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Governors Anca Dragu and Irena Radović: Shared vision for European integration and modernisation of the central banks of Moldova and Montenegro

On 24 June 2025, in Montenegro, the Governor of the National Bank of Moldova, Anca Dragu, had a bilateral meeting with the Governor of the Central Bank of Montenegro, Irena Radović. The discussions centred on common areas of action for the two institutions in the context of institutional transformation processes, with an emphasis on European integration, accession to the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA), and strengthening female leadership in the financial sector.

The two countries in Southern and Eastern Europe, with economies of similar size, have taken important steps in aligning with European standards, including through their acceptance into SEPA — a catalyst for fast, secure, and efficient transfers for citizens and businesses. “Joining SEPA is a concrete step towards European integration and a clear example of real benefits for citizens. At this stage, cooperation with the Central Bank of Montenegro is extremely valuable, providing us with best practices and a sincere dialogue between institutions that share the same aspirations – to become part of the EU,” noted Ms. Anca Dragu.

The meeting also had a special symbolic significance. For the first time in the history of the two institutions, both the National Bank of Moldova and the Central Bank of Montenegro are led by women: Anca Dragu and Irena Radović, both appointed in December 2023. This dual milestone reflects a paradigm shift in the leadership of financial institutions in the region.

During the discussions, the Governor of the NBM highlighted the country’s progress in promoting gender equality. According to the recent Global Gender Gap Index ranking, Moldova ranks 7th out of 148 countries, rising from 13th in 2024 and 19th in 2023.

"Female leadership brings a balanced perspective, focused on cooperation and long-term development. The National Bank of Moldova is actively engaged in fostering an environment that supports the professional development of women in the financial sector. For example, this year we launched the “FinanciarELE – Women’s leadership community” project, which connects and supports women across all fields. Moldova has many role models who can inspire the entire region," mentioned the Governor of the NBM.

The meeting reaffirmed the openness of the two central banks to strengthening the bilateral partnership and leveraging shared experiences in the processes of reform and European integration.

"Strengthening ties between central banks in the region is essential for stability, transparency, and financial inclusion. The exchange of experiences helps us address common challenges and support each other on the European path. Together, we can become an example of smart and sustainable institutional transformation in Southern and Eastern Europe—a region with immense potential that deserves to be valued and integrated," concluded NBM Governor Anca Dragu.

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