

# EaP | Eastern Partnership



## STRONGER WOMEN — STRONGER AZERBAIJAN

#strongertogether



For sixty years, the European Union has worked tirelessly to defend women's rights and to empower them to realise their full potential. Gender equality is at the heart of the EU's Eastern Partnership initiative. It is vital to the individual lives of women as well as men, and essential for long-term democratic development. In its cooperation with Azerbaijan, the EU is driving real change by strengthening women in business, providing opportunities for quality education and promoting a fair society.

### WHAT IS BEING DONE

- **GENDER ACTION PLANS**  
*Taking account of gender issues across public policies and generating statistics based on gender*
- **NEW AND IMPROVED LEGISLATION**  
*Adopting and applying anti-discrimination and domestic violence laws*
- **MORE WOMEN IN BUSINESS**  
*Making loans via local banks available for women-led enterprises: medium and large-sized businesses have access to loans through the National Fund of Assistance to Entrepreneurship; although the Fund does not have quotas for women-led businesses, it attempts to attract female clients by offering them favourable terms*
- **NEW STUDY AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES**  
*Offering a wide range of exchange programmes across Europe with Erasmus+*
- **YOUNG WOMEN LEADERS**  
*Enhancing the active participation of young women through the EU4Youth programme*

### WOMEN IN BUSINESS

The EU supports women entrepreneurs in Azerbaijan through the **Women in Business programme**, which is implemented by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Support provided by the programme includes **business advice, training and mentoring** to women-led companies.

**Gulnara Hassanova**, Director of ESSE LLC, a company distributing women's accessories and home-care products, received **EU-funded sales training**, gained **25% more customers** and **increased turnover by 18%**.

Find out how you can take part:  
[www.ebrdwomeninbusiness.com](http://www.ebrdwomeninbusiness.com)

«You need proper advice and the know-how to develop.»

**Nigyar Kocharli** expanded her bookshop business with EU advisory support to develop IT solutions.



Women entrepreneurs in Azerbaijan also have access to a range of other funding and advisory services provided under the EU4Business initiative.

Find out more:

[www.eu4business.eu/smeprojects/azerbaijan](http://www.eu4business.eu/smeprojects/azerbaijan)

## NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Through its **Erasmus+** programme, the EU offers young women and men in Azerbaijan a huge range of exchange opportunities across Europe.



*«It's not just a year in a new place... It's a huge life experience.»*

**Irana Alimova** was an Erasmus student in Portugal – she now works for an international company in Baku.

- **Azerbaijan** was provided with **€4 million in funding for student and staff exchanges** under Erasmus+ in 2015-17, with **876 students and staff** from Azerbaijan benefiting from exchanges to EU universities.
- The EU has set a **75% target to support young women** under the **EU4Youth** programme that runs until 2020.

### ERASMUS+ OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- Scholarships to study in Europe
- Student exchanges
- Youth exchanges
- European Voluntary Service
- Opportunities for youth workers
- Youth involvement in reform dialogue

Find out more:

Erasmus+ website [www.ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus](http://www.ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus)

Erasmus+ national office Azerbaijan [www.erasmusplus.org.az](http://www.erasmusplus.org.az)

Erasmus+ youth info centre in Azerbaijan [www.bfngo.az](http://www.bfngo.az)

EU4Youth [www.euneighbours.eu/en/east/eu-in-action/projects/eu4youth](http://www.euneighbours.eu/en/east/eu-in-action/projects/eu4youth)

## A FAIR SOCIETY

An EU-funded project – **Enabling civil society to play a greater role in advancing gender equality and women's rights** – implemented by the UNDP has set up women's resource centres in the regions of Sabirabad, Neftchala and Bilasuvar, which aim at strengthening women's entrepreneurial skills through vocational education and creative self-expression.

### AS A RESULT OF THE PROJECT:

- **4 Women's Resource Centres** have opened
- **416 women** have benefited directly, and over 1,500 people indirectly
- over **350 women** have received entrepreneurship training
- **50 new women-led businesses** were started
- more than **1,300 children, women and men** have been reached in awareness-raising campaign on **gender-based violence and gender equality**



*«I will raise my daughters as active citizens so that they learn to stand firm on their own two feet.»*

**Gunay Guliyeva**, who has started a small cattle breeding business with the help of the **project**.

Find out more:

[www.az.undp.org](http://www.az.undp.org)

