Early Warning System

EBRD-56827

Asarel Medet Bulgarian copper 55m

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Quick Facts

Countries	Bulgaria
Specific Location	Panagyurishte, Pazardzhik Province
Financial Institutions	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
Status	Approved
Bank Risk Rating	B
Voting Date	2026-03-25
Borrower	Asarel Medet AD
Sectors	Mining
Potential Rights Impacts	Healthy Environment, Labor & Livelihood, Right to Water
Investment Type(s)	Loan
Investment Amount (USD)	$ 64.90 million
Loan Amount (USD)	$ 64.90 million
Project Cost (USD)	$ 129.22 million

Project Description

As stated by the EBRD, the project consists of up to EUR 55 million senior secured loan in favour of Asarel Medet AD, a privately owned Bulgarian copper mining company. The EBRD transaction is expected to benefit from support under the InvestEU Fund.

The proceeds of the loan will be applied towards the sustaining capital expenditures at the Asarel mine and captive renewable investments.

Copper is crucial for many applications in today's economy, as it is prevalently used in or critical to renewable energy, technologies that increase energy efficiency, other low-carbon technologies, and materials and products with low embedded GHG emissions.

The project is expected to implement key improvements to the environmental and social standards at the Asarel mine in line with the best international practices as outlined in the comprehensive ESAP.

People Affected By This Project

As stated in a report by Bankwatch, "miners working in Asarel Medet AD's open-pit mine and flotation factory often complain of mine dust, heavy metals and chemical reagents. Metallurgists who work in Aurubis Bulgaria AG's metallurgy facilities complain of exposure to sulphur dioxide and heavy metals gases. The local population has experienced exposure to dust coming from the open-pit mine, which increases the risk of cancer and respiratory diseases".
Two dangerous waste facilities used by the mining industry – Asarel Medet AD's Lyulyakovitza mining waste tailing dam and the Vlajkov Vrah mining waste facility used by the construction industry – have caused fear among the local residents. The Panagyurishte mine workers and residents from the local villages are afraid of the gigantic Lyulyakovitza tailing dam, and they believe that once Asarel Medet AD leaves the open-pit copper mine in 5 to 7 years, there will be no one to ensure the safety of the hazardous waste is properly maintained. Local voices have noted: 'Offshore owners of the company will take their money to some offshore island and the mining waste will remain here in the tailing dam and nobody will care for its safety!' The environmental and economic impact on the local population has been negative. Agricultural lands and waters are polluted and acid rain is common. This makes it impossible for local residents to maintain small agrarian enterprises such as livestock farms and gardens that produce rose oil and medicinal herbs.

Investment Description

- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

Private Actors Description

As stated by the EBRD, Asarel Medet AD is a joint-stock company incorporated in Bulgaria. The Company operates the producing Asarel copper mine and other businesses in Panagyurishte, Bulgaria.

Private Actor 1	Private Actor 1 Role	Private Actor 1 Sector	Relation	Private Actor 2	Private Actor 2 Role	Private Actor 2 Sector
-	-	-	-	Asarel Medet AD	Client	Mining

Contact Information

Client - Asarel Medet AD:

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ACCESS TO INFORMATION

You can request information by emailing: accessinfo@ebrd.com or by using this electronic form: https://www.ebrd.com/eform/information-request

ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM OF EBRD

The Project Complaint Mechanism (PCM) is the independent complaint mechanism and fact-finding body for people who have been or are likely to be adversely affected by an European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)-financed project. If you submit a complaint to the PCM, it may assess compliance with EBRD's own policies and procedures to prevent harm to the environment or communities or it may assist you in resolving the problem that led to the complaint through a dialogue with those implementing the project. Additionally, the PCM has the authority to recommend a project be suspended in the event that harm is imminent.

You can contact the PCM at: pcm@ebrd.com or you can submit a complaint online using an online form at: http://www.ebrd.com/eform/pcm/complaint_form?language=en

You can learn more about the PCM and how to file a complaint at: http://www.ebrd.com/work-with-us/project-finance/project-complaint-mechanism.html

Bank Documents

- Raw Deal: Bankwatch Report 2021 [Original Source]

Campaign Documents

- Company's response to Bankwatch report (BHRC, 2024)

Media

- Bulgarian ‘Green’ Activist Faces Lawsuit Over Facebook Post (Global Voices, 2016)
- The MOEW will request a new EIA report on the expansion of “Asarel Medet” AD (MOEW, 2021)

Other Related Projects

- EIB-20240435 AURUBIS CRM COPPER INVESTMENTS