



Women entrepreneurship in Azerbaijan and the region

5 GENDER EQUALITY

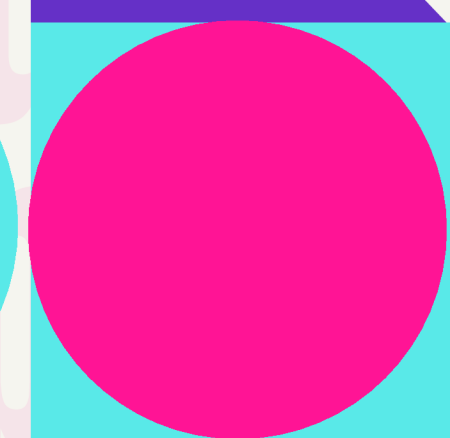
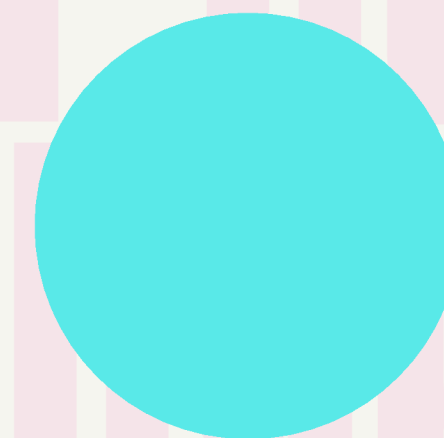
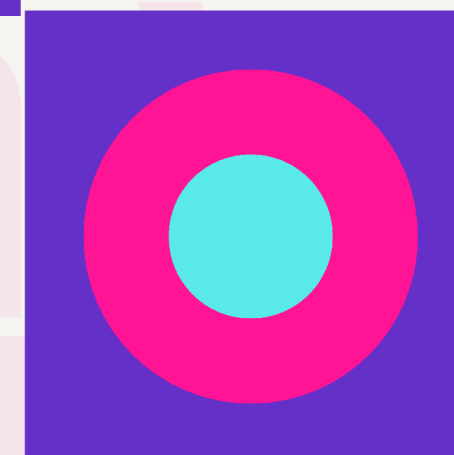


10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



13 CLIMATE ACTION





Entrepreneurship

is a driving force behind **innovation, job creation, and economic resilience**. Around the world, women entrepreneurs are transforming industries and communities – and Azerbaijan is no exception.

In recent years, the country has made significant strides in promoting women's participation in business, yet many challenges remain.

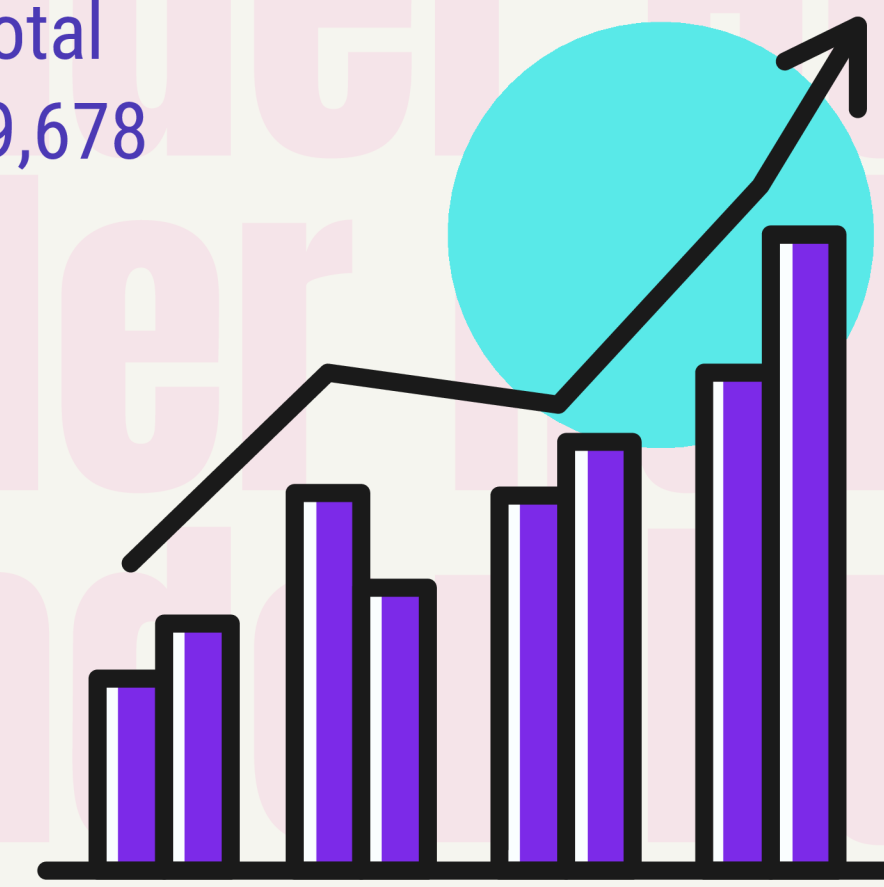
This presentation explores the current state, barriers, and opportunities for women entrepreneurs in Azerbaijan, and highlights ways to further empower them.



