

# Selected projects in the Eastern Neighbourhood



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## 1 UKRAINE

# Solidarity Lanes

## Upgrading border crossings

*We were able to open a new way of economic life through the territory of the European Union. Along this road of life, we established a supply that is critically important not only for Ukraine but also for the whole of Europe and many other countries.*

**Volodymyr Zelenskyy**  
President of Ukraine

## Project description

The Solidarity Lanes were set up in May 2022 to ensure that Ukraine can export grain and other agricultural products, as well as import the goods it needs. So far, over €2 billion have been mobilised by the Commission and international financial institutions for these corridors. One specific action the EU supports as part of this initiative is the upgrade of road border crossing points between Ukraine, Moldova and EU Member States, and also the purchase of mobile equipment and simplification and digitalisation of border crossing procedures.

## Funding

Total investment  
(estimated)

**€50**  
million

EU grant  
**€50**million

## Impact

- ✓ **Diesel generators** delivered and installed to ensure business continuity at border crossing points
- ✓ **Anti-virus licenses** delivered and installed for State Customs Service of Ukraine
- ✓ Hardware equipment for the support of the **e-queue** delivered and installed



2  REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

# Solidarity Lanes

North-South railway corridor

Global Gateway Forum

Global Gateway

*The implementation of the project will result in several benefits such as reducing the duration of railway journeys, increasing the market share of railway transport for large tonnage and gauge goods, reducing the load on road infrastructure, minimising road wear and tear, and enhancing road traffic safety.*

**Petru Rotaru**  
Minister of Finance of the Republic of Moldova

## Project description

As part of the improvement of the existing railway infrastructure in the Republic of Moldova, this project focuses on the rehabilitation of the Valcinet-Ungheni-Chisinau-Cainari corridor. This North-South railway corridor is a critical link from Western Ukraine to key Danube and Prut river ports with access to international waters. Improving the rail connection aims to boost trade and benefit both the Republic of Moldova's economy and Ukraine's exports, particularly in the context of the EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes initiative.

## Funding

Total investment (estimated)

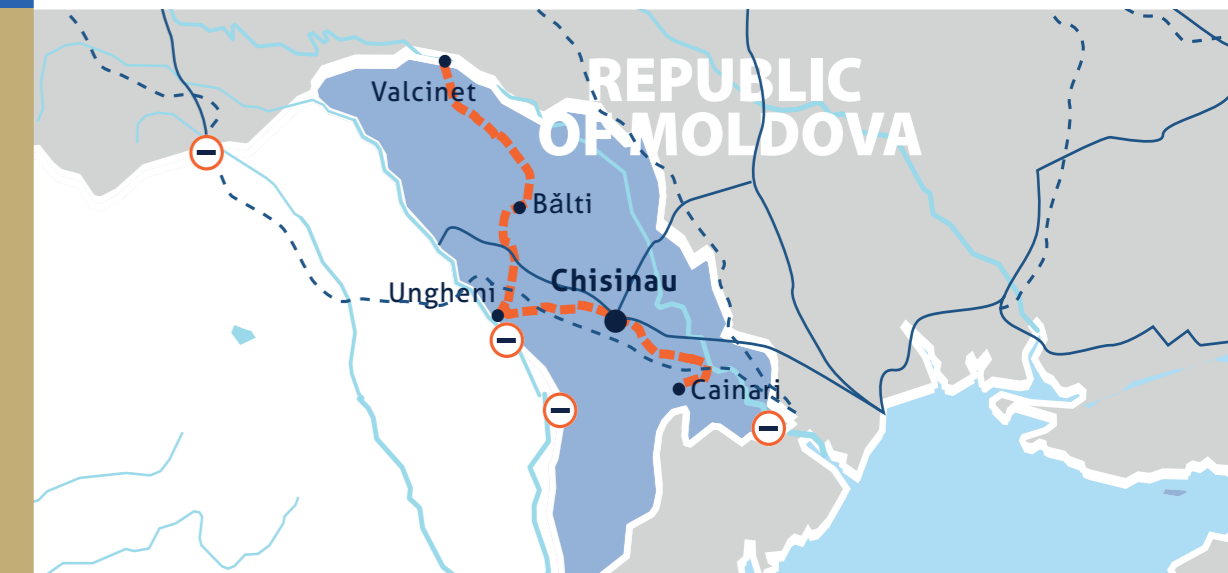
€53.2 million

EU grant  
€12 million

IFI loan  
€41.2 million

## Impact

- ✓ Enhanced **transport connections** within Moldova
- ✓ Crucial export route for Ukraine in the **Solidarity Lanes** initiative
- ✓ Facilitated **road and border traffic** by shifting freight from trucks to railways
- ✓ Enhanced mobility and reduced **environmental impact**



### 3 GEORGIA

# Improving road safety along the East-West Highway

*With this new investment in Georgia's East-West highway, we are improving Georgia's connectivity to Europe as well as its road safety, travel conditions and ultimately we are reducing travel times for all Georgians. The East-West Highway also opens up new economic and trade opportunities for Georgia as it reinforces Georgia's role as a trade hub along the trans-Caspian corridor.*

**Olivér Várhelyi**  
Commissioner for Neighbourhood  
and Enlargement

## Project description

Georgia's East-West Highway is a critical corridor across the South Caucasus and a core part of the extended Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). Through this latest phase of the East-West Highway project, the EU aims to enhance safety by improving physical safety of the roads, providing engineering services and awareness raising actions. Enhanced safety on Georgia's extended Trans-European Network connections to the EU and on certain local transport axes will open up new economic and trade opportunities for Georgia as a trade hub along the trans-Caspian corridor.

