

POST-EVENT REPORT

2026 Türkiye
MINEX **ASIA**

12th MINEX Asia Mining & Exploration Forum

Bridging Continents: Building a Resilient Critical Raw Materials
Ecosystem Across the Middle Corridor

DATES

24-25 June 2026

VENUE

Ankara HiltonSA, Türkiye

ORGANISER

MINEX Forum

140+

DELEGATES

16

COUNTRIES

30+

SPEAKERS

9

SESSIONS



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Post-Event Report

12th MINEX Asia Mining & Exploration Forum
24-25 June 2026 · Ankara, Türkiye

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Two Days, One Argument: Execution Is Now the Question

The 12th MINEX Asia Forum brought together delegations from 16 countries in Ankara to confront a single, recurring theme: the strategic case for the Middle Corridor as a global critical minerals supply line is no longer being made — it is being assumed. What remains open is who finances, who processes, who certifies, and who builds the workforce to make that assumption real.

Over two days, more than 140 delegates — senior executives, government officials, multilateral development bank representatives, and technical specialists — worked through the full value chain: from the demand case for critical raw materials (CRM), through Türkiye's rare earth element (REE) ambitions at Beylikova, to the financing architecture, ESG standards, tailings engineering, and midstream processing infrastructure required to move Central Asian and Caucasus minerals to Western markets.



Day 1 asked why geological wealth does not automatically translate into investment. Day 2 answered: because the supply chains — the processing capacity, the certification infrastructure, the trade finance instruments — do not yet exist at the scale or speed the energy transition demands. Both days converged on the same conclusion voiced by Türkiye's General Directorate of Mining and Petroleum Affairs (MAPEG): the country's positioning is shifting from reserve holder to industrial bridge between Central Asian ore and European demand.

“ A jurisdiction that ranked 104th in global mining investment attractiveness a decade ago now sits in the global top ten — not because its geology changed, but because its framework did.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What This Report Covers

This report summarises the two days of MINEX Asia 2026 sessions, names every speaker and panellist who shaped the conversation, presents delegate participation statistics across country, industry sector and seniority, and sets out where the discussion moves next as the MINEX Forum 2026 series turns to Ireland and the UK.



DAY 1 · 24 JUNE 2026

The Demand Case, Türkiye's REE Ambition, and Who Is Funding the Future

Day 1 opened with the global frame: by 2040, mineral utilisation in renewable energy will increase four-fold under the IEA's Sustainable Development Scenario and six-fold under Net Zero, with lithium demand alone projected to surge 42-fold. İbrahim Halil Kırşan, Chairman of Mining Council at TOBB, opened with this global frame and did not soften it. Ozkan Ozkardes of the Investment and Finance Office of the Presidency made the investment case for Türkiye directly, and Ahmet Serkan Sarıtaş of Turk Gold Corp. brought an operator's perspective to the country's export ambitions. Ayhan Yüksel of the Chamber of Mining Engineers picked up the regulatory thread, tracing Türkiye's mining legislation from the 1954 Mining Law through seven amendments to the 2025 revisions. Session 1 was moderated by Busra Sofu of SLR Consulting, who returned to chair Session 4 later in the day.

4x

RENEWABLE ENERGY MINERAL UTILISATION

6x

MINERAL DEMAND UNDER NET ZERO

42x

PROJECTED LITHIUM DEMAND

TÜRKİYE'S REE AMBITION

Beylikova: From Ambition to Technical Specificity

Dr Hüseyin Çaldırak of TENMAK's Rare Earth Elements Research Institute presented the most forensically detailed case of the morning. Beylikova holds an estimated 694 million tonnes of resource at approximately 2% NTE grade — widely described as the world's second-largest REE reserve after China's Bayan Obo — with a planned facility targeting 570,000 tonnes of ore per year. At 10,000 tonnes of NTE annually, the deposit covers Türkiye's entire projected domestic wind-turbine mineral requirement and still exports, against a backdrop where China controls roughly 70% of world NTE production and over 90% of processing and magnet manufacturing capacity.

