



Background

Through the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) funding, People 1st International have been engaged in a cross-regional intervention to provide businesses with the HR skills required to effectively manage their business.

The EBRD emphasises economic inclusion for development, measuring how economic institutions and education systems provide equal opportunities. Businesses face barriers when employing youth due to high unemployment and education gaps, impacting transitions to work. SMEs struggle to attract skilled labor, worsening labor force challenges.

The Skills in Business programme aims to address these issues by enhancing SMEs' capacity to recruit and retain skilled young workers through work-based learning.

The project promotes a previous phase of work where People 1st International and EBRD developed an SME Human Resource Competency Framework, comprising 15 standards linked to specific HR-related outcomes and KPIs and provided training to local HR consultants across 8 countries to equip them with the tools and know-how to support local small businesses to increase the effectiveness of HR management in line with international best practice.



Skills in Business Standards

Recruitment and Retention	1. Developing Strategies	2. Competency Frameworks	3. People Policies	4. Employability Programmes	5. Market Insights
	6. Recruitment and Selection	7. Inclusion	8. Retention	9. Performance Management	10. Leavers
Work-based Learning	11. Induction	12. Career planning	13. Learning Needs	14. Learning Approaches	15. Measuring Impact



WeTrade, Moldova

People 1st International collaborated with WeTrade, a leading Moldovan business group, through the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) funded Skills in Business intervention from July 2023 to April 2024.

WeTrade are committed to building on the intervention's successes, prioritising continuous improvement and strategic HR development to ensure sustained growth and a more attractive employment environment for young talent in Moldova.

Objectives / Challenges

Operating across 12 distinct businesses in the agricultural sector WeTrade faced a disparity in youth engagement, with only 12% youth representation compared to a national average of 36%. This challenge was particularly pronounced in rural operations where the supply of employees is limited.

The project aimed to strengthen WeTrade's ability to attract and retain skilled employees by standardising HR practices and improving youth retention and hiring rates, addressing a significant challenge in engaging youth within the workforce.



Outcome / Impact

The partnership supported by the EBRD, marked a critical phase towards sustainable HR practices in Moldova's agricultural sector. The initiative not only addressed immediate HR challenges but also established a foundation for long-term growth and competitiveness.

Scoping sessions with WeTrade's senior management team proved instrumental in defining the focus for the project and in setting key performance indicators to measure the success of the implemented strategies. During scoping we agreed to focus on developing strategies; competency frameworks; performance management; induction; learning approaches and measuring impact standards, which best aligned with the needs for the business.

The collaboration led to several significant outcomes:

- Standardised HR practices across WeTrade's diverse operations
- Enhanced managerial capacity through targeted training sessions
- A robust performance management framework and training workshop for managers, leading to completed performance reviews for 20 staff members supporting employee development.
- A comprehensive induction and onboarding programme with a checklist and buddy system to support youth retention and recruitment metrics.
- Strategies for continuous growth in staff learning and development, including partnerships with educational institutions.
- Workshops for HR and senior managers on learning approaches and measuring HR impact





About People 1st International

People 1st International has been providing world-class skills solutions for over 50 years. Our expertise is trusted by organisations globally and is proven to:

- Increase staff retention
- Maximise the potential of the workforce
- Increase productivity and competitiveness
- Create effective people strategies
- Build a strong commitment to vocational lifelong skills



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THE EBRD

**SKILLS
IN BUSINESS**