## Funding

Total investment  
(estimated)

**€1.574**  
billion

EU grant  
**€16.4** million

IFI loan  
**€1.558** billion

## Impact

- ✓ Decreased road accidents in both number and severity along the targeted road sections by **30%**
- ✓ Improved **travel conditions**
- ✓ Reduced **travel times**



## 4 ARMENIA

# Green buses in Yerevan

*A new era of public transport for Yerevan has begun, it will not only help to shape transport transformation and to care more about the environment, but also will provide safe, reliable and affordable transportation to passengers.*

**Tigran Avinyan**  
Mayor of Yerevan

## Project description

A total of 87 new environmentally friendly buses have been provided to improve and modernise public transport in Yerevan. The low-floor buses will also facilitate easier access for passengers including those with limited movement, the elderly and disabled, as well as for parents with strollers. The low emission buses working on compressed natural gas improve the public transport service by increasing the reliability, safety and efficiency.

## Funding

Total investment

**€25**  
million

Eastern Europe Energy Efficiency and Environment Partnership (ESP) grant\*

**€5** million

IFI loan

**€20** million

\*The Eastern Europe Energy Efficiency and Environment Partnership (E5) merges financial contributions from the EU and 24 countries, including countries benefitting from the fund. The contributions are grants to support municipal sector projects

## Impact

- ✓ Passengers benefit from improved **urban transport**
- ✓ Reduced **CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** contributing to a smaller environmental footprint
- ✓ Less **air pollution**



## 5 EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD Regional

UKRAINE / REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

# Synchronisation of electricity grids

with the continental Europe network

*We not only joined one of the largest interconnected power systems in the world with the highest standards of operation, but also received huge support when the full-scale war broke out. Integration means new opportunities for electricity exchanges, more investments, and, above all, a new level of energy security, which will be enhanced by joint efforts from now on. We highly value the possibility of cooperating with ENTSO-E, and we are grateful to our European colleagues for their immense support all along the way towards this goal.*

**Volodymyr Kudrytskyi**  
CEO of Ukrenergo (2020–2024)

## Project description

As a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Ukrainian and Moldovan Transmission System Operators for Electricity requested emergency synchronisation with the Continental Europe power system. Thanks to close cooperation with the EU and the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity (ENTSO-E), and based on previous studies, the adoption of risk mitigation measures and ongoing synchronisation work since 2017, the synchronisation was completed in less than three weeks. Synchronisation was a collective effort of engineers, managers and politicians from across Ukraine and the EU. It resulted in the disconnection of Ukraine from the Russian electricity operating system and its connection with the EU's. Currently confronted with Russia's massive attacks on Ukraine's energy system, this synchronisation saves the country from massive blackouts as it enables seamless imports of energy from the EU.

## Funding

Total investment  
(estimated)

**€124**  
million

EU funding  
**€124** million

## Impact

- ✓ Synchronisation helped Ukraine cover the deficit in the Ukrainian power grid due to the loss of **10 GW** in generating capacity because of the war
- ✓ The volume of electricity imports to Ukraine increased by more than **94%** compared to 2021
- ✓ Total volume of electricity transferred between the Ukrainian and the Continental European Network increased by **77%**
- ✓ Increased competition for Ukrainian electricity imports and exports to/from the EU, with the number of **participating companies now close to 40** for trade in both directions



## 6 REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

# Energy efficiency in healthcare and educational institutions

*As a result of this project, the 11 healthcare institutions covered will have lower maintenance costs in the future, allowing them to direct more of their budgets towards the development of medical services. We thank our external partners for their support of this programme. I believe that this project will be a starting point for us to consume energy much more responsibly, and that other institutions will follow this example.*

**Andrei Spînu**  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Infrastructure and Regional Development

## Project description

This action aims to improve energy efficiency in public buildings, municipal and State-owned, in the Republic of Moldova, with a strong focus on hospitals and municipal medical institutions, kindergartens and schools. Greater energy efficiency will be achieved by improving the insulation of buildings, installing more energy-efficient lighting, heating, cooling and ventilation systems, integrating renewable energy sources and introducing efficient energy management practices.