**PROJECT
BANKABILITY**

The Invisible Foundation: Data, Laboratories and Bankability

Abdullah Buhur of ARGETEST made what might have seemed a narrower technical argument — but it ran directly to the financing panel that followed. In modern mining, he argued, you must extract the data from the ore before you extract the ore itself: reliable end-to-end geochemical and metallurgical data is what makes CRIRSCO, JORC and UMREK-compliant reporting possible, and compliant reporting is what makes a project financeable. ARGETEST, founded in Ankara in 2012, has already opened its first international laboratory in Tashkent, with three further countries in active planning.

**REGIONAL
ARCHITECTURE**

The Tethyan Belt and the Investability Question

EBRD's Deputy Head of Türkiye, Mehmet Uvez, reframed the Middle Corridor as a platform for trade resilience and industrial value chains rather than simply a transport route, citing €24.4 billion in cumulative EBRD investment in Türkiye and a record €2.7 billion across 54 projects in 2025 alone. Céleste Laporte Talamon of the OECD presented the institution's latest work on critical raw materials policy frameworks across Central Asia. Simon Glancy of Strategic Solutions proposed a Central Asian CRM alliance built around processing hubs in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Dr Elena Safirova of the USGS assessed the region's mineral endowment, and Marina Yakhnis of the U.S. Embassy Ankara closed with an overview of U.S. critical minerals policy.

**DEVELOPMENT
FINANCE**

Financing: Institutions Present, Speed the Decisive Variable

The financing session, moderated by Han Ilhan of Catalis Strategies, opened with Scott Macpherson of Hogan Lovells International on protecting foreign investment from political risk. The panel brought together Philippe Bernard-Treille (EIB), Şebnem Alp (UK Export Finance), Çağrı Güven (KfW IPEX-Bank), Claire Alidenes (Asian Development Bank), Azamat Kasymbekov (EBRD), Guillermo Saniger Pare (IFC) and Stephanie Casey (BORG Capital Insights). Their conclusion was candid: the mandates and appetite exist, but speed, flexibility and first-loss willingness on frontier projects remain decisive.

**INDUSTRY AND
TALENT**

The Turkish Industrial Offer and the Workforce Question

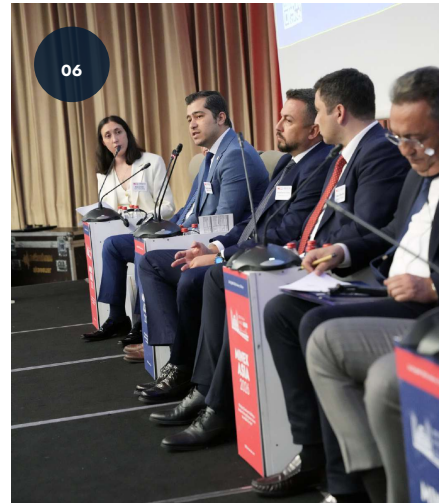
Sabri Karahan of DAMA Engineering traced four decades of Turkish mining advancement — from Atatürk's 1935 founding of MTA and Etibank, through the arrival of global majors following the 1985 Mining Law, to the UMREK reporting code and modern integrated processing plants. Şahin Özdemir, Chairman of MITTO Consultancy, followed with a case study in mining, environmental and engineering advisory services. Devrim Aksu closed the day with the question cutting across every projection of regional growth: who will build the workforce behind the critical minerals boom?

“ Global talent shortages, scarce digital mining skills and the absence of remote-operations workforce models remain unresolved. Women also remain a structurally underutilised reserve in mining talent pipelines across the region.



FORUM GALLERY · 24 JUNE 2026

Day 1 in Focus



DAY 1

Key Takeaways

01

The demand case is irrefutable — a 42-fold lithium surge and 6-fold rise in total mineral use for renewables by 2040 under Net Zero frame every investment decision in the room.

02

Beylikova's significance rests on arithmetic, not reserve size alone: Türkiye can cover domestic wind-energy mineral needs and become a net exporter to allies diversifying from China.

03

Accredited laboratory infrastructure is a prerequisite for bankability, and its regional arrival — including ARGETEST's new Tashkent laboratory — is an enabling condition, not a detail.

04

Turkish companies have a specific, underexploited opportunity as providers of engineering, processing technology, laboratory services and advisory capacity across the Central Asian CRM ecosystem.



