corruption reports

In accordance with its obligations under the PIP, the EBRD Office of the Chief Compliance Officer issued its annual Integrity and Anti-Corruption Report on matters arising during the 2017 calendar year and this was published and posted on the Bank's website in 2018.

Project Complaint Mechanism (PCM)

The PCM Annual Report for 2018, including a summary of PCM case-processing activities and operations in 2018, will be published on the Bank's website.⁶

In 2018, the PCM received 34 new complaints, of which 10 fell under the PCM mandate and were eligible for registration. Nineteen of the unregistered complaints were ineligible, as they related to procurement, labour or contractual issues, allegations of fraud and corruption, or other concerns that fell outside the PCM's purview. Comprehensive information on all registered complaints is available on the Bank's website, on a page dedicated to the PCM Register. In total, the PCM published 26 reports during the 2018 calendar year, available on the PCM Register.⁷ These comprise:

- 13 eligibility assessment reports
- three compliance review reports
- one problem-solving initiative report
- nine monitoring reports

Moreover, the PCM also embarked on its mandated five-year policy review in 2018, with a view to publishing a revised PCM policy in 2019. This review process has included extensive internal and external stakeholder feedback on the 2014 PCM rules of procedure, as well as analysis of the lessons learnt from seven years of PCM operations, the PCM's efficiency and efficacy and the evolution of international practice. The PCM will continue to engage with PCM complainants, CSOs, labour organisations, academia, clients, EBRD management and other international financial and non-financial institutions over the remainder of the PCM policy review process.

³ EBRD (2010)

⁴ EBRD (n.d.)

⁵ See EBRD (2017) for the revised version.

⁶ EBRD (n.d.)

⁷ EBRD (2019b)

5.2. Evaluation

The following evaluation documents were published on ebrd.com during the review period:

Table 7: Evaluation documents

Document type	Publication in 2018
Evaluation policy	EBRD Evaluation Policy
Evaluation Department's annual evaluation review	Annual Evaluation Review 2017
Operational evaluation summaries	Lending for SMEs, Women in Business and Energy Efficiency in SMEs
Special and thematic studies and approach papers	Additionality in the EBRD – Review of Concept and Application Review of the EBRD Energy Sector Strategy Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility – Thematic Evaluation EBRD Country Strategies – Approach Paper The EBRD's Investment Climate Support Activities EvD Transport Sector Strategy Review Credit Lines – Lending Through Financial Intermediaries

5.3. Other documentation

A meeting of the Bank's Environmental and Social Advisory Council was held on 22 May 2018. A summary of the meeting can be found on the Bank's website.⁸

During the reporting period, the Bank prepared and published the following reports:

- Annual Review 2017⁹
- EBRD Financial Report 2017¹⁰
- Sustainability Report 2017¹¹
- Transition Report 2017-18 – Sustaining Growth¹²
- Annual Review of Procurement Activities under the Procurement Policies and Rules 2017¹³
- Annual Report on Procurement Activities Under the Corporate Procurement Policy¹⁴
- Public Information Policy Implementation Report 2017.¹⁵

⁸ EBRD (2019c)

⁹ EBRD (2018j)

¹⁰ EBRD (2018k)

¹¹ EBRD (2018l)

¹² EBRD (2018m)

¹³ EBRD (2018n)

¹⁴ EBRD (2018o)

¹⁵ EBRD (2018p)

6. Information considered confidential (Section E of the PIP)

Section E of the PIP deals with confidential information that is not disclosed to the public.

7. Implementation and monitoring of the PIP (Section F of the PIP)

Relations with civil society

The EBRD continued its proactive engagement with CSOs across its regions in 2018, through both dialogue and TC projects implemented under the Bank's Civil Society Capacity Enhancement Framework.

The year was marked by a significant increase in the number of meetings with CSOs (to 170 from 30 in 2017), which attended by over 1,400 civil society representatives. This was largely due to the cycle of consultations on the Bank's key policies and sectoral and country strategies and the Bank's enhanced engagement with civil society on complex investment projects and other policy-dialogue initiatives.

At the end of 2018, the Bank's Civil Society Capacity Enhancement Framework comprised 24 TC projects worth around €5.7 million. The Framework benefitted nearly 11,000 civil society and community representatives in 15 countries, often through tailored capacity-enhancement activities.

CSOs were regularly informed about the latest EBRD developments through dedicated webpages, a quarterly EBRD CSO newsletter, email notifications and alerts and social media.

CSOs that had registered with the EBRD (around 2,200) were notified about the start of the consultation period for Category A projects and invited to provide comments to the Bank and its clients on the ESIA's associated with those projects.

The EBRD's flagship CSO engagement event, the 2018 Civil Society Programme, took place on 9-10 May in Jordan in parallel with the EBRD's Annual Meeting and Business Forum, attended by about 80 civil society participants from more than 20 countries.

The EBRD website in 2018

The EBRD's main corporate communications platform, its website, ebrd.com, enjoyed record traffic in 2018, attracting 1,150,770 visitors. This was the highest total number of visitors since records began and a 5.1% increase from 2017. Sessions were also up 2.2%, though the number of page views recorded was down 2.7%.

Over the course of the year, work began on improving site performance and speed – a key factor in determining audience numbers. In another important technical enhancement, ebrd.com moved from the http protocol to https, in line with current best practice for secure communications online.