## Funding

Total investment (estimated)

**€79**  
million

EU grant  
**€15.6** million

IFI loan  
**€61.3** million

IFI grant  
**€0.5** million

National contribution  
**€1.6** million

## Impact

- ✓ Renovations allow heat savings of about **60%** and electricity savings of about **30%**
- ✓ CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduced by **840 tonnes** per year and electricity savings in the order **500 mWh per year**
- ✓ Improved healthcare services for over **26 000 patients** annually treated by the healthcare facilities and better conditions for healthcare workers



## 7 REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

# Counteracting energy poverty through affordable access to energy

for vulnerable population

*We were counting on help from our partners in the European Union, help that came just in time.*

**Nicu Vrednic**  
Citizen from Truşeni village

## Project description

Through the State and Resilience Building programme for Moldova, the EU has supported the most vulnerable segments of the population to deal with rising energy costs. The programme supported the Energy Vulnerability Reduction Fund, created in 2022 by the Moldovan Government, with the support of the EU, Slovakia and the United Nations Development Programme to compensate households for gas and heating bills. The programme also addressed challenging socio-economic conditions and ensured energy stability in times of crisis.

## Funding

Total investment

**€240**  
million

EU grant  
**€240** million

## Impact

- ✓ **81%** of Moldovan households received compensations
- ✓ Around **895 000 households** received on-bill compensations, decreasing the rate of energy poverty by **43%**
- ✓ **57%** of natural gas bill expenses and **59%** of heating bill costs were covered through the compensations
- ✓ The compensation scheme benefitted **79%** of urban and **73%** of rural households
- ✓ **72%** of the beneficiaries under the scheme acknowledged that such support could not have been possible without international assistance



## 8 EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD Regional

# Black Sea submarine electricity cable

*Georgia has the opportunity to directly connect to the European energy systems through the planned Black Sea submarine cable. Its implementation will have a significant economic and transformational effect for Georgia, it will contribute to further economic growth and development. Access to the European electricity markets will have a positive impact on the Georgian market, its transformation and convergence with the European one.*

**Levan Davitashvili**  
Minister of Economy of Georgia

## Project description

This project aims to support the construction of a submarine electricity cable across the Black Sea. The submarine electricity cable would have a length of approximately 1,195 km and a total capacity of 1,000 MW. An extension of the cable to Azerbaijan and the Caspian Sea is also being contemplated, offering opportunities to leverage the vast renewable energy potential of the Caspian Sea. An essential prerequisite for such ambitious projects is the alignment of the legal frameworks of partner countries with the fundamentals of EU energy law: liberalisation packages and electricity market regulations. Moreover, it will be essential to strengthen the transmission system and interconnectors through multidimensional regional cooperation.

## Funding

Total investment  
(estimated)

€3.5  
billion

## Impact

- ✓ Enhanced opportunities for the export of **green electricity** from the South Caucasus to the EU
- ✓ Development of **renewable energy** incentivised in the region
- ✓ **Stronger incentive** for improving regulatory framework of South Caucasus countries and their alignment with the EU
- ✓ Significant economic and transformational effect for Georgia and contribution to further economic growth



## 9 AZERBAIJAN

# Greening the Port of Baku

*The Middle Corridor plays a very important role between Europe and Asia and the development of this corridor is beneficial for all parties. The Port of Baku has come a long way in this field (of green port policy) with the support of the EU, but the future goals are bigger.*

**Taleh Ziyadov**  
Director General of the Port of Baku

## Project description

This project supported the implementation of the Strategic Plan and "green port" concept of the Port of Baku. It contributed to strengthening the institutional capacity of the Port of Baku and enabling its resilient, sustainable, and integrated development by introducing international standards required for the development of a sustainable health, safety, and environmental protection system. The project also supported the Port of Baku Training Centre and set up the International Cooperation and Project Department.

## Funding

Total investment

€300 000

EU grant

€300 000

## Impact

- ✓ The Port of Baku obtained **ISO certification** for energy management in 2023
- ✓ **Standards** for the development of a sustainable health, safety and environmental protection system introduced
- ✓ **More than 100 people** benefited from training on the «green port» concept, digital soft skills, project management and study tours to EU Member State ports