DAY 1 · 24 JUNE 2026

Speakers & Panellists Featured

<p>İbrahim Halil Kırşan Chairman of Mining Council, TOBB – Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges</p>	<p>Ozkan Ozkardes Expert, Investment and Finance Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye</p>
<p>Ahmet Serkan Sarıtaş Deputy General Manager, Turk Gold Corp.</p>	<p>Ayhan Yüksel Chairman of the Board, Chamber of Mining Engineers</p>
<p>Abdullah Buhur Deputy General Manager, ARGETEST Mineral Processing, R&D and Analysis Services</p>	<p>Dr Hüseyin Çaldırak Group Manager & Senior Researcher, TENMAK Rare Earth Elements Research Institute</p>
<p>Busra Sofu Senior Mining Engineer – Advisory, SLR Consulting MODERATOR · SESSIONS 1 & 4</p>	<p>Mehmet Uvez Deputy Head of Türkiye and Head of Ankara Office, EBRD</p>
<p>Céleste Laporte Talamon Policy Analyst, Central Asia, OECD</p>	<p>Simon Glancy Managing Partner, Strategic Solutions</p>
<p>Dr Elena Safirova Economist and Country Specialist, United States Geological Survey</p>	<p>Marina Yakhnis Economic Officer, U.S. Embassy Ankara</p>

DAY 1

Speakers & Panellists • 13-24

<p>Han Ilhan Co-Founder and Managing Director, Catalis Strategies MODERATOR • SESSIONS 2, 3 & 9</p>	<p>Scott Macpherson Counsel, Hogan Lovells International</p>
<p>Philippe Bernard-Treille Head of EIB Representation to Türkiye, European Investment Bank</p>	<p>Şebnem Alp Country Head Türkiye, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, UK Export Finance</p>
<p>Çağrı Güven Vice President, KfW IPEX-Bank Türkiye Representative Office</p>	<p>Claire Alidenes Principal Investment Specialist, Asian Development Bank</p>
<p>Azamat Kasymbekov Principal Banker, Natural Resources, EBRD</p>	<p>Guillermo Saniger Pare Investment Officer, International Finance Corporation</p>
<p>Stephanie Casey Senior Consultant, BORG Capital Insights</p>	<p>Sabri Karahan General Manager, DAMA Engineering</p>
<p>Şahin Özdemir Chairman of the Board, MITTO Consultancy</p>	<p>Devrim Aksu Independent HR & Organisational Transformation Advisor</p>

DAY 2 · 25 JUNE 2026

Processing Capacity, Governance, and the Infrastructure Gap

If Day 1 asked why geological wealth does not automatically translate into investment, Day 2 answered with clarity: because critical minerals cannot reach global markets without the infrastructure to process them. Nevzat Başlar of MAPEG opened with a deliberate reframing — not Türkiye’s mineral wealth, but “Bridging Between Reserves and Refining.”

“ Türkiye positions itself as an industrial anchor converting Central Asian ore into finished products for Western supply chains.

MIDSTREAM

WHERE REGIONAL VALUE IS CREATED

ASSURANCE

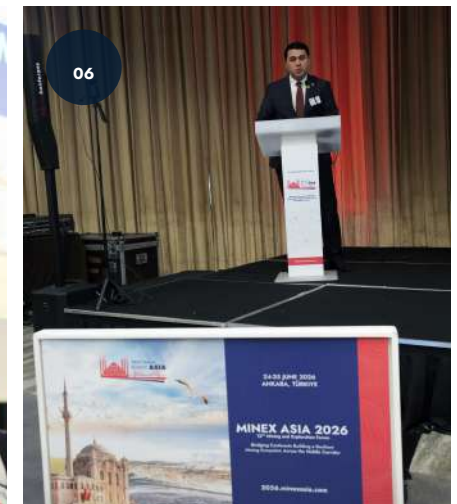
CERTIFICATION, ESG AND TAILINGS

SPEED

THE UNRESOLVED FINANCING VARIABLE

FORUM GALLERY · 25 JUNE 2026

Day 2 in Focus



DAY 2 · 25 JUNE 2026

Trade Finance, Uzbekistan's Pivot, and the Assurance Layer

Şebnem Alp of UKEF presented trade finance as the instrument that actually moves tonnes of processed material — shorter tenors, repeatable commodity flows and off-balance-sheet structures. Timur Khikmatullaev of Uzbekistan's Technological Metals Complex signalled that Tashkent now views Western offtake and technology partnerships as genuinely competitive with Chinese state finance. Dr Tomas Hrstka of SGS positioned advanced mineralogy and certification as a competitive accelerator rather than compliance overhead, while Artyom Geghamyan of the International Chamber of Mines of Armenia argued that Armenia's post-conflict position and location along the Middle Corridor create a genuine window to become a processing node rather than a source of raw exports. Veda Duman Kantarcioğlu of the Nuclear Engineers Society closed the morning by making explicit what was implicit in Beylikova: REE processing is a quasi-nuclear operation, requiring workforce training and regulatory partnerships aligned with IAEA standards.