As of January 2023

women's participation in micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Azerbaijan maintained a significant and upward trend. The total number of women employed in MSMEs rose from 102,083 in 2022 to 109,678 in 2023.

Across all sectors, women's employment saw increases, with particularly strong representation in services and trade. The largest segments of female employment were in manufacturing, human health and social work, trade and repair of transport means, and other branches such as tourism and services.





Despite progress

women entrepreneurs face multiple barriers:

- Access to Finance: Many women lack collateral or credit history, making it difficult to secure business loans.
- Cultural Norms: Traditional expectations about gender roles can limit women's mobility and confidence in pursuing business.
- Knowledge Gaps: Access to entrepreneurship training, digital literacy, and mentorship remains limited, especially outside major cities.
- Policy Implementation: Although gender equality laws exist, enforcement and monitoring can be inconsistent.





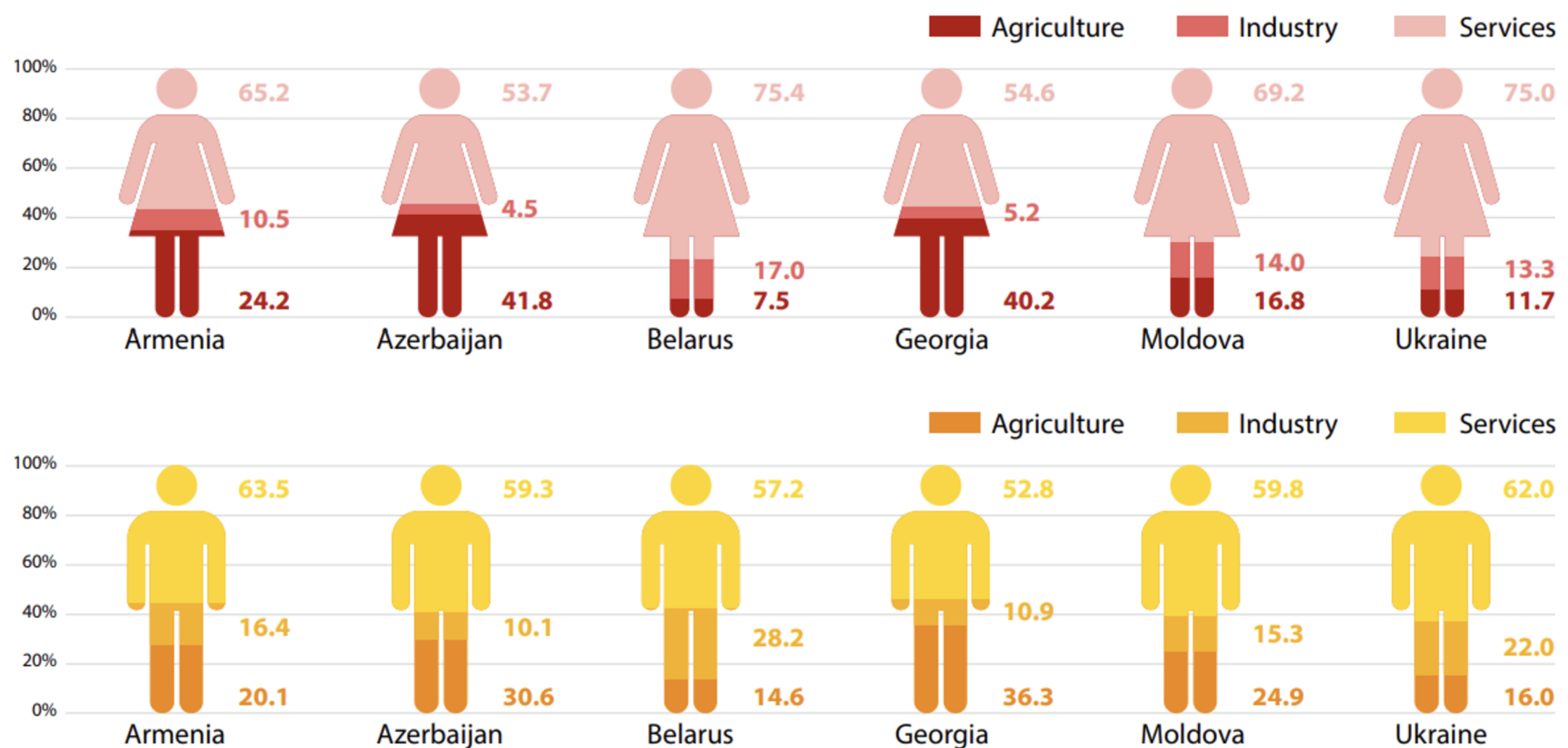
Female Entrepreneurship and ICT Leadership

