

Unlocking the Potential of the Middle Corridor

Venue: Paragraph Freedom Square Hotel, Tbilisi, Georgia

Unlocking the Potential of the Middle Corridor: World Bank Study Presented at Regional Event in Tbilisi

On February 27, a hybrid regional event hosted by the World Bank discussed a comprehensive study, ["The Middle Trade and Transport Corridor: Policies and Investments to Triple Freight Volumes and Halve Travel Time by 2030."](#) The report provides an in-depth assessment of the expected demand for the Middle Corridor and offers a detailed diagnostic of the infrastructure, logistics services capacity and constraints in three countries along this route, which spans Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Kazakhstan.

The event, ["Unlocking the Potential of the Middle Corridor"](#), served as a platform for collaborative discussion on improving the operational efficiency of the Middle Corridor and addressing existing bottlenecks. Government representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Kazakhstan stakeholders from the private sector, development partners, think-tanks and academia gathered to discuss the key findings of the World Bank's study, with a strong emphasis on moving from analysis to action.

The Middle Corridor's significance and strength lie in the benefits it can bring as an intraregional trade corridor. Increased trade between Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Europe are the key drivers of demand—including a potential 37% increase in intra-regional trade and a 28% increase in trade between these three countries and the European Union by 2030.

The report identifies key policies and investments needed to respond to the demand for transport and to support economic development in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Kazakhstan, which include:

- Providing logistics solutions along the Corridor to ensure seamless operations.
- Reforming and simplifying processes and procedures, particularly at border crossings, to smooth out exchanges of traffic and data – issues that are characteristic of multimodal corridors, which combine different forms of transportation.
- Coordinating digitalization to increase tracking and to reduce delays at borders and operational interfaces. A unified, interoperable framework can facilitate digital transformation of processes and activities in the corridor.
- Improving performance at the Caspian and Black Sea crossings, with a focus on removing bottlenecks to vessel availability and improving port productivity.
- Agreeing on a uniform investment prioritization system. The report identifies several investment opportunities that should be further evaluated and sequenced.