RESPONSIBLE MINING

ESG as Competitive Advantage, Not Compliance Burden

Session 6, moderated by Zhanar Faizuldayeva of SLR Consulting, reframed responsible mining as a competitive filter: projects with robust environmental and social governance attract Western capital faster and move through permitting more quickly. Tunç Berkman of TBS Investment captured the session's argument in one line. Bilge Küçükaytan of TUMAD Mining Inc. followed with a practical walkthrough of the TUMAD sustainability standards now being adopted across Turkish operations.

OPERATIONAL ASSURANCE

Tailings, Water, and the Cost of Certification

Session 7 brought together the specialists who confront what stops more mining projects than geology ever has: Sam Safavian of SLR on risk-based safety reviews, Alistair White of Knight Piesold on resilience-based design, Iain Pickard of Strategia Worldwide presenting Tailings Protect — an integrated real-time monitoring and risk-management solution — and Azamat Abdulayev of SRK Kazakhstan closing with water management as competitive advantage in a region facing acute water stress. Modern tailings management is now central design, not bolt-on infrastructure.

MIDSTREAM
CAPACITY

Processing Momentum and the Closing Tension

Session 8, moderated by Ivan Livinskiy of SRK Kazakhstan, moved to the point where most Central Asian minerals still stop: processing. Umid Salokhutdinov of Future Metals Technopark presented the technopark model as Uzbekistan's answer to converting mined tungsten into higher-value alloys rather than competing on raw-material price. Emre Ahmet Kantarci of ExxonMobil brought the multinational perspective: the majors are securing feedstock for advanced materials manufacturing, not purchasing tonnes of raw ore at commodity prices. Burak Köse of ARGETEST closed with the data infrastructure argument — none of this works without laboratory certification at every step.

“ Mining’s greatest resource is no longer underground — it is public trust.

TUNÇ BERKMAN · TBS INVESTMENT

3-5 years

WESTERN PERMITTING AND FINANCING

18-24 months

CHINESE CAPITAL DEPLOYMENT

The closing panel — Céleste Laporte Talamon of the OECD, Zhanar Faizuldayeva of SLR and Ivan Livinskiy of SRK Kazakhstan, under Han İlhan's moderation — did not paper over the central unresolved tension.

DAY 2

Key Takeaways

01

Processing, not extraction, is where value creation happens — and the Middle Corridor does not yet have enough midstream capacity to absorb regional mineral output at scale.

02

Trade finance instruments, not mega-project lending, are the mechanism that will move tonnes of processed material along the corridor.

03

ESG and tailings standards are structural and non-negotiable for access to Western markets — not a compliance layer to be minimised.

04

The sovereign-scale decision that processing capacity is the strategic priority — not extraction speed alone — is the one still pending.



DAY 2 · 25 JUNE 2026

Speakers & Panellists Featured

<p>Céleste Laporte Talamon Policy Analyst, Central Asia, OECD MODERATOR · SESSION 5</p>	<p>Nevzat Başlar Mining Engineer – Underground Mining Specialist, MAPEG, Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources</p>
<p>Şebnem Alp Country Head Türkiye, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, UK Export Finance</p>	<p>Timur Khikmatullaev Special Envoy for Global Integration, Uzbekistan Technological Metals Complex</p>
<p>Dr Tomas Hrstka Sr. Manager, Business & Technology Development – NAM & Global, SGS</p>	<p>Artyom Geghamyan Executive Chairman, International Chamber of Mines of Armenia</p>
<p>Veda Duman Kantarcioğlu Nuclear Engineers Society</p>	<p>Zhanar Faizuldayeva Principal Environmental & Social Specialist, SLR Consulting MODERATOR · SESSIONS 6 & 7</p>
<p>Tunç Berkman Branding & Growth Partner, TBS Investment & Management</p>	<p>Bilge Küçükaytan Integrated Management Systems & Sustainability Manager, TUMAD Mining Inc.</p>