- Women face difficulty in scaling or sustaining enterprises.
- Armenia: women are 30% of ICT workforce but only 11% in leadership.
- Azerbaijan: women own just 25% of registered businesses.
- Ukraine: 46% of individual entrepreneurs are women, yet businesses remain small and vulnerable (95% disrupted by war).
- Georgia & Moldova: Women entrepreneurs struggle with caregiving burden and limited financial access.



In all countries except Azerbaijan, relatively more women than men are in the services sector. There is a much higher proportion of women in agriculture in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia than is the case for men.

FIGURE 6: PROPORTION (%) OF THE EMPLOYED POPULATION IN EACH SECTOR OF ACTIVITY BY SEX, EaP COUNTRIES, 2019

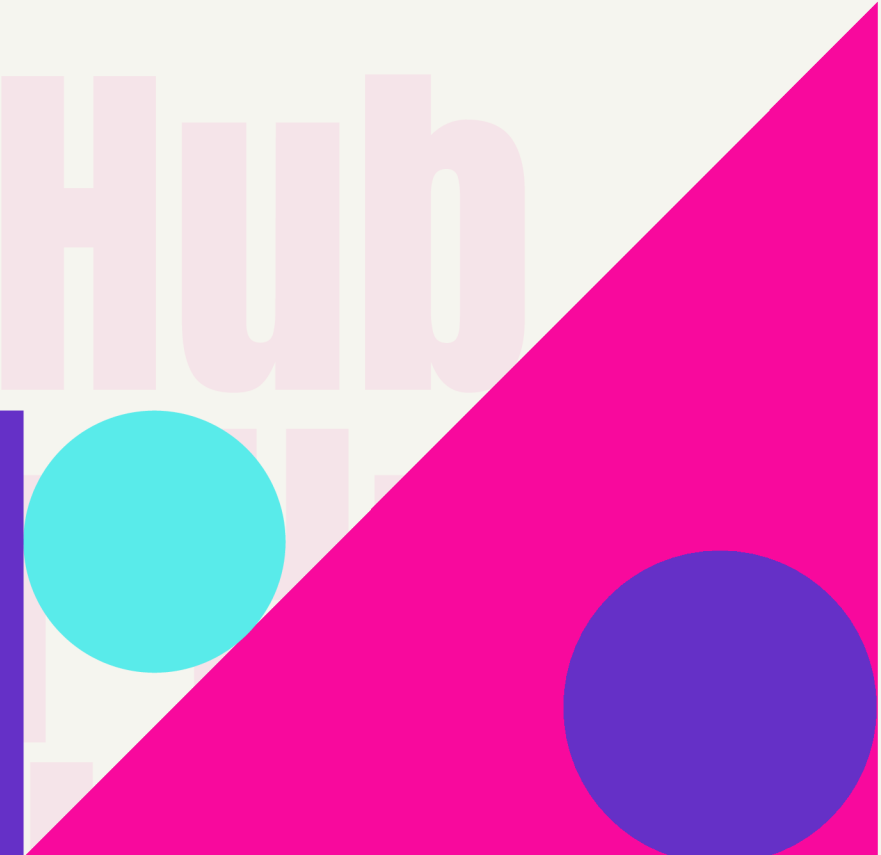
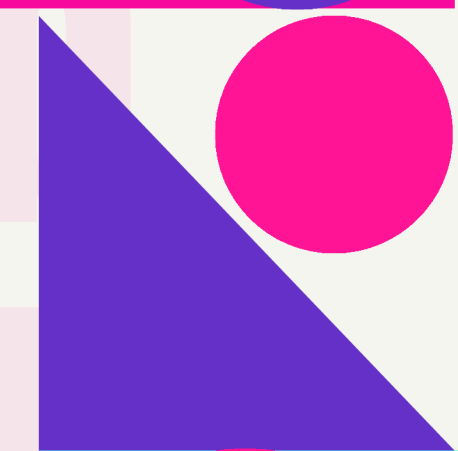
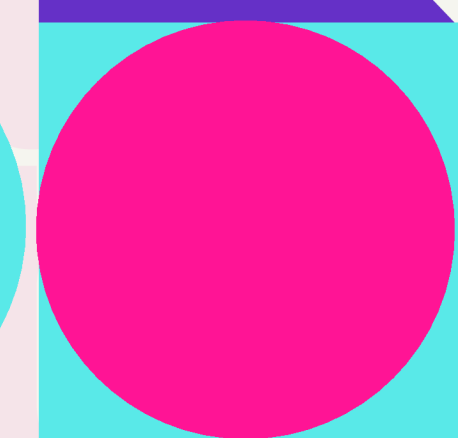
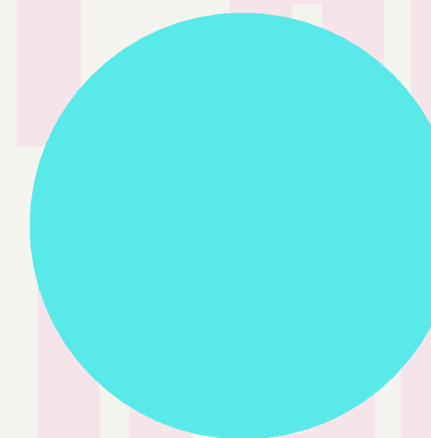
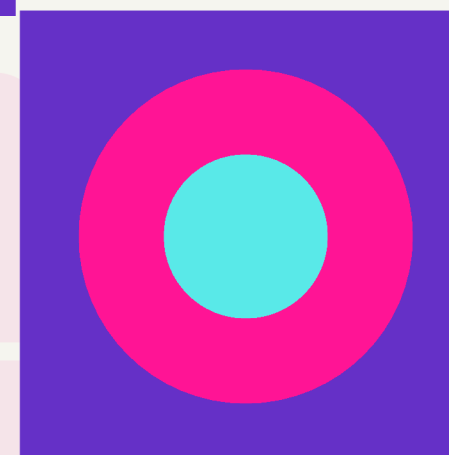




