

PUBLIC

**DOCUMENT OF THE EUROPEAN BANK
FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT**

STRATEGY FOR ALBANIA

**REPORT ON THE INVITATION
TO THE PUBLIC TO COMMENT**

PUBLIC

1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this report is to summarise key comments received from stakeholders during the consultation period on the Bank's Strategy for Albania and provide the Bank's management responses.

In accordance with the EBRD Public Information Policy (PIP), the draft Strategy for Albania was posted on the EBRD website in English and Albanian for 45 calendar days starting from 3 December 2019 until 17 January 2020. During the consultation period no written comment was received by the EBRD.

Information about the public consultation process was posted on the EBRD's dedicated webpage "Have your say", which highlights the latest opportunities for the public to comment on the Bank's policies and strategies under review. The Communications Department also advertised the public consultation on social media. In addition, targeted notifications of the consultation process were sent to local and international civil society organisations (CSOs) that have expressed interest in the Bank's work in the country.

In line with the Bank's increased efforts to involve civil society at an early stage of country strategy development, the EBRD organised a consultative meeting with civil society organisations on 11 September 2019. The event was hosted by the EBRD Resident Office in Tirana with the objective to gather civil society's feedback during the preparatory phase of the draft Strategy. The consultation attracted 4 participants and the EBRD was represented by the Head of the Resident Office; the Economic, Policy and Governance team; and the Country Strategy Coordination team. The summary of the meeting and the list of CSO participants to the consultation process are provided in the Annex 1.

ANNEX 1

Consultation with civil society, 11 September 2019 (Tirana Resident Office)

List of CSOs participating to the consultation process

- Centre Ekolevizja (Eco Movement) Group
- Urban Research Institute
- Albanian professional and businesswomen association
- Centre for Economic & Social Studies

Summary of key messages from CSOs:

- Sustainability – Support to renewable energies is regarded as a priority both at level of policy dialogue, production and support to private households (e.g. use of solar panels). It was noted that the newly approved regulatory framework on solar energy does not create the necessary conditions for households to use solar panels, which could be supported through concessional finance and investments in the grid connection.
- Governance – Concerns were expressed over the implementation of the Law on Bankruptcy, especially in relation to NPLs, impact of anti-informality campaigns on small businesses and the overall potential impact of political instability on the economy. The EBRD is also expected to promote fair competition and prevent the creation of monopolies.
- Role of civil society- CSOs can be a partner for the EBRD in the identification and implementation of projects at municipal level as well as support to women's entrepreneurship.
- Political situation- Civil society was interested to understand to what extent the political instability of a country of operation may affect the EBRD country strategy and related investments. Civil society was also keen to discuss the impact on businesses, in particular SMEs, of the latest anti-informality campaigns promoted by the national authorities.
- Inclusion- Civil society was interested to learn whether the EBRD is considering undertaking any specific research on the impact of emigration and inclusion of underserved segments of the population in Albania.