DAY 2

Speakers & Panellists • 11-19

<p>Sam (Meysam) Safavian Technical Director – Geotechnics, Dams and Tailings, SLR Consulting</p>	<p>Alistair White Civil Engineer, Knight Piésold</p>
<p>Iain Pickard Managing Partner, Strategia Worldwide</p>	<p>Azamat Abdulayev Consultant (Sustainability), SRK Consulting KZ</p>
<p>Ivan Livinskiy Principal Geotechnical Consultant, SRK Consulting Kazakhstan MODERATOR • SESSION 8</p>	<p>Umid Salokhutdinov Deputy Director, TMK's Future Metals Technopark</p>
<p>Ahmet Kantarcı Distributor Business Consultant, Mobil EAME (ExxonMobil)</p>	<p>Burak Köse Deputy General Manager, Project, Mineral Processing and R&D, ARGETEST</p>
<p>Han Ilhan Co-Founder and Managing Director, Catalis Strategies MODERATOR • SESSION 9</p>	

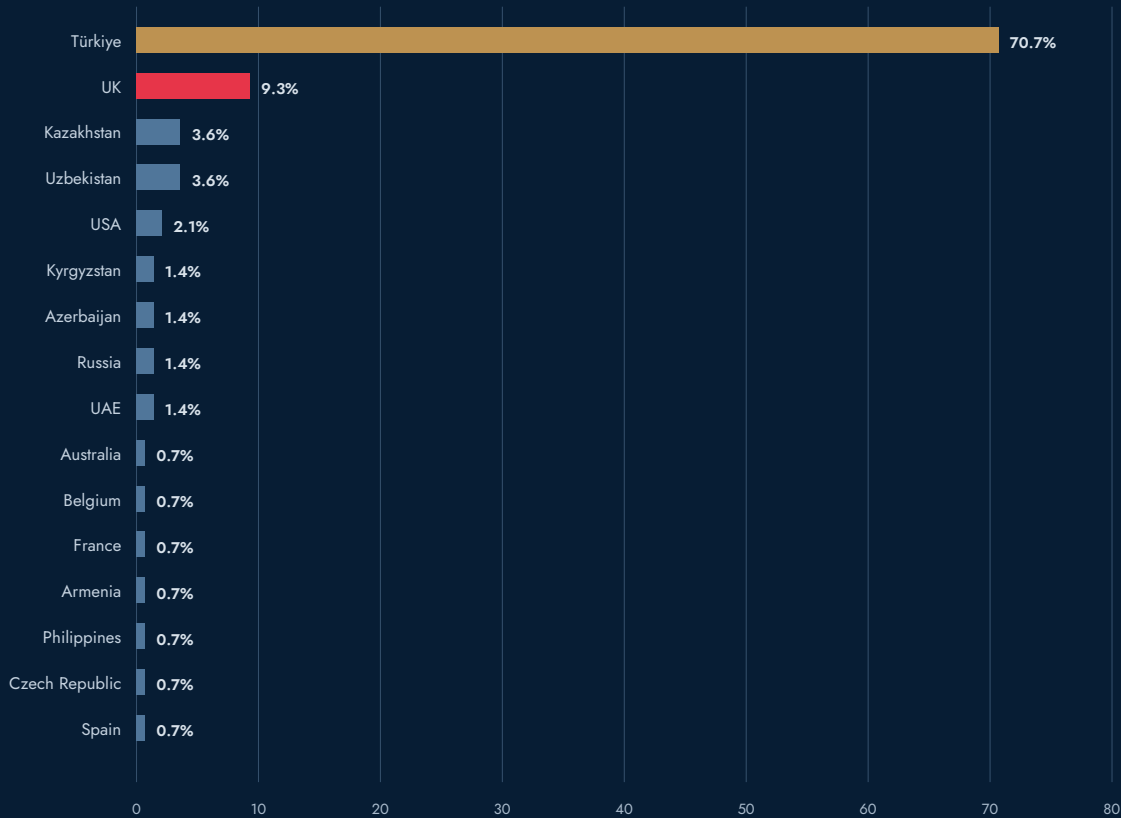
PARTICIPATION

Who Was in the Room

MINEX Asia 2026 convened a senior, cross-sector delegation spanning government, multilateral development finance, engineering and technical services, and mining and exploration companies from across the Middle Corridor and beyond.



