

EBRD-CSO Newsletter

Keeping you up to date with the EBRD



Welcome to the
CSO Newsletter

October 2024

71

Foreword

**Dear reader,
welcome to another edition of the CSO Newsletter!**

This edition is packed with exciting updates, including the appointment of the new Chair and Co-Chair of our Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Steering Committee, the EBRD Board of Directors' visit to Türkiye and our upcoming expansion into sub-Saharan Africa.

We are particularly thrilled to share our new project case-study format: in this edition, we highlight the EBRD's initiative to support the economic integration of Ukrainian refugees in Croatia.

Last year, we conducted a survey on the newsletter's contents and frequency of publication. This pilot case study takes into account the feedback we received.

The case-study format aims to provide a more in-depth and comprehensive understanding of our projects and their impact on the communities we serve. We hope this new format will offer greater insights in a visual way and foster deeper connection with our work.

As always, your feedback is invaluable to us. We encourage you to share your thoughts on the new case-study format and any other suggestions for future content.

Together, we can continue to improve this newsletter and deliver meaningful content. Thank you for your continued support and engagement.

Happy reading!
The CSE team



See the back page for
links to more content

MAIN ACTIVITY

CSO Steering Committee appoints Chair and Co-Chair



At its third quarterly meeting of 2024, the EBRD [CSO Steering Committee](#) appointed a Chair and Co-Chair.

The Chair's primary role is to facilitate discussions and decision-making by members at committee meetings and to support the Civil Society Engagement team with its preparations for the CSO Programme at the EBRD Annual Meeting and Business Forum. The Co-Chair assists the Chair in these duties.

The Eastern Alliance for Safe and Sustainable Transport (EASST) was selected as Chair, while Oxfam Great Britain was chosen as Co-Chair. Steering Committee members decided that the term of the Chair will run from one Annual Meeting to the next. The Committee may reassess the role and term of the Chair in future.

The CSO Steering Committee, selected in January 2024, consists of 13 international non-governmental organisations and CSOs, representing the economies where the Bank invests and spanning the EBRD's strategic priorities. Its role is to act as an additional platform for outreach and engagement with civil society and to support the work of the CSO Programme at the EBRD Annual Meeting and Business Forum. The current committee will sit until the end of 2025.

EBRD delegation visits container city in Hatay, Türkiye



In September, representatives of the EBRD Board of Directors visited Türkiye as part of a regular series of consultations in the economies where the Bank operates.

The delegation held two meetings with CSOs during the visit. The first was with CSO representatives in Ankara to discuss human rights, the rule of law, transparency issues, climate and the green economy, as well as the overall situation of CSOs in Türkiye.

Second, on 18 September, the delegation visited Hatay, where it witnessed the destruction and impact of the 2023 earthquakes. It also visited a container city run by Needs Map (İhtiyaç Haritası). Needs Map has established co-living spaces in container houses in Hatay, sheltering 270 families, or around 1,500 people. The container city is one of the best in the earthquake-stricken region, serving as a model for civil society's essential role in post-disaster recovery.

The EBRD delegation was deeply impressed and recognised the pivotal role that CSOs can play in society, especially in times of crisis. The Bank's representatives thanked Needs Map for its dedicated efforts on the ground.

EBRD to expand into sub-Saharan Africa



In May 2023, the EBRD Board of Governors approved the Bank's limited and incremental expansion into sub-Saharan Africa from 2025.

Initially focused on Ghana, Senegal, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya and Nigeria, the move aims to boost private-sector growth and sustainable investment. In May 2024, the EBRD approved the membership of Kenya and Nigeria, following its approval of applications by Benin and Côte d'Ivoire in October 2023 and Ghana and Senegal in February 2024. Benin became the first sub-Saharan African country to finalise all membership requirements in April 2024.

The applications of these countries also included requests to become recipients of EBRD financial and advisory services, which the Bank will address once the statutory amendments are in force.

Over the summer, the EBRD appointed Heike Harmgart as the first Managing Director for sub-Saharan Africa.

We look forward to working with civil society organisations in the region.



Send us your newsletter topic recommendations at csos@ebrd.com

Private sector for Ukrainian refugee integration

Following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, which prompted the biggest displacement of people in Europe since World War II, in August 2023, the EBRD launched a new initiative to support the economic integration of Ukrainian refugees in Croatia.

The project builds on previous initiatives by EBRD retail and food-industry clients in Croatia, offering employment assistance to Ukrainian refugees, most of whom are women.

The initiative is a win-win – benefiting both displaced Ukrainians and the Croatian economy by filling vacancies in the retail, hospitality and information technology (IT) sectors. This project is supported by the TaiwanBusiness-EBRD Technical Cooperation Fund.



Engaging civil society, delivering impact

The project was delivered by two CSOs – the SVOJA Association and the SOLIDARNA Foundation – showing how civil society can and should be key to tackling complex community challenges.

“ Investing today, transforming tomorrow ”

BENEFICIARIES

4,500 +

The project secured direct employment for more than 500 Ukrainian refugees across Croatia, with an additional 4,000-plus displaced Ukrainians benefiting from employment and self-employment support via offline/online training sessions, workshops, counselling and so on.



THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

The initiative provided capacity-building assistance to the SVOJA Association, a Croatia-based organisation established by Ukrainian women refugees. This small investment has helped SVOJA to assist thousands of Ukrainian refugee jobseekers. A small investment today can have far-reaching results tomorrow.

MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

The project's success is down to close partnerships with the private sector. More than 20 Croatian private-sector companies and associations engaged in promoting employment and self-employment opportunities for Ukrainian refugees across Croatia. This private sector-civil society collaboration proved instrumental for local communities.

OVERVIEW OF CSE ACTIVITY

The CSE team had conducted the following activities as of 30 September 2024:

- 11** Senior Management CSO meetings
- 12** Country/sector strategy consultation meetings
- 7** Presidential meetings
- 4** Board meetings with CSOs

EBRD PUBLICATIONS



NEW COUNTRY STRATEGY FOR THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC



LIFE IN TRANSITION SURVEY IV



REGIONAL ECONOMIC PROSPECTS



Contacts

Civil Society Engagement

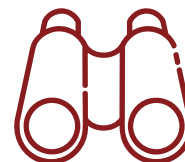
Tel: +44 20 7338 7982

Email: cso@ebrd.com

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Five Bank Street
London E14 4BG
United Kingdom
www.ebrd.com

LOOKING AHEAD



- The consultation on the draft [Food and Agribusiness Strategy](#) runs until 15 November 2024.
- The consultation on the draft [Azerbaijan Country Strategy](#) runs until 17 November 2024.
- The consultation on the draft [Real Estate Strategy](#) runs until 29 November 2024.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Review our open consultations



ACCESS PROJECT INFORMATION



SLOVAK REPUBLIC COUNTRY DIAGNOSTIC



LAUNCH OF THE EBRD TRANSITION REPORT 2024-25



Find us on social media



www.youtube.com/ebrdrtv
www.facebook.com/ebrdrtv
www.x.com/ebrd
www.linkedin.com/company/ebrd
www.instagram.com/ebrd_official
www.flickr.com/photos/ebrd