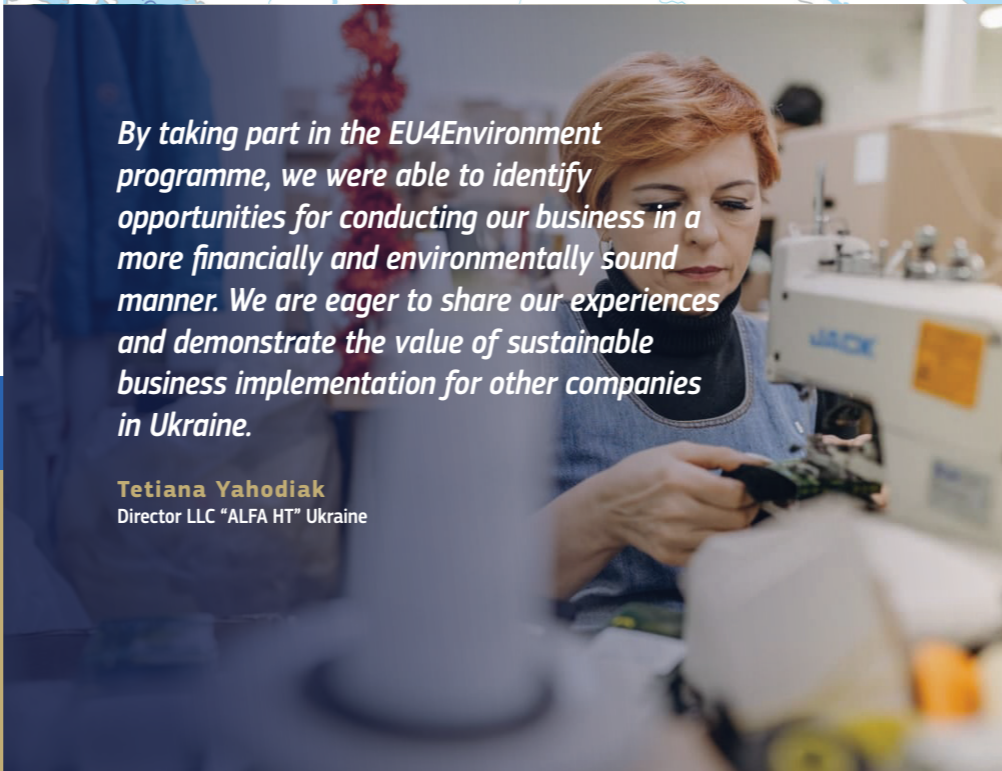
10 EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD Regional

# EU4Environment

Decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation and climate change requires ambitious reforms and capacity building within both public and private sectors. In response to these needs, the programme enabled policy and legal changes and helped the partner countries to green investments and business models. Across its pillars, the programme strengthened environmental policy instruments and governance and enhanced investment planning, capacity for circular economy, environmental statistics, and the management of waters, protected areas, and forests.

Funding

Total cost (estimated)	€32.3 million
EU grant	€31.5 million
Other donors	€840 000



*By taking part in the EU4Environment programme, we were able to identify opportunities for conducting our business in a more financially and environmentally sound manner. We are eager to share our experiences and demonstrate the value of sustainable business implementation for other companies in Ukraine.*

**Tetiana Yahodiak**  
Director LLC "ALFA HT" Ukraine

GREEN ECONOMY PILLAR

This pillar focused on accelerating the move towards a green circular economy by:

- 1 Facilitating legislative reforms on environmental impact assessment, strategic environmental assessment, sustainable public procurement, pollution prevention and control, environmental compliance and enforcement and green finance
- 2 Providing on-line training modules to around 750 civil servants and experts to acquire new qualifications on green economy
- 3 Providing tailored advice to around 600 SMEs on resource and energy efficiency and eco-innovative business strategies since 2017. The total outreach includes over 1 000 companies
- 4 Raise awareness about green economy and sustainable lifestyles of around 6 million people in the region

WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL DATA PILLAR

Under this pillar, work was carried out on river basin management planning, including the identification of investment needs, water economics, public participation, the environment and health agenda, and water monitoring, promoting cross-sectoral cooperation and transboundary cooperation. To develop evidence-based policies, support was provided to national governments to improve water data collection and analysis and environmental statistics.

ECOSYSTEMS AND LIVELIHOODS PILLAR

This pillar helps the partner countries to:

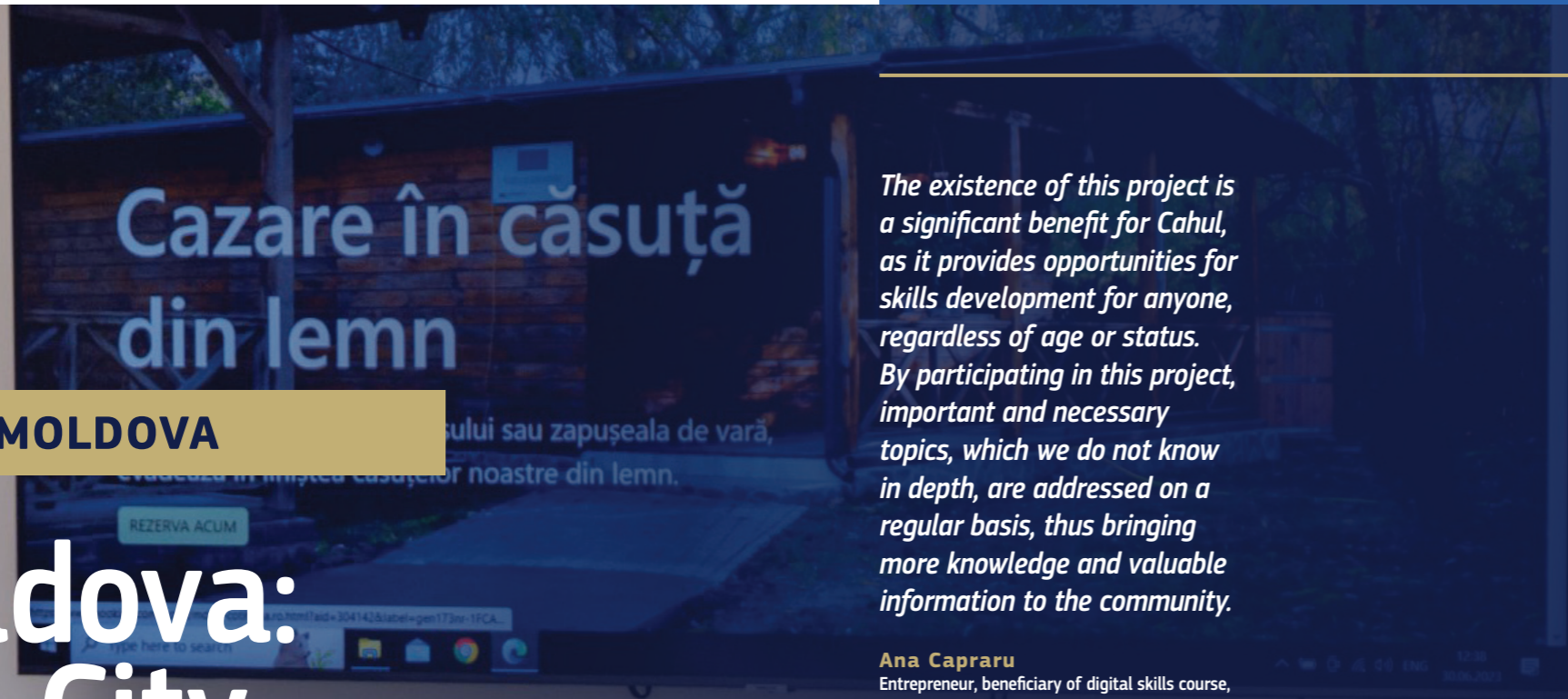
- 1 Draft action plans for protected sites under the Emerald Network and improve the management of such sites
- 2 Identify innovative financing schemes for the sustainable management of forests and ecosystem services
- 3 Helps countries address deforestation
- 4 Support community-led actions to increase the production and use of non-timber goods from sustainable management of natural habitats and advises communities on rural job creation and diversification of economic opportunities

Impact

- ✓ **National waste management plans** developed in Georgia and Moldova. Industrial waste mapping, eco-industrial parks, and eco-innovation piloted in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova
- ✓ **Indicators** for monitoring progress in greening the economies incorporated into the statistical systems of Moldova and Ukraine
- ✓ **Pilot Strategic Environmental Assessment** project for Ganja city master plan implemented in Azerbaijan
- ✓ Potential annual savings of **€4.32 million** from resource efficiency measures identified at **81 pilot companies** in Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. In total, **128 companies** received tailored expert advice with **€8.1 million** identified as potential savings
- ✓ Around **200 success stories** about greening SMEs published
- ✓ Green public investment programmes prepared in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova
- ✓ **4 countries** introduced monitoring of pathogens in wastewater
- ✓ **12 river basin management plans** concerning **41.5 million people** drafted in Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine - in line with EU law
- ✓ Transboundary **water cooperation** between Moldova and Ukraine improved on Prut and Dniester rivers
- ✓ Roadmaps for advancing the Emerald Network of protected areas developed in **3 countries**

## 11 REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

# EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul



*The existence of this project is a significant benefit for Cahul, as it provides opportunities for skills development for anyone, regardless of age or status. By participating in this project, important and necessary topics, which we do not know in depth, are addressed on a regular basis, thus bringing more knowledge and valuable information to the community.*

**Ana Capraru**  
Entrepreneur, beneficiary of digital skills course, ICT4Women, Digital Upgrade and Small Grants programme.

## Project description

“EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul” is a project implemented by the Moldovan Association of ICT Companies and financed by the EU in partnership with Sweden, aimed at catalyzing development in the Southern region of Moldova. The initiative focuses on fostering partnerships for innovation and entrepreneurship among private sector entities, governmental bodies and educational institutions in Cahul; promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programmes and making them more attractive and accessible to individuals of all genders and ages. Furthermore, the project aims at supporting the business environment and aspiring entrepreneurs. The project’s impact will resonate beyond its duration thanks to the establishment of the Inotek - EU Innovation Centre Cahul, which will continue to drive regional development and support Moldovan citizens’ employability and entrepreneurial spirit.

