Digital Infrastructure

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Need for better Digital Infrastructure in WB6

- Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans:
    - Ensure that the Western Balkan region is benefitting from the digital transformation and adequately prepared to join the EU

    - Five areas of action:
        - Lowering the cost of roaming
        - **The deployment of broadband**
        - The development of eGovernment, eProcurement, eHealth, & digital skills
        - Capacity building in digital trust and security, in parallel to efforts to enhance digitalisation of industries
        - The adoption, implementation and enforcement of the acquis

    - Deployment of broadband is a key element in this action document

    - DA for the WB is endorsed by the six Western Balkan leaders at the Sofia Summit and will be published on 25 June 2018

Deployment of digital (broadband) infrastructure

- Need for better Broadband Connectivity in WB6:
  - enable a digital transformation
    - e-government, e-health, e-procurement
    - precondition for industry development and competitiveness
    - but also day-to-day household applications

  - ensure that the development of broadband infrastructure is future-proof and focused towards the most pressing needs
    - achieve a higher penetration rate
    - address low broadband speeds
    - reduce the rural-urban divide
    - And connect schools, governments and health institutions

Deployment of digital (broadband) infrastructure

- Points of attention – next to infrastructure:

  - Bridge the gap with EU28 and prepare for 'EU's Gigabit Society'
    - "all European households, rural or urban, should have access to networks offering a download speed of at least 100 Mbps, which can be upgraded"
    - "all schools, transport hubs and main providers of public services as well as digitally intensive enterprises should have access to internet connections with download/upload speeds of 1 Gigabit of data per second"

  - Multi-stakeholder approach for broadband development
    - Broader focus than operators , investors and governments
    - Demand-side actions should be incorporated by an analysis of socio-economic indicators (e.g. KODE project – World Bank)
    - 'Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans' puts forward multiple actions

  - Link digital infrastructure 'EU acquis' alignment
    - 'Broadband Cost Reduction Directive'
    - Support mechanisms: 'BCO-network' / 'TAIEX-assistance'

Support under WBIF for deployment of digital (broadband infrastructure)

- Regional and cross-border understanding
  - Detailed mapping: understand situation and needs
  - E.g. Western Balkans Digital Highway

- National strategies
  - EU support mechanisms: 'BCO-network' / 'TAIEX-assistance'

- Prepare development projects
  - WBIF TA support 2018-2020 (e.g. Albania)
  - Focus on 'white zones' – rural areas
    … and connecting schools, governments and health institutions (>100 Mbps)
    - Identify the right investment mechanisms
    - Aim for best competition / involvement of private sector
    - Bring projects in line with EU2025-targets
      … and future-proof technology

- Infrastructure investments
  - WBIF blended support 2020 onwards

Zoom-in: where we are...

Albania

- Regional broadband development

- TA under WBIF approved

- Feasibility study and Cost-based analysis for planning investments from 2020 onwards

fYRoM

- Regional broadband development

- EBRD working together to apply for TA under WBIF

Kosovo*

- KODE-project (Worldbank)

- Digital infrastructure component coupled with supply-side measures

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Finalisation of strategic framework on broadband

- Ready for TA WBIF – regional broadband development?

Serbia/Montenegro

- More developed broadband infrasctructure

- Focus on whitezones and upgrading to fibre-based network

Multi-country projects

- Western Balkans Digital Highway

- NOBAL NGA Network

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