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BOMCA | БОМКА
BORDER MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME IN CENTRAL ASIA
ПРОГРАММА СОДЕЙСТВИЯ УПРАВЛЕНИЮ ГРАНИЦАМИ В ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ АЗИИ



State Border Guard
Republic of Latvia

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 10

October 2024 - March 2025



MINISTRY OF INTERIOR
HUNGARY



Food and Veterinary Service
Republic of Latvia



State Border Guard Service
Republic of Lithuania



International Centre for
Migration Policy Development



State Revenue Service
Republic of Latvia



RIGA TECHNICAL
UNIVERSITY



Border Guard
Republic of Poland



Central Directorate for
Immigration and Border Police
Italian Republic

Dear readers,

We are thrilled to bring you the 10th issue of the BOMCA 10 Newsletter, covering our journey and achievements from October 2024 to March 2025.

This issue reflects BOMCA's commitment to enhancing security, stability and sustainable development of Central Asia region by fostering regional cooperation and building capacity. During this period, BOMCA 10 continued to advance its efforts across the four thematic areas, emphasising strategic development and collaboration with national and international counterparts.

We take pride in showcasing progress in capacity-building initiatives, operational milestones and the impactful implementation of grants for NGOs. Additionally, this issue witnessed remarkable stories of transformation as local communities benefited from targeted interventions and innovative solutions.

On behalf of the Consortium of implementing partners and the entire Project team, we hope you find inspiration and insight in this issue.

The BOMCA 10 Team



BOMCA 10 PROGRESS IN A NUTSHELL

Project implementation timeline



From October 1, 2024 till March 31, 2025, the Programme implemented 37 activities: capacity-building, national and regional events. This work was taking place hand-in-hand with procurement of technical equipment and realisation of work with NGOs through grants.

ABOUT BOMCA 10

Since its launch in 2003, the various phases of the Border Management Programme in Central Asia (BOMCA) funded by the European Union with the contribution of Latvia and Lithuania have focused on capacity building and institutional development, developing trade corridors and the facilitation of trade, improving border management systems and eliminating drug trafficking across the Central Asia region.

OVERALL
OBJECTIVE

Enhancing security, stability, and sustainable growth in the region, as well as supporting cross-border cooperation and improving living conditions for people living in border areas of Central Asia.

BUDGET



21 650 050

DURATION



**April 2021 -
September 2025**



COMPONENT 1

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF
BORDER CONTROL AGENCIES

SPECIFIC
OBJECTIVE

Adopting international security standards, integration of best practices and/or compliance with integrated border management models where applicable



COMPONENT 2

IMPROVEMENT OF
DETECTION CAPACITIES

SPECIFIC
OBJECTIVE

Enhancing detection, coordination and investigation effectiveness within and between Central Asian countries



COMPONENT 3

FACILITATION OF TRADE

SPECIFIC
OBJECTIVE

Harmonizing institutional, technical and normative practices related to the facilitation of legitimate flows of people and cargo across borders



COMPONENT 4

IMPROVEMENT OF CROSS-
BORDER COOPERATION

SPECIFIC
OBJECTIVE

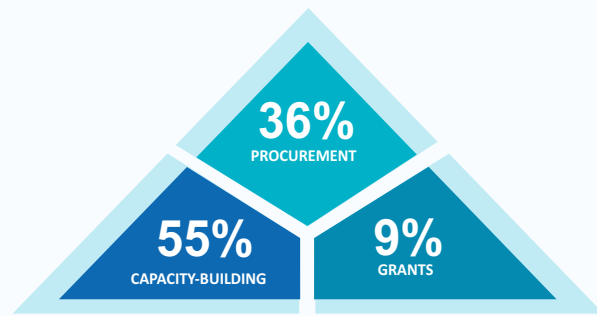
Improving living conditions in border areas through local economic development, with a focus on human rights, gender equality and vulnerable groups (such as women, children and victims of human trafficking)

DYNAMIC OF IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES

Since its launch in April 2021, BOMCA 10 has made steady progress in strengthening border management across Central Asia. **Capacity-building efforts** at the forefront, the program has successfully completed over 87% of its planned capacity-building activities, ensuring that target outcomes are being met. This includes the development of essential skills and the introduction of legal and procedural changes across participating countries. The collaboration with partner institutions and international stakeholders has been crucial in achieving these milestones, providing the necessary expertise to support these advancements.

Procurement of equipment has been instrumental in strengthening capacity-building efforts and aligning with national priorities and planning. Despite the scope of needs and stemming from its complexity to address them, to date significant progress has been achieved and 83 % of planned equipment is either handed over or at the final stages of deliveries to the national counterparts.