The future

for women entrepreneurs in Azerbaijan is promising.

- Digital Economy: Online platforms, e-commerce, and social media create new business opportunities with lower entry barriers.
- Green and Social Enterprises: Growing global demand for sustainable and community-focused products aligns with women's leadership strengths.
- Creative and Cultural Industries: Handicrafts, design, and cultural tourism have high export potential.
- Youth and Innovation: Younger women are more globally connected, tech-savvy, and open to entrepreneurship as a career path.





Our role in the process

WOMAN BAZAAR

Woman Bazaar - A unique project that brings together various stakeholders, including governmental organizations, NGOs, private companies, individual entrepreneurs, and creative minds, to promote women's eco-entrepreneurship in Azerbaijan!





Woman Bazaar

is a **multidisciplinary festival** that has been held for 4 years. The main goal is to help **vulnerable groups of women** to support the sustainable initiatives and entrepreneurial activities of the representative women, to accelerate **their reintegration into the society**, as well as to boost the expansion of support mechanisms along with **increasing their knowledge and skills** to ensure the sustainability of existing activities.

**200+ women
entrepreneur**

30 + regions

**10000+
customers**





Woman Bazaar: Leyla's story

A screenshot of a YouTube video player. The video title is "Woman Bazaar: Leylanın hekayəsi". The video content shows a woman with long brown hair, smiling and looking slightly to the right. A red play button is overlaid on the video. At the bottom of the video frame, there is a subtitle: "There was also a staircase here , I used to go up those stairs and act cute to my mother." In the bottom left corner of the player, there is a "Watch on YouTube" button. In the top right corner, there is a "Copy link" button.

Woman Bazaar: Leylanın hekayəsi

Copy link

There was also a staircase here , I used to go up those stairs and act cute to my mother.

