

EBRD press release

EBRD supports youth entrepreneurship in Tajikistan



European Bank
for Reconstruction and Development

Facility to support youth entrepreneurship and stimulate inclusive lending

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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- EBRD launches its Youth in Business programme in Tajikistan
- Local banks to receive US\$22 million for on-lending to small companies
- Benefits are economic inclusion, professional training and advisory services

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is addressing the issue of youth entrepreneurship and employment by launching its flagship Youth in Business (YiB) programme in [Tajikistan](#). The programme is designed to provide better access to finance and relevant training to young entrepreneurs in the region, where 30 per cent of the population is aged between 18 and 34 years.

The EBRD funds of up to US\$22 million will be offered to three local financial institutions [Bank Arvand](#), [MDO Humo](#), [Investment Credit Bank](#). It is expected that [Imon International](#) and [Bank Eshkata](#) will join the YiB programme in the future.

The YiB programme will also offer non-financial services for eligible small businesses. They will be provided by the Bank's Advice for Small Businesses programme and will help develop their entrepreneurial skills through training, advisory services and networking opportunities.

All the banks, which joined or will be participating in the YiB programme are well established in Tajikistan. They are actively engaged in lending to youth-led or owned small businesses, which represent around 30 their portfolios.

According to an EBRD conducted survey, many young people in Tajikistan have a strong entrepreneurial mindset but very few of them have access to equal economic opportunities. Almost half of 250,000 youth-owned micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the country are seeking financial support but less than 15 per cent are currently able to access funding.

The Bank's YiB programme is also designed to tackle other pressing issues young entrepreneurs are facing in Tajikistan. These include: finding and retaining staff, identifying new markets and customers.

The EBRD is one of the leading institutional investors in Tajikistan. It has to date provided more than €1 billion through 182 projects.