

# 10 Years of Success Stories

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WBIF was jointly launched in 2009 by the European Commission (DG ELARG now DG NEAR), International Financial Institutions and Bilateral Donors to enhance harmonization and cooperation in investments for the socio-economic development of the Western Balkans.

Together with the **Western Balkan beneficiaries**, WBIF forms a unique partnership, defining priorities and support packages needed for strategic investments and institutional reform. WBIF contributes to the European perspective of the Western Balkans by supporting not only investment projects improving competitiveness and growth, but also by reinforcing regional cooperation and connectivity. Eligible sectors include digital infrastructure, energy, environment, social, transport, and private sector development through WBIF's dedicated initiative **EDIF** (Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility). This cooperation is only possible due to the close and coordinated interaction among the **European Commission, International Financial Institutions and Bilateral Donors**, together with the **Western Balkan beneficiaries**.

This year marks **WBIF's 10th anniversary**, and during the past decade over €1 billion in grants were allocated for preparation and implementation of infrastructure projects. Starting with 2015, around **€200 million in investment grant per annum** is allocated to the **Western Balkan beneficiaries for the implementation of Connectivity Agenda**. The EU grant channelled through the WBIF since inception, will support investment projects with an estimated total investment cost of **€18 billion**. The successful implementation of the EU grant have resulted in many tangible and intangible gains, including but not limited to: significantly **reduced travel times; increased transport safety; reduced emissions; improved quality of life and urban environment; better learning conditions; and increased competitiveness**, etc.

Besides physical infrastructure, these investments will reduce existing barriers making the horizon of European accession visible and obtainable.

### Success Stories

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Benefits related to infrastructure will include:

- **Construction or rehabilitation of 800 km of roads;**
- Refurbishment or construction of approximately **1,000 km of railway** lines;
- **40 MW of new electricity** generation from **renewable energy resources** (sufficient to supply the energy needs of a medium sized city);
- Access to clean drinking water for around **1 million people;**
- Refurbishment and construction of **24 healthcare and over 80 educational facilities.**