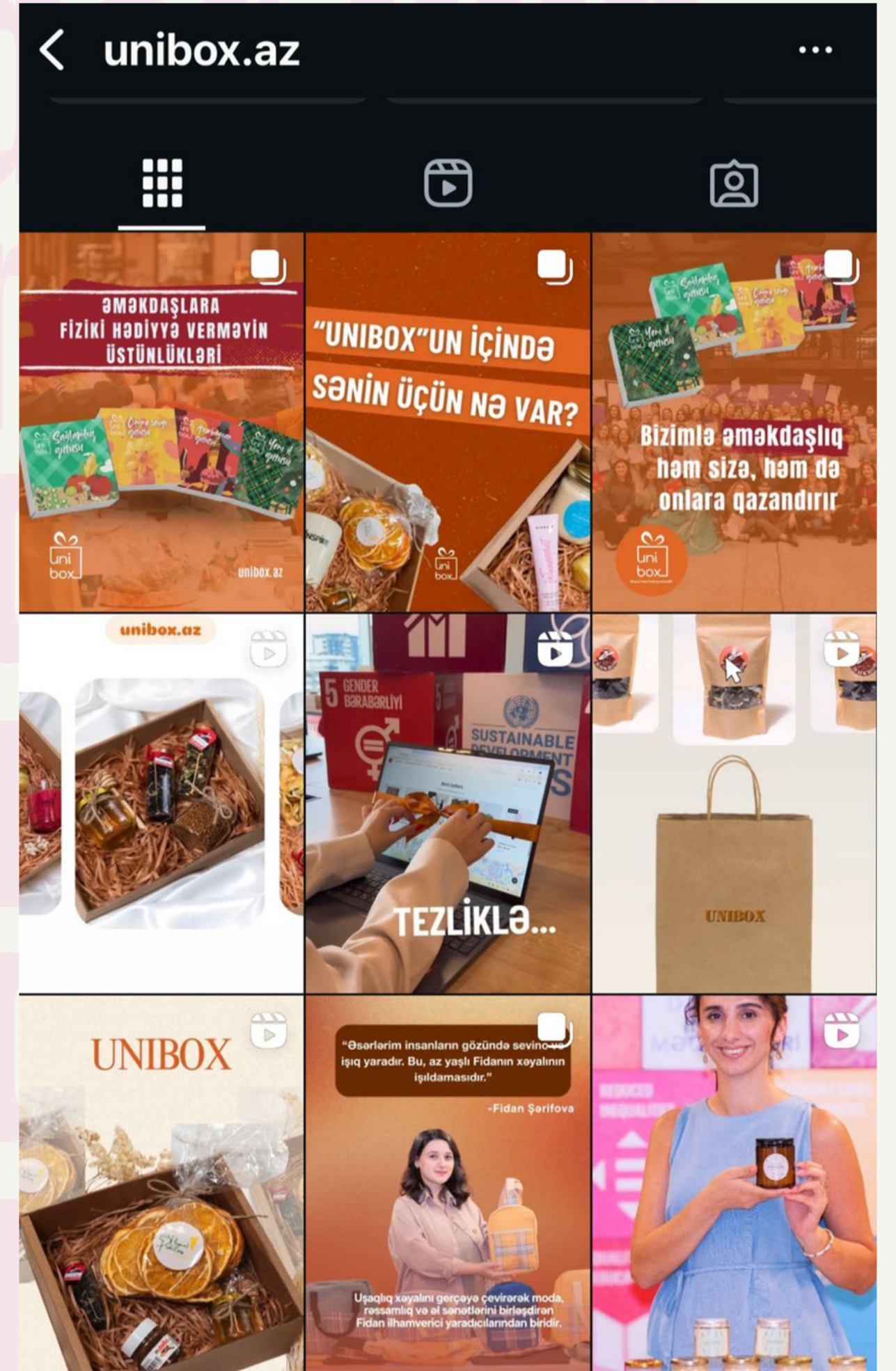
Watch on YouTube



unibox

is a social business that promotes women's economic empowerment by bringing the creativity and strength of women entrepreneurs to the market, transforming their lives.

It was founded based on Gender Hub Azerbaijan's "Woman Bazaar" sustainable development project. At this bazaar, women entrepreneurs showcased and sold their handmade products.





However, once the festival ended,

the opportunities ended too. Two days a year simply weren't enough...

We asked ourselves:

- Why should this support end with the festival?
- Why can't it be a sustainable income?

And that's how UNIBOX was born.