Grants for local NGOs have been another key success, providing direct support for community engagement and capacity-building at the grassroots level. The second round of grants is nearing completion, these grants have been instrumental in fostering long-term, localised change and furthering the program's impact across Central Asia.



BOMCA 10 implements 3 types of activities, each contributing to overall objective. The diagram illustrates the distribution of these activities in percentages.

REGIONAL IMPACT

The 4th Regional Steering Group Meeting (RSG) of the BOMCA 10 Programme, held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, on 20 February, gathered key stakeholders to review the past year's impact and outlined priorities for the final phase of the programme, which has already yielded significant results across the region. The collective efforts are driving regional peace, stability and prosperity, laying a strong foundation for continued cooperation in Central Asia.

Kazakhstan has made substantial strides in border security and law enforcement, including the adjustment of a draft National Border Policy Concept and the adoption of a Law on Combating Human Trafficking. With BOMCA's support, over 2,000 specialists were trained, and advanced surveillance equipment, including drones, was introduced. Innovations in training and border control methods have further strengthened Kazakhstan's security capabilities.

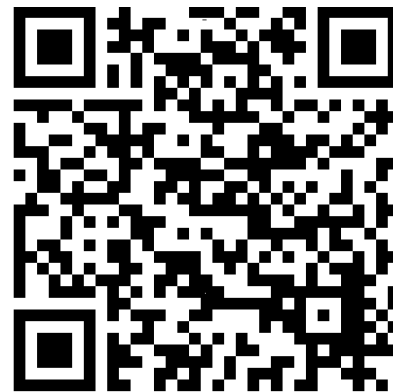
Kyrgyzstan has enhanced border operations with advanced technology, specialised training for over 100 law enforcement personnel, and the digitalization of customs, veterinary, and phytosanitary processes. The country developed the IBM strategy that came into force in December 2024. As a part of integrated approach to border management the Border Service established a Situation Centre for monitoring borders in 24/7. Additionally, BOMCA played a key role in enhancing the K9 division of the Kyrgyz Customs Service, upgrading its infrastructure, introducing EU-based training standards, and securing its accreditation as a Regional Training and K9 Centre by the World Customs Organization.

Tajikistan's "Poytakht" Training Centre trained over 200 border officers with advanced skills in document security and border control. As a result, border guards skills in detecting forgeries at the border had a positive impact. A Memorandum of Understanding between Tajikistan and Kazakhstan Border Guard training institutions has deepened cooperation in the area of education and qualification raising. Comprehensive support has been provided to border agencies in their efforts to evaluate and develop the national Integrated Border Management strategy. The programme also fosters economic growth by empowering women in border areas through small business and entrepreneurial training.

Turkmenistan has advanced its border security through practical training in document security and K9, bolstered by EU study visits. A newly developed mobile app is streamlining customs processes, and the modernisation of veterinary and phytosanitary services has enhanced agricultural stability.

Uzbekistan has made significant progress in border control infrastructure and the modernisation of its plant quarantine and veterinary services. Advanced training for border guards in document security and criminal analysis has improved border guards' capacity to face challenges related to border security. The implementation of risk management systems in customs and plant quarantine services has strengthened cooperation with neighbouring countries and EU agencies.





For over 20 years, BOMCA has been a key driver of regional change. However, our achievements extend beyond operational improvements at border posts, contributing significantly to the socio-economic development of the region. In February, BOMCA 10 launched the "The Story of Impact" video series, offering a window into the enduring effects of its work, as seen through the perspectives of national partners. The series, comprising more than 15 videos, features interviews with government officials and beneficiaries across region.

Each video highlights a specific aspect of BOMCA's work, illustrating how the programme has driven positive change in the region. By showcasing firsthand accounts of its impact, we hope to inspire future initiatives while reinforcing its commitment to sustainable development in Central Asia.

OUTSTANDING WOMEN SHAPING CENTRAL ASIA 2.0



When the second phase of the online exhibition "Outstanding Women Shaping Central Asia 2.0" was unveiled in March 2025, it was more than just a showcase of achievements. It was a celebration of determination, ingenuity and leadership. This online exhibition brought together an eclectic mix of stories. Women from government agencies, NGOs and border communities were given a platform to share their triumphs and challenges.

The journey to the exhibition began months earlier, with women from across Central Asia invited to share their stories. Those selected took part in a photoshoot in late February, with portraits accompanying their narratives. For many, this recognition is a rare moment in the spotlight, though they play key roles in regional security, social development and economic progress. By showcasing these stories, BOMCA 10 continues to champion the role of women in creating a safer, more stable and prosperous Central Asia. The exhibition is now live on BOMCA 10's website.