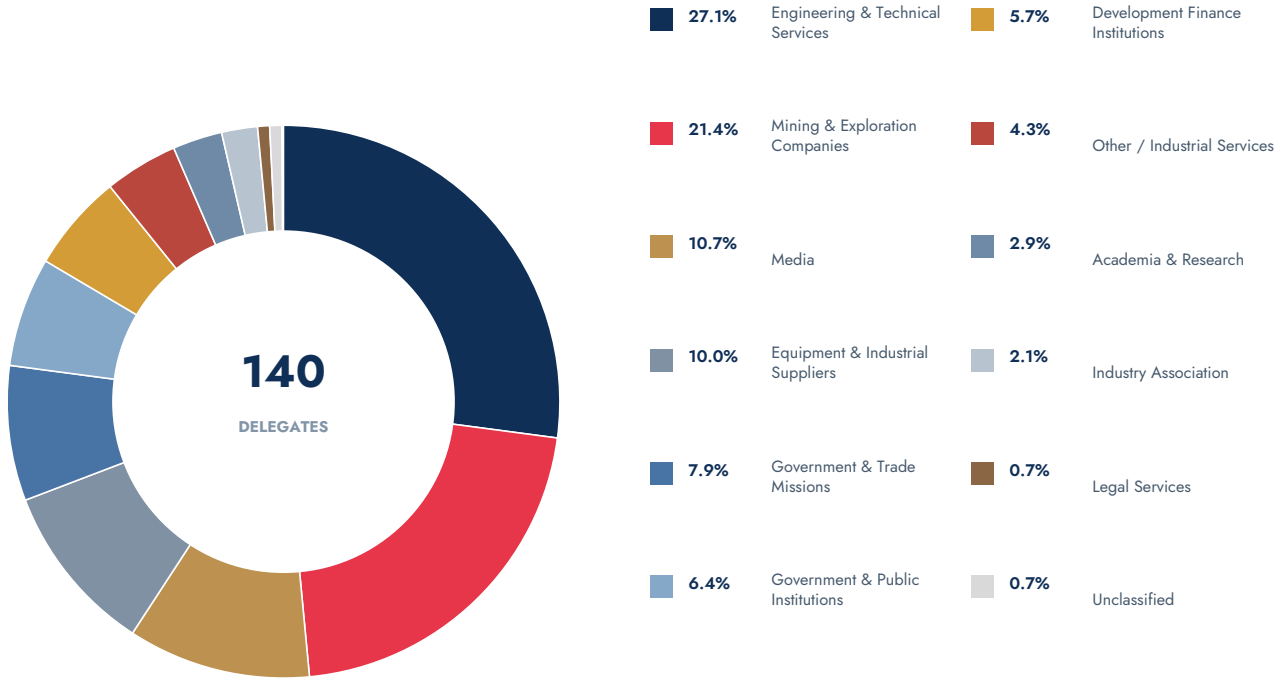
DELEGATES BY COUNTRY (% OF TOTAL)



Türkiye hosted the largest domestic contingent as venue country, with the United Kingdom the largest international delegation, followed by Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