## Funding

Total investment  
(estimated)

**€6.8**  
million

EU grant  
**€6.8** million

## Impact

- ✓ Inotek - EU Innovation Centre, phase 1 launched with **€1.4 million** mobilised for the capacity building of Inotek Foundation
- ✓ **45 488 children** benefitted from STEM programmes
- ✓ **2 000 pupils** guided and informed about IT careers
- ✓ **1 398 teachers** trained in teaching STEM subjects and using ICT tools
- ✓ **300 adults** completed ICT courses
- ✓ **58 schools** from the Southern region connected to the on-line extra-curricular courses
- ✓ **15 digital laboratories** established and **38 SMEs** digitally upgraded
- ✓ **108 entrepreneurial and community events** organized with **3 065 beneficiaries**
- ✓ **133 women and girls** received better employment opportunities
- ✓ **55%** of project beneficiaries are women



## 12 EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD Regional

# EU4Digital in the Eastern Neighbourhood

*Many interesting things happened within the e-commerce programme, but it was during the personal consultations that I found immense value. Meeting experts in the field and receiving direct advice and recommendations tailored to my brand proved incredibly beneficial.*

**Tamar Abuladze**  
Founder of 'Wine Diamond', Georgia

## Project description

The EU4Digital facility is the cornerstone of the EU's efforts to promote the digital transition in the Eastern Neighbourhood region. Through this facility, the EU supports the reduction of roaming tariffs, the development of high-speed broadband to boost economies and expand e-services, supporting e-logistics and e-health. The facility also supports enhancing digital skills, and job creation in digital industries. The EU4Digital facility is the centrepiece of the wider EU4Digital umbrella, which aims at supporting the gradual integration of the Eastern Neighbourhood countries into the EU's Digital Single Market and facilitate the implementation of digital-related investment projects.

## Funding

Total investment  
(estimated)

**€11**  
million

EU grant  
**€11** million

## Impact

- ✓ Short-term and preparations for long-term **roaming arrangements** facilitated between the EU and Moldova
- ✓ Tailor-made assistance provided by **more than 100 experts** on key thematic areas of the EU Digital Compass
- ✓ Support provided to align with **EU legislation** on e-commerce, e-signatures and e-customs and developing cross-border projects
- ✓ **Six networks** established between partner countries and EU stakeholders on telecommunications, trust and security, eTrade, ICT innovation, eHealth and digital skills



## 13 EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD Regional

# Connecting research and education communities

in the Eastern Neighbourhood  
(EaP Connect)

*The special collaboration with the National Research and Education Network of Moldova (RENAM), through the availability of advanced services and technologies, has made a significant contribution towards the creation and smooth operation of the National Colposcopy Network.*

**Sergiu Gladun**  
Director, Research Institute  
for Mother and Child Health Care,  
Republic of Moldova

## Project description

The programme aims at extending secure and high-speed connectivity links (digital highways) between the EU and Eastern Neighbourhood countries, providing access to cutting-edge services (clouds, VPNs) to increase the use of digital services for online education and research and facilitating the participation of Eastern Neighbourhood National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) in Horizon Europe, the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation. The project also aims to strengthen the position of the Eastern Neighbourhood National Research and Education Network within the research and education systems of each country.

## Funding

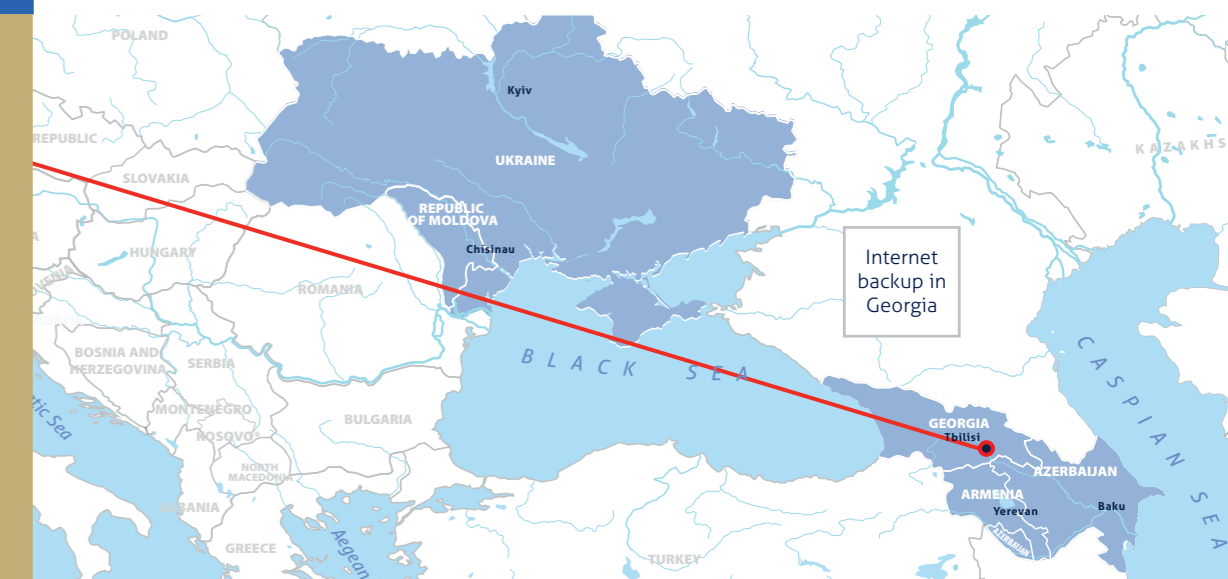
Total cost  
(estimated)  
**€10.5**  
million