For those ready to be inspired, the stories are just a click away!

www.bomca-eu.org/en/impact/outstanding-women-shaping-central-asia

COMPONENT 1 INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF BORDER CONTROL AGENCIES



Enhanced technical expertise: Between 26–28 November 2024 in Almaty, Kazakhstan Component 1 successfully facilitated a regional event, bringing together heads of customs and border guard training institutions from Central Asia. The workshop focused on fostering collaboration, sharing innovative teaching methods, and exploring the integration of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, into training processes.

AI tools for border control: Experts from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan shared good practices and discussed innovations in the training systems for border and customs services. Participants explored the latest technological solutions, including AI,

simulation programs, e-learning environments, and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) for border control. These technologies were highlighted as tools to enhance training efficiency, reduce costs, and improve operations.

Regional cooperation: A key outcome was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, marking a milestone in regional cooperation in border and customs personnel training. The workshop also emphasized the development of joint e-libraries and the creation of a network of digital resources for customs services. Discussions on trainer exchange programmes, distance learning and career development pointed to the future needs of border and customs agencies.



COMPONENT 2 IMPROVEMENT OF DETECTION CAPACITIES



Strengthening Turkmenistan's K9 Services: In October 2024–March 2025, Component 2's main efforts focused on enhancing Turkmenistan's K9 capabilities. Through structured series of Training-of-Trainers (ToT) workshops, BOMCA in partnership with the OSCE, has equipped Turkmen instructors with advanced knowledge in explosive and drug detection, along with critical canine care, including health, wellness and first aid. This initiative is essential in reinforcing Turkmenistan's border security and law enforcement, especially for K9 units deployed in remote locations.

Gender inclusion in K9 work: In 2024 and early 2025, workshops across Turkmenistan brought together instructors from districts in central units in Ak-bugday district in Ahal region, Balkanabat city in Balkan region, S.A. Niyazov district in Dashoguz region, Mary city in Mary region and Farap district in

Lebap region. Led by certified Turkmen K9 instructors, who had completed BOMCA's program in Latvia and Lithuania, the sessions combined theory and practical training using service dogs and specialised equipment. A significant milestone was the inclusion of Turkmenistan's first female K9 instructor from the Turkmen Alabay Association, promoting gender inclusion.

Sustainable result for national security: BOMCA 10 impact extends further with an international K9 competition in spring 2025, allowing Turkmen K9 officers to showcase skills and exchange best practices. Two K9 minibuses, arriving by mid-2025, will enhance mobility for the units. Instructors trained in 2022 and 2024 now lead ongoing training, ensuring long-term sustainability. BOMCA's collaboration with the OSCE Centre ensures a robust, sustainable framework, strengthening national security for years to come.





Advancing customs expertise in Central Asia: Component 3 continued advancing Customs capacities in Central Asia. In line with this effort, BOMCA 10 facilitated an online lecture on customs valuation on 29 January 2025. The session brought together 73 customs officials from five beneficiary countries, enhancing their understanding of key valuation principles and practical applications.

A regional commitment to learning: The programme was developed in response to specific needs identified during National Steering Group meetings and consultations with regional training institutions. Led by a high-level expert accredited by the World Customs Organization, the lecture tackled pressing challenges in customs valuation with a focus on practical applications and strategic decision-making. Participants explored key issues to modern customs valuation, including regulatory frameworks, valuation methods, and their limitations.

Knowledge transparency: Online learning platforms do more than just expand knowledge - they serve as catalysts for regional collaboration, facilitating the exchange of information, local practices and discussions. By connecting individuals across borders, platforms such as this lay the groundwork for more transparent, efficient trade operations, fostering an environment where information flows seamlessly and best practices are shared. The result is a more interconnected regional approach to trade, driven by mutual learning and greater cooperation.

COMPONENT 4
IMPROVEMENT OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION



Empowering women entrepreneurs: Under the BOMCA 10 grants scheme, Component 4 supported rural women in the border villages of the Batken region of Kyrgyzstan, providing them with training and resources to manage small-scale businesses that are positively impacting their communities. Support for women's entrepreneurship plays a vital role in driving local economic development, especially in border regions. It not only enhances economic opportunities but also strengthens the resilience and stability of communities.

Strong border communities: BOMCA 10 has released a brochure titled "Strong communities - Safe Borders: Success stories of women entrepreneurs in the Border villages of Batken region, Kyrgyz Republic." The brochure features the success stories of 12 women entrepreneurs who were empowered through two EU-funded grant projects implemented by Kyrgyz NGOs in the Batken region. These stories highlight the impact of expanding women's economic opportunities on community well-being, border security and regional growth.

Fostering regional growth: The brochure not only showcases personal stories, but also provides a list of services offered by the women entrepreneurs. This initiative aims to inspire local communities and international donors to invest in women's entrepreneurship by promoting the women's products and services. It encourages further support for their business development, with contact details available for potential cooperation, orders, or financial backing.



