



Co-funded by
the European Union



Western Balkans Investment Framework Annual Progress Report 2023

Contents

Introduction	3
1 WBIF in 2023: main achievements of the year	4
1.1. <i>EIP implementation in full swing</i>	4
1.2. <i>Advances in implementing Connectivity Agenda and other investments</i>	5
1.3. <i>New Growth Plan for the Western Balkans</i>	6
2 EIP flagship investments implementation	8
2.1. <i>Blending operations</i>	8
2.2.1 Sustainable transport.....	13
2.2.2 Clean energy	20
2.2.3 Environment & climate	26
2.2.4 Digital future.....	30
2.2.5 Human capital.....	31
2.2.6 Private sector	33
2.2. <i>Western Balkans Guarantee Facility</i>	36
3. Overview of WBIF contributions	38
3.1. <i>European Commission contribution</i>	38
3.2. <i>Bilateral Donor contribution</i>	38
3.3. <i>Joint Fund 2023 & WBIF leverage</i>	38
Annex 1: Visibility events 2023	41
Abbreviations	43

This publication was funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the Western Balkans Investment Framework and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

© Western Balkans Investment Framework, 2024

Reproduction is authorised, provided that the source is acknowledged.

Introduction

The WBIF is a joint financial platform launched in 2009 that brings together the European Commission, financial organisations, EU Member States, and Norway to enhance cooperation in public and private sector investments. It supports the region's socio-economic development and contributes to the European integration of the Western Balkans.

Alongside being the main financial vehicle for implementing the EU's Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans (EIP), the WBIF will also play an essential role in the implementation of the new Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans, which aims to boost socio-economic convergence with the EU and accelerate the accession process.

This **Annual WBIF Progress Report** is prepared by the European Commission and highlights the main achievements of WBIF operations in implementing the EIP in 2023. It also provides a financial overview of used funds based on aggregated data provided by financial institutions, the Annual WBIF Monitoring Report 2023, the Joint Fund Financial Statements for 2023, and regular reports provided for the various funds and by programme managers responsible for implementation.

This Report is structured as follows:

- **Section 1** summarises the WBIF's main progress in 2023, such as its contribution to the implementation of the EIP, the progress achieved on other related investments, and the EU's new Growth Plan for the Western Balkans;
- **Section 2** presents the progress achieved in the implementation of the six EIP priority areas, both through blending and guarantee instruments under WBIF;
- **Section 3** provides an overview of the WBIF financial figures for 2023.

Once approved by the 7th WBIF Strategic Board, this report will be published on the www.wbif.eu website.

1 WBIF in 2023: main achievements of the year

Since the adoption of the EU's Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans 2021-2027 (EIP) in October 2020, the WBIF members have been active in identifying investments in support of the public and private sectors that contribute to stepping up the region's socio-economic convergence and advancement on the path towards the EU.

In 2023, the WBIF members furthered the implementation of the EIP by endorsing new investment flagships in the public and private sectors. In addition, the WBIF advanced on the Connectivity Agenda and Bilateral Donor co-funded investments.

On 8 November 2023, the European Commission adopted a new Growth Plan for the Western Balkans to bring the Western Balkan partners closer to the EU by offering some of the benefits of EU membership to the region in advance of accession, boosting economic growth and accelerating socio-economic convergence. Alongside being the primary financial vehicle for implementing the EIP, the WBIF will also play an essential role in implementing the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans (RGF). The RGF has a financial envelope of €6 billion, including €2 billion in grants and €4 billion in highly concessional loans. At least half of the total amount (grants and loans) will go to investments through the WBIF.

1.1. EIP implementation in full swing

As part of the Global Gateway¹, the EIP aims to spur long-term recovery, accelerate a green and digital transition, and foster regional cooperation and convergence with the EU. Adopted by the European Commission in October 2020, the Plan is implemented through a package of €9 billion of EU grants and the Western Balkans Guarantee Facility, which is expected to attract up to €20 billion in investments.

In 2023, WBIF progressed towards advancing the European perspective of the Western Balkans. The WBIF Operational Board endorsed four calls for proposals for public and private sector blending in Oslo (30 June 2023) and Brussels (8 December 2023), which resulted in the funding of 19 new EIP flagship investments with €784 million in grants for €2.8 billion investments and over €11 million in technical assistance.

Furthermore, 22 guarantees will benefit from up to €985 million in EU guarantee coverage. These guarantees aim to support sustainable and inclusive economic development in the Western Balkans by strengthening public and private infrastructure, fostering energy efficiency and renewable energy, promoting sustainable agriculture, and supporting the digital economy.