EU grant  
**€10** million  
GÉANT consortium\*  
grant  
**€0.5** million

\*GÉANT is the collaboration of European National Research and Education Networks (NRENs)

## Impact

- ✓ **265 Research and Education institutions** connected with their counterparts in the EU
- ✓ **706 000 students, scientists and researchers** benefit from this connection.
- ✓ Ukraine and Moldova benefit from digital highways with the EU (more than **100 gigabits per second**) and connectivity increases in the region
- ✓ Access provided to **digital services**, like cloud services, for online education and scientific collaboration via Horizon Europe



## 14 GEORGIA

# Log-in Georgia

bridging the urban/  
rural digital divide

*One of the main priorities of the Government of Georgia is the development of the digital economy. With the support of our international partner institutions such as the European Union, the European Investment Bank and the World Bank, we are aiming for this goal. This aspiration is demonstrated by the “Rural Fibre Network Georgia” project. It will promote digital development of rural settlements that will ultimately be reflected in their economic growth.*

**Lasha Khutsishvili,**  
Minister of Finance of Georgia

## Project description

The project supports the development of digital connectivity infrastructure by investing in the extension of national broadband networks to cover rural areas of Georgia. The aim is to provide 5 000 km of fibre with 100 Mbps capacity to benefit more than 500 000 inhabitants by 2025. It paves the way for further investment in last-mile connectivity bringing the internet right up to the doorstep of people, businesses and administrations in rural areas.

## Funding

Total cost  
(estimated)

**€68.7**  
million

EU contribution

**€34** million

IFI contribution

**€34** million

Other contributions

**€0.7** million

## Impact

- ✓ **1 000 rural settlements** connected via middle-mile connectivity from national network to access points in rural areas
- ✓ Promotion of **digital inclusion** of women, social minorities and persons with disabilities
- ✓ Promotion of **digital solutions** in the fields of education, health and financial services



15 EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD Regional

# Black Sea submarine digital cable



*To achieve the harmonisation of digital identity and electronic services across the region, legal regulations and an international agreement are necessary. However, beyond that, we also need a technical solution, which was provided to us during the cross-border piloting phase with Georgia and Moldova. As a result, we got a solution that allows us, so to speak, to open up to the countries of Europe and the Eastern Partnership that also use this technology.*

**Araks Avetyan**  
Head of Program Management, Armenia's e-Governance infrastructure implementation agency EKENG CJSC

## Project description

This project concerns the construction and deployment of a submarine digital cable in the Black Sea interconnecting the EU with Georgia and further on to Armenia, with the aim of boosting data traffic and the uptake of innovative digital services. The EU supports the improvement of the regulatory environment in line with EU standards and the implementation of a number of cross-border projects in the fields of digital identity, e-commerce, and e-customs. The aim is to develop a digital system at regional level and gradually integrate it into the EU's Digital Single Market.

## Funding

Total investment (estimated)

€60 million

- EU grant €20 million
- IFI loans €20 million
- Private contributions €20 million

## Impact

- ✓ Increased **interoperability of digital solutions** such as Digital Identity Wallets and digitalisation of transport corridors
- ✓ Increased resilience and **cyber security** of digital infrastructure in line with EU standards
- ✓ **13 cross-border pilot projects** initiated to increase integration into the EU's Digital Single Market



## 16 EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD Regional

# EU4Business

EU4Business is an umbrella initiative that encompasses all EU support to small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in Eastern Neighbourhood countries. It supports private sector development by improving access to finance for SMEs, promoting better business regulations, facilitating access to business development services and helping SMEs take advantage of present and future trade opportunities. EU4Business helps to create and sustain jobs, stimulates higher SME growth and expands SME exports. More than 80 partners are currently implementing EU4Business projects and programmes.

### Funding

Total investment  
(estimated) **€2.8 billion**

EU grant  
**€2.8 billion**



### EU4BUSINESS - EXAMPLES

#### AZERBAIJAN – INNOVATING THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

- 1 In Azerbaijan, the EU supports multiple SMEs in various sectors, like access to finance, business development and enabling environment. In the agricultural sector, the EU supports farmers in North-Western Azerbaijan to build regional networks and introduce innovation in the fruit and vegetable sector through the use of new key technologies. SMEs targeted by the programme are enabled to produce safe, high quality and marketable food supplies, aligned with domestic and external markets' demands. The project is backed by a grant of €5 million.

#### REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA - EU4SMES

- 2 In the Republic of Moldova, the EU co-funds seven national SME support programmes implemented by the Moldovan Organisation for Entrepreneurship Development (ODA). The project aims to improve the investment climate, employability and a favourable business environment for SMEs, especially in rural areas, ensuring better access to finance for rural and women-owned SMEs. The project also fosters the green and digital economic transition. By the end of 2023, a total of 93 companies had already benefitted from the programme, which aims to support up to 300 companies. The project receives an EU grant of €8 million.

### Impact

- ✓ **156 067 SMEs** supported in the Eastern Partnership countries since 2021
- ✓ **150 089 jobs** created since 2021 and **1 418 977 jobs** sustained since 2021
- ✓ In 2022, every million of EU funding supported **622 SMEs** and created **665 new jobs**, generating **€20.20 million** in increased income
- ✓ Access to finance represents **59%** of EU support to SMEs (2023)
- ✓ More than **40%** of supported businesses are managed or owned by women



*With the help of the Moldovan Government and of the European Union, we received our first grant of 250 000 MDL and bought a precision drilling machine for furniture production, and then we bought a precision cutting machine for which we received a grant of 920 000 MDL. With the help of the programme, we were able to increase the number of employees by 20% per year.*

**Vasile Burca**  
Founder of the company "Arhimob" Map

## 17 ARMENIA

# Investing in education

*Children of Armenia Fund's Smart Centres initiative in Syunik marks a significant step towards enhancing education and development in rural areas. Our future SMART Centres will provide high-quality after school education and comprehensive services in Southern regions of Armenia which is especially vital for Armenia during this crucial period.*

**Liana Ghaltaghchyan**  
Executive Director of Children of Armenia Fund

## Project description

Under the “Investing in education, notably in the Syunik region” initiative, this project will construct two extra-curricular education and teacher training centres in the municipalities of Kapan and Goris in the Syunik region in Southern Armenia. The centres will provide after-school educational opportunities and access to services for children and young people between the age of 6 and 18. Using a dedicated transport network, students will have the possibility to follow a curriculum covering subjects such as mechanics, programming, entrepreneurship, languages, arts, music and athletics. Students will also have access to social workers, education counsellors, study trips and presentations by external experts and professionals.

## Funding

Total investment  
(estimated)

**€20.8**  
million

EU grant  
**€10.8** million

IFI loan  
**€10** million

## Impact

- ✓ Up to **6 000 students** benefit from extra-curricular activities
- ✓ Young people, including vulnerable groups, prepared for finding jobs
- ✓ Improved quality of **rural education** and workforce development
- ✓ Reduced urban-rural divides and gender gaps



18  UKRAINE

# Improving access to education and healthcare

*Ukrainian communities are receiving more than 370 buses. This is a great display of solidarity. This is a path towards our children's future - theirs and the entire country's, in the midst of war. This is what school buses mean, this is why they are important.*

**Olena Zelenska**  
First lady of Ukraine

## Project description

As part of the “School buses for Ukraine” solidarity campaign, the EU funded 100 school buses to get Ukrainian children safely to school. Another 270 buses were donated by 11 EU Member States. With the aim of improving access to healthcare new ambulances were delivered to municipalities and hospitals across Ukraine. Fitted with state-of-the-art equipment and advanced medical capacities, the ambulances were part of a project providing food, hygiene products and medical and civil protection equipment such as firefighting equipment and electricity generators.

## Funding

Total investment

**€24**  
million

EU grant  
**€24** million

## Impact

- ✓ **100 school buses** delivered to **6 regions** across Ukraine
- ✓ **25 ambulances** delivered to hospitals and municipalities
- ✓ Emergency aid distributed to **192 municipalities** in **22 regions** across Ukraine



## 19 EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD Regional

# Supporting healthcare systems

*Cold chain is a key element for the safety and quality of vaccines. By strengthening the cold chain system, we ensure the integrity of immunisation programmes and safeguard public health.*

**Nazifa Mursalova**  
Head of Public Health, Ministry of Health  
of Azerbaijan

## Project description

To strengthen routine immunisation systems after the COVID-19 crisis ended, this programme supported immunisation by strengthening the cold chain system through improved vaccine storage, transport, handling, management and digitalisation of the cold chain inventory system. The programme also supported actions in risk communication, community engagement and the capacity building of healthcare professionals.

## Funding

Total investment  
(estimated)

**€42.35**  
million

EU grant  
**€42** million

Other contribution  
**€0.35** million

## Impact

- ✓ Procurement of **1 800 medical refrigerators**, **240 m<sup>3</sup> cold room storage space** for vaccines, **5 refrigerated trucks**, **100 vehicles** for vaccination teams, **700 IT equipment units**
- ✓ **10 power generators** procured and installed in Ukraine
- ✓ Capacity building on vaccines for **44 000 healthcare and other professionals** across the region
- ✓ In Ukraine, **180 people** were trained on international trauma life support, **81 people** on hostile environment surgery, **90 people** from three different hospitals on mass casualty management and 65 on mental health training.