While the corporate website had been the focus of the Bank's digital communications for many years, it is now only one of several channels. The EBRD now uses multiple social-media platforms, each with their own conventions and ecosystems.

Overall, the number of people following the EBRD's corporate accounts on social media rose 31.8% on the year to 157,752 in 2018. The Bank's LinkedIn followers increased 29.4% from the year before to 75,897, while its Facebook following grew 39.8% to 42,122 during the reporting period. Twitter followers (including the newly launched @EBRD Green account) increased 21.6% to 31,253, while the Bank's Instagram account saw an increase of 88% to 5,078 followers and its YouTube channel recorded a 34.4% rise to 3,402 followers.

What's more, the quantity and quality of the Bank's engagement on social media were also significantly higher during the reporting period than in previous years. On Facebook, for example, the EBRD account drew 3.4 million reactions (often considered engagement) and reached 5.6 million people.

One of the reasons for this level of engagement was an greater emphasis on video content. One video about people in the Bank's regions, for example, was watched more than 550,000 times on Facebook and Instagram.

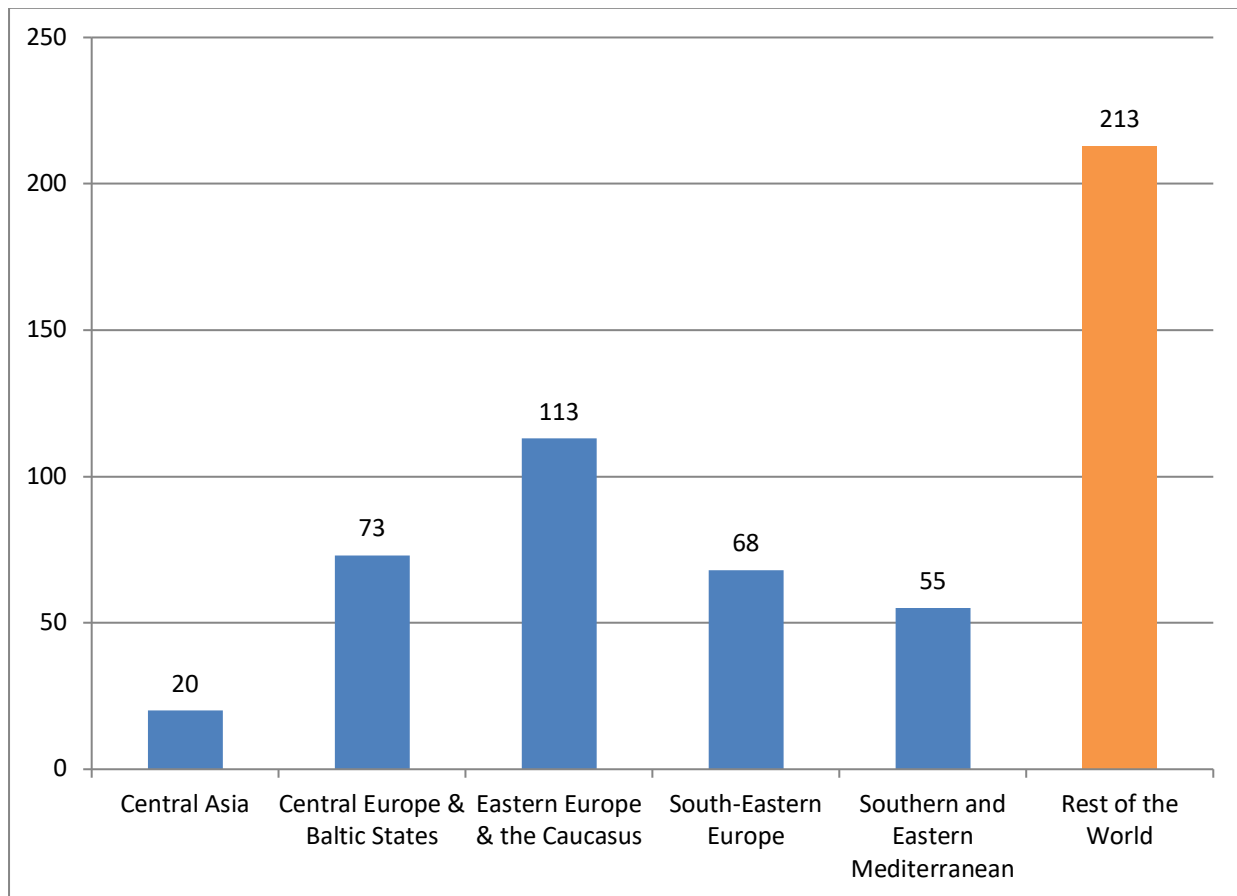
Responding to information requests

Of the 701 requests for information received by the Bank during the reporting period, 666 related to the PIP. They concerned accountability and governance (11), general institutional information (94), policy and strategy (24), projects and project finance (477), publications (11), procurement (11) and other topics (43).

Not all of those who submitted a PIP-related request identified their profession. Where they were identified, PIP-related requests came from the following: 145 from civil society, 244 from business or private enterprise, 41 from students or academics, 164 from the media and 67 from others.

Figure 1 shows the source of requests in geographic terms, where the requester identified his/her nationality.

Figure 1: Information requests by EBRD region



The number of information requests and responses reported above relates to those received through the “Enquiries” mailboxes or online requests.

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