Four years after its adoption, the EIP is progressing in achieving the goals set in the Communication COM(2020) 641. The EU committed €5.4 billion in grants to mobilise up to €17.5 billion in investments². This includes funding 68 flagship projects through WBIF, actions under bilateral and multi-country IPA, and IPARD agriculture support measures. The WBIF contributed to the EIP with €3 billion of EU and Bilateral Donor grants approved for €10.5 billion in investments thus far.

The 68 EIP flagship projects co-funded through the WBIF deliver the Global Gateway in the Western

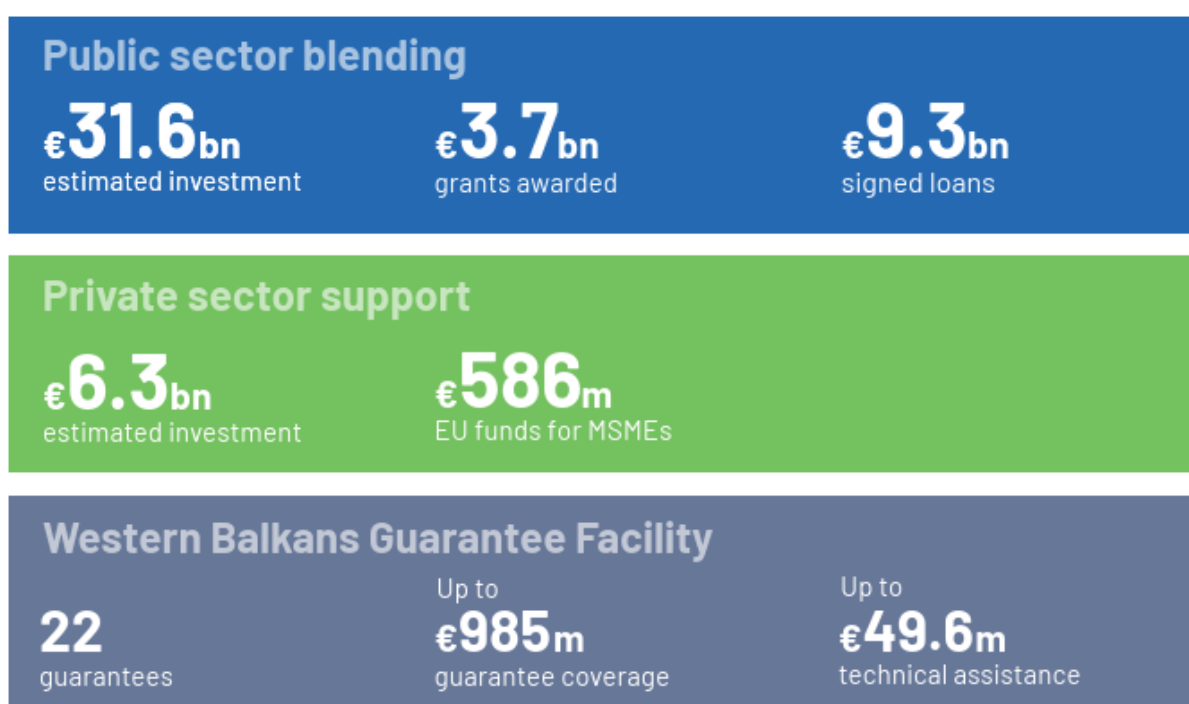
¹https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/stronger-europe-world/global-gateway_en

² These figures cover the period 2020-July 2024, when the last WBIF Operational Board met.

Balkans. These projects boost energy and transport connectivity across the region and with the EU, increase the region’s renewable energy generation capacity, reduce energy consumption in the building sector, improve water and waste management, build new education and health facilities, and strengthen the private sector’s competitiveness.

In terms of implementation on the ground, following the completion of the first EIP investment in 2022, the Oslomej 1 solar power plant in North Macedonia, the construction works advanced on the Kriva Palanka – Stracin expressway in North Macedonia and commenced on three other projects in 2023: Medakovo – Ozimice motorway subsection of Corridor Vc in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the first school in Podgorica under the education infrastructure improvement project in Montenegro, and Kostolac wind farm in Serbia. Furthermore, the Safe and Sustainable Transport Programme³ was officially launched in December.