BOMCA 10 encourages all readers of the Newsletter to explore the brochure and share it, fostering greater awareness and support for women's empowerment in the region.



PROCUREMENT PROGRESS

The procurement initiative has been segmented into three categories: ICT equipment, specialised equipment and other equipment. With 70% of procurement completed, 13% contracted, and 17% in the planned, BOMCA 10 is well on track to achieve its objectives. *Key initiatives included:*

In **Kazakhstan**, the Border Service of the National Security Committee has received document verification devices and remote learning tools for the Border Academy. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has been equipped with distance learning technology, along with digital forensic software and hardware. Meanwhile, the Financial Monitoring Agency has benefited from advanced training tools, including drones and mobile scanners.

Kyrgyzstan's Border Service of the State Committee for National Security now boasts distance learning facilities in Osh and Bishkek, as well as document verification equipment and computer resources for training. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has been equipped with digital forensic software and hardware, and a software for the Border Service Situation Center. The State Customs Service has also seen the renovation of its dog training facilities.

In **Tajikistan**, the Border Troops of the State Committee for National Security have been provided with document verification devices, laptops, border surveillance equipment. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has been equipped with digital forensic software and hardware, the Customs Service has received distance learning equipment, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been supplied with laptops and projectors.

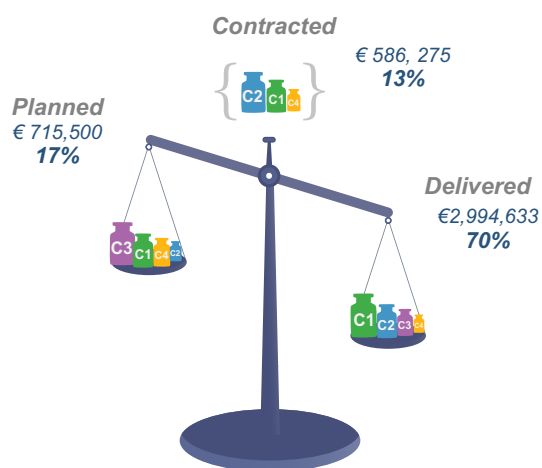
has been supplied with laptops and projectors.

Turkmenistan's State Border Service has been equipped with computers, printers, server equipment and inspection tools. The General Prosecutor's Office has enhanced its capabilities with digital forensics tools, while the Ministry of Internal Affairs has introduced video conferencing equipment and 3D scanners.

Uzbekistan's Border Troops of the State Security Service have received document verification devices and remote learning tools. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has been equipped with digital forensic software and hardware, 3D scanners and computers. The Border Guard Forces and Veterinary Committee have received ICT equipment to improve their operational efficiency. The Customs Institute has acquired distance learning equipment, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been provided with laptops and monitors.

The progress made thus far underscores the project's commitment to supporting national strategies and addressing emerging security challenges in the region.

Overall procurement progress

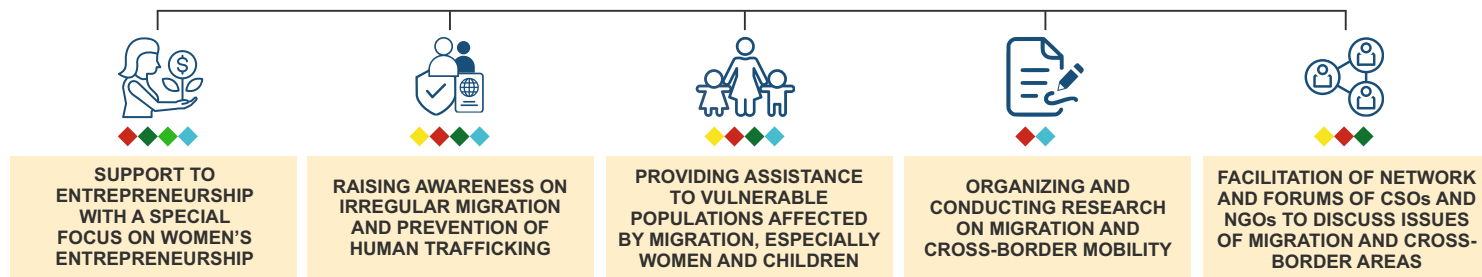


IMPLEMENTATION OF GRANTS

1st Call for Proposals 8 Implemented projects in 2023-2024

2nd Call for Proposals 12 Implemented projects in 2024 and will last till July 2025

Grants project by thematic focus



Grants project per country



Direct Award Kyrgyzstan



Empowering migrant families in border communities of Batken region – Phase 2

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