



Digital Connectivity

WBIF Project Financers' Group– 26/04/2018
Guidelines for Digital Infrastructure

David Ringrose (DG CONNECT)

David.Ringrose@ec.europa.eu



Need for better Broadband Connectivity in WB6

- enable a digital transformation
- need to connect public administration, schools, health institutions
- precondition for industry development and competitiveness
- Bridge the gap with EU28 and prepare for 'EU's Gigabit Society'

Western Balkans

*Fixed broadband
penetration rate: 9-20%*

*Broadband speed:
< 10Mbps (BA/ME/AL)
10-30 Mbps (RS/XK)*

*Rural-Urban divide:
High (white zones)*

*Technology: reliance on
cable/copper infrastructure*

EU average

*Fixed broadband
penetration rate: 32.7%*

*Broadband speed:
> 30Mbps (75.1%)
Target: 100Mbps, to
gigabit (2025)*

*Rural-Urban divide:
Low (focus on white zones)*

*Technology: increasing
transition to fiber*



Need for blended support under WBIF

Detailed mapping

- Understand situation and needs
- Focus on 'White zones' – rural areas (on municipal level)

Explore possible models of investment

- Identify the right investment mechanisms
- Aim for best competition / involvement of private sector
- Focus on making projects 'bankable'

Prepare broadband development projects

- Identify the right projects
- Bring projects in line with EU2025-targets
... and future-proof technology
- Focus on right investment mechanisms
- Infrastructure-sharing projects



Preparation of a project pipeline

June : decision on Albania's TA application

- CONNECT: bring project in line with EU's strategy
- WBIF TA (+ investment grant) to secure the right setting and accents
+ loan/blended support to make projects 'bankable'
- Last step before large-scale infrastructure investments (2020-2025)
- Pilot-project for similar projects in other countries

Dec. : decision on other BB devpt projects

- Similar TA studies in other WB countries. Commitment needed for investment support to these projects
- Communication to NIPACs and country experts (RCC)