



# **New Financing & Global Opportunities for Nigerian Businesses through EBRD**

**Client Alert**

**G. ELIAS**

## Introduction

At the 2025 annual meeting of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the “**EBRD**” or the “**Bank**”) held in London, United Kingdom, Nigeria was formally announced as a shareholder/member of the EBRD. This followed the approval of the EBRD’s Board of Governors in May 2023.

## What is the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development?

The EBRD was established in 1991 by a treaty among European countries - to support the development of the private business sectors in Central and Eastern Europe after the fall of communism. It is owned by multiple countries and international institutions, including the European Union, the European Investment Bank, the United States, Japan, Canada, and Australia. It has no shareholders from the private sector, but at least 60% of its disbursements must go to private sector entities.<sup>1</sup> As at the end of 2024, the EBRD’s total assets stood at €86,467 billion out of which €25,316 billion is shareholders (members) equity.<sup>2</sup>

The EBRD is committed to environmentally sustainable and democracy-supporting investments through the provision of loans, equity investments and guarantees for private businesses, banks, and industries, to improve public services, promote entrepreneurship, strengthen legal and financial systems, and restructure privatized state-owned enterprises. The EBRD invests in sectors such as energy, infrastructure, financial institutions, agribusiness, manufacturing and services, natural resources, telecommunications, and real estate.<sup>3</sup>

The EBRD, headquartered in London, is funded mainly by equity capital from its 75 member countries and EU institutions, borrowings through bond issuances in international markets, and retained earnings from its operations. It predominantly lends to the private sector, with a 40% cap on public sector loans.

In 2023, the EBRD expanded its operational scope to include sub-Saharan Africa and Iraq,<sup>4</sup> paving the way for Nigeria’s membership. On April 29, 2025, the Bank announced that it will be siting its first West-African office in Lagos, Nigeria.

## Implications for Nigeria’s Private Sector

Nigeria's membership opens the door to a broader range of financing options including loans, equity investments, and guarantees tailored to private sector needs. This funding opportunities are particularly significant for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), which constitute the majority of Nigerian economy and often face challenges accessing affordable capital.

Beyond financial resources, the EBRD provides access to valuable technical expertise and advisory services. With decades of experience supporting private sector development across countries, the EBRD offers capacity-building programmes and other consulting services that can help Nigerian businesses build stronger structures, improve sustainability, and enhance appeal to international partners and investors.

## Conclusion

As Nigeria begins this new chapter of economic cooperation with the EBRD, the country stands to gain not only from increased financial support but also from access to global expertise and a network of international partners. If properly harnessed, this development could mark a significant turning point for the Nigerian business landscape. If you are interested in exploring how your business can prepare to benefit from this opportunity, we will be pleased to guide you.

For further enquiries, please do not hesitate to reach us at [geliass@gelias.com](mailto:geliass@gelias.com).

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<sup>1</sup> [ebrd-annual-review-2024-english.pdf](#)

<sup>2</sup> [q4-2024-ifs.pdf](#).

<sup>3</sup> [EBRD business sectors](#)

<sup>4</sup> Board Of Governors, “Resolution No.259 Amendment To Article 1 Of The Agreement Establishing The European Bank For Reconstruction And Development To Enable A Limited And Incremental Expansion Of The Geographic Scope Of The Bank’s Operations To Sub-Saharan Africa And Iraq” (2023).

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