



## Western Balkans: An Economic and Investment Plan to Support the Economic Recovery and Convergence

The European Commission adopted a comprehensive Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans, which aims to spur the long-term economic recovery of the region, support a green and digital transition, foster regional integration and convergence with the European Union.

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## 23<sup>rd</sup> WBIF Steering Committee Meeting 10-11 December 2020

The Western Balkans Investment Framework held its 23<sup>rd</sup> WBIF Steering Committee Meeting on 10 and 11 December. Due to the COVID-19 situation, this meeting was held virtually with over 200 participants from the Western Balkans beneficiaries, the European Commission and Financial Institutions (Afd, CEB, EBRD, EIB, EIF, KfW, WBG).

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## Feature Story: Corridor Vc in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Road of Europe

Over 1.5 million people, living along the Corridor Vc (CVC), connecting the north and the south of Bosnia and Herzegovina, witness their accessibility being improved thanks to the contribution of the Western Balkans Investment Framework into this transport pillar. The CVC is the first major motorway and the largest ever infrastructure project in the country's history.

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## Investment Projects



## Completion of the EU-Supported Modernisation of Water and Wastewater Network in Subotica, Serbia

Serbia's northern city of Subotica is now equipped with a modern water and wastewater network and facilities thanks to a decade-long engineering endeavour supported through a grant by the European Union and the Bilateral Donors under the WBIF and a loan by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

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## EBRD Loan Signed for 2018 Connectivity Project 'Peace Highway' Connecting Niš and Pristina

The 'Peace Highway', one of the flagship projects under the EU's Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans, comes closer to construction thanks to a loan of up to €85 million from the EBRD signed on 25 November.

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## Technical Assistance



### EU-Funded Technical Assistance for Two Functional Waste Areas in Albania

The virtual kick-off meeting for two WBIF projects in Albania was held on 16 September, attended by the representatives of the EU Delegation, the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Germany's KfW Development Bank, Ministry of Infrastructure & Energy, Ministry of Finance & Economy and the National Agency of Sewerage, Water Supply & Waste Infrastructure.

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### Completion of the EU-Funded Institutional Support for Idrizovo Prison Complex in North Macedonia

The EU-funded technical assistance for the design of several new buildings to further develop the Idrizovo Prison complex in North Macedonia was completed in October 2020. This followed on from the completion of the institutional support provided to the country's largest penitentiary institution which finished in September 2019.

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### EU-Funded Feasibility Study for Regional Broadband Infrastructure Development in Albania

The EU-funded technical assistance project to identify the needs, options, and financing structure of the construction of next generation broadband networks in Albania, was completed in July 2020. As a result, the Feasibility Study and Cost-Benefit Analysis have been developed for the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy in the scope of the Government's National Broadband plan 2013-2020.

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## International Financial Institutions



### Video: Start of Works on the Wastewater Treatment Plant Podgorica

The new WWT plant will ensure adequate collection and treatment of the wastewater generated by the city of Podgorica, now serviced by a 1970s plant, which no longer meets the required level of treatment and demand. The project benefits from a WBIF grant, mobilised through Bilateral Donors' contributions, a KfW loan and a contribution from Montenegro.

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### Video: Regional Housing Programme in 2020

Wrapping up this challenging year is the perfect opportunity to recognise the momentous impact that the Council of Europe Development Bank's (CEB) supported project the Regional Housing Programme has had upon the refugees' and internally displaced people's lives throughout the Western Balkans.

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### Article: Albanian Shoe Producer Takes Bold Steps to Adapt to Coronavirus

At EFA Solution and its sister company ProDyn Albania, a solid client base and reliable service have helped them to stay strong during the crisis. With support from the EBRD, Italy and the European Union (EU), the company had robust foundations and efficient management systems in place, so it could swiftly adapt to the new reality.

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### Article: With EU Investment Serbian Justice Gets More Efficient

The Palace of Justice and the Court Building in Kataniceva Street in Belgrade have been fully reconstructed after 40 years. The EU financing helps create improved working conditions and reduced operational costs for judicial authorities and administrators, thus improving the overall service for the clients.

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## WBIF Videos



### Video: Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans

In October the European Commission adopted the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans with the main objective to spur the long-term economic recovery of the region and foster regional economic integration. The plan identifies ten investment flagship initiatives in key areas for economic development.

[Watch here >>](#)



### Video: Road Corridor Vc in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Corridor Vc, one of the Indicative extensions of the TEN-T Mediterranean Corridor to the Western Balkans, is the most ambitious investment programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Despite the disruptions brought by the pandemic, the construction works on all 11 motorway sections, supported by more than €200 million in EU grants are ongoing, with the safety measures introduced.

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## WBIF Publications



### Brochure on EU Connectivity Agenda for the Western Balkans

DG NEAR produced brochure on the EU Connectivity Agenda for the Western Balkans including investment projects selected for EU funding in 2020 as presented at the Western Balkans Summit in Sofia on 10 November 2020.

[Download here >>](#)



### WBIF Country Summaries 2020

In November, a new set of factsheets on WBIF activities in the beneficiaries was developed, with more emphasis on the IPA II funds and the project examples for the investments in the public and private sector.

[Download here >>](#)

## Good Luck in Your Future Endeavours!



### Colin Wolfe

Head of the Western Balkans Regional Cooperation Unit, DG NEAR, European Commission.

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### Massimo Cingolani

Managerial Adviser in the Operations Directorate of European Investment Bank (EIB)

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