PARTICIPATION PROFILE

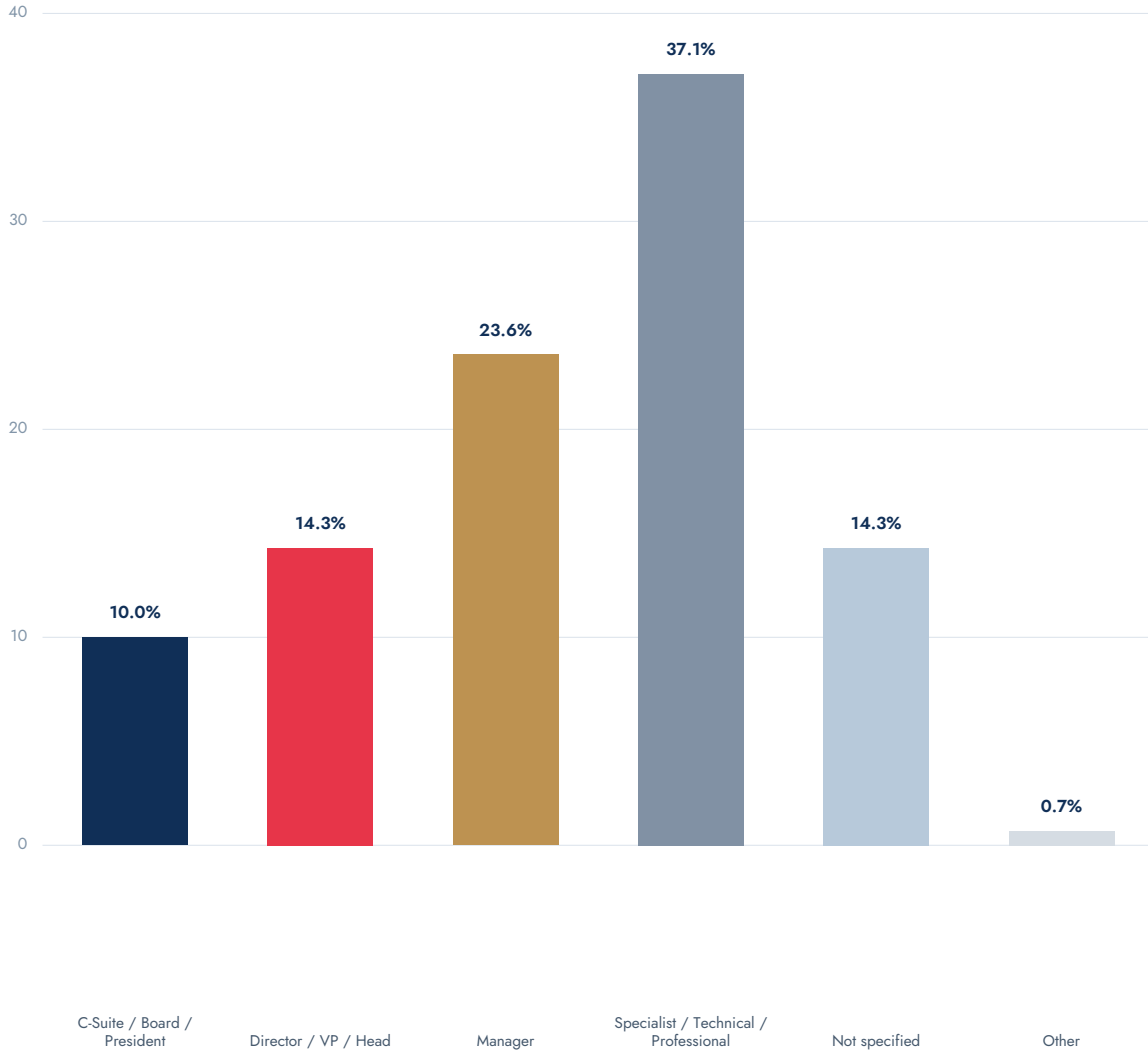
Delegates by Industry Sector



Engineering, consulting and technical services firms - laboratories, geotechnical and environmental consultancies, and testing houses - formed the single largest professional group, followed closely by operating mining and exploration companies.

PARTICIPATION PROFILE

Delegates by Seniority



More than a third of delegates held C-suite, board, director or head-of-department roles, underscoring the Forum's positioning as a decision-maker convening rather than a general-attendance conference.

WHAT COMES NEXT

The Conversation Continues

MINEX Asia 2026 sharpened the questions facing the Middle Corridor's critical minerals ecosystem without resolving them. Financing architecture, midstream processing capacity, ESG certification and workforce development remain the decisive variables for whether geological endowment converts into industrial reality on a timeline that matches the energy transition.

The MINEX Forum series continues this conversation in Europe later this year, extending the analysis of critical raw material supply chains, the Middle Corridor and Western strategic interests to a new audience and geography.

ORDER FORUM MATERIALS

Recordings, presentations and photography

Full session recordings, speaker presentations and event photography from the 12th MINEX Asia Forum are available online.

2026.minexasia.com/order-forum-materials

UPCOMING EVENTS



10th MINEX Europe Forum

28-30 October 2026

Trim, County Meath, Ireland

2026.minexeurope.com/



14th MINEX Eurasia Conference

30 November 2026

London, United Kingdom

2026.minexeurasia.com/