Figure 1.1: WBIF at a glance 2008-2023



1.2. Advances in implementing Connectivity Agenda and other investments

In 2023, actions were taken to accelerate the implementation of investment projects approved under the EU’s Connectivity Agenda⁴ and those co-financed by the Bilateral Donors in 2017-2020. These led to the following principal tangible results in this reporting period:

- Completion of three Connectivity Agenda investments:
 - The first 5.5 km-long Merošina – Merošina 1 subsection of the Peace Highway in Serbia was opened to traffic in July;
 - The 13.2 km-long Kriva Palanka – Dever Bair (border with Bulgaria) road in North Macedonia was completed in December;

³ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/eca/brief/safe-and-sustainable-transport-program-in-the-western-balkans>

⁴ Additional information on the Connectivity Agenda and related projects can be found on the WBIF website in the library at <https://wbif.eu/library/connectivity-agenda>

- Construction of the Ponirak – Vraca/Zenica Tunnel motorway subsection of Corridor Vc in Bosnia and Herzegovina was completed in September, while the tunnel electro-mechanical equipment will be installed in 2024.
- Progress of construction works on nine Connectivity Agenda and Bilateral Donor co-funded investments:
 - Durrës – Tirana railway line in Albania;
 - Poprikuše – Nemila and Rudanka – Putnikovo Brdo 2 Tunnel motorway sections of Corridor Vc in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
 - Modernisation of the Brčko port in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
 - Water supply systems in Gradačac and the Jajce municipality in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
 - Mitrovicë/Mitrovica – border with North Macedonia railway sections in Kosovo*;
 - Beljakovce – Kriva Palanka railway section in North Macedonia.
- Start of construction on four Connectivity Agenda and Bilateral Donor co-funded investments:
 - Albania's grid section of the power interconnection with North Macedonia;
 - Putnikovo Brdo 2 Tunnel – Medakovo motorway section of Corridor Vc in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
 - Sicevo – Dimitrovgrad railway section of Corridor Xc in Serbia;
 - Rehabilitation of physical education facilities in 10 primary and secondary schools in North Macedonia.
- Launch of procurement of works on six Connectivity Agenda and Bilateral Donor co-funded investments:
 - Bukočani – Kičevo and Blace – Skopje motorway sections in North Macedonia;
 - North Macedonia – Greece gas interconnection;
 - Obrenovac – Bajina Bašta grid section of the Trans-Balkan Electricity Corridor in Serbia;
 - Gjilan wastewater treatment plant and sewerage network extension in Kosovo;
 - Bijelo Polje wastewater treatment plant in Montenegro.

1.3. New Growth Plan for the Western Balkans

On 8 November 2023, the European Commission adopted a new Growth Plan for the Western Balkans to bring the Western Balkan partners closer to the EU by offering some of the benefits of EU membership to the region in advance of accession, boosting economic growth and accelerating socio-economic convergence⁵.

The new Growth Plan for the Western Balkans is structured on four pillars:

⁵ Communication COM(2023) 691 final

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.



Enhancing economic integration with the **European Union's Single Market**



Boosting **economic integration within the Western Balkans through the Common Regional Market**



Accelerating fundamental reforms



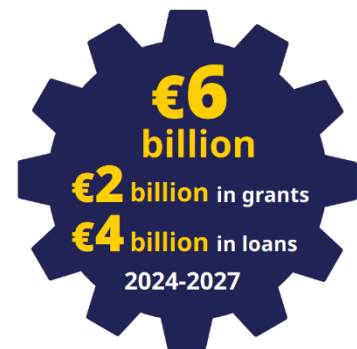
Increased financial assistance

The Growth Plan will be implemented through a new €6 billion financing instrument, the Reform and Growth Facility (RGF) for the Western Balkans in the period of 2024-2027. The Facility was published in the EU Official Journal on 24 May 2024.

At least half the total amount (including the grant component) will finance priority infrastructure investments in transport, energy, digital, and human capital development through the WBIF.

The Western Balkan partners were invited to submit individual Reform Agendas, laying out the socio-economic and fundamental reforms they would undertake to spur growth and convergence under the Growth Plan. Moreover, Serbia and Kosovo need to engage constructively in the EU-facilitated Dialogue on normalisation of relations, led by the High Representative, as a necessary precondition.

The release of funds of the RGF will depend on the progress in implementing the measures committed to in the Reform Agendas, which Western Balkans partners were asked to prepare to lay out the socio-economic and fundamental reforms they would undertake to spur growth and convergence under the Growth Plan. Payments will be made twice a year, based on requests submitted by the Western Balkan partners and following verification by the European Commission of the achievement of the relevant payment conditions, preconditions, and general conditions, such as macro-financial stability, sound public financial management, transparency, and budget oversight.



2 EIP flagship investments implementation

2.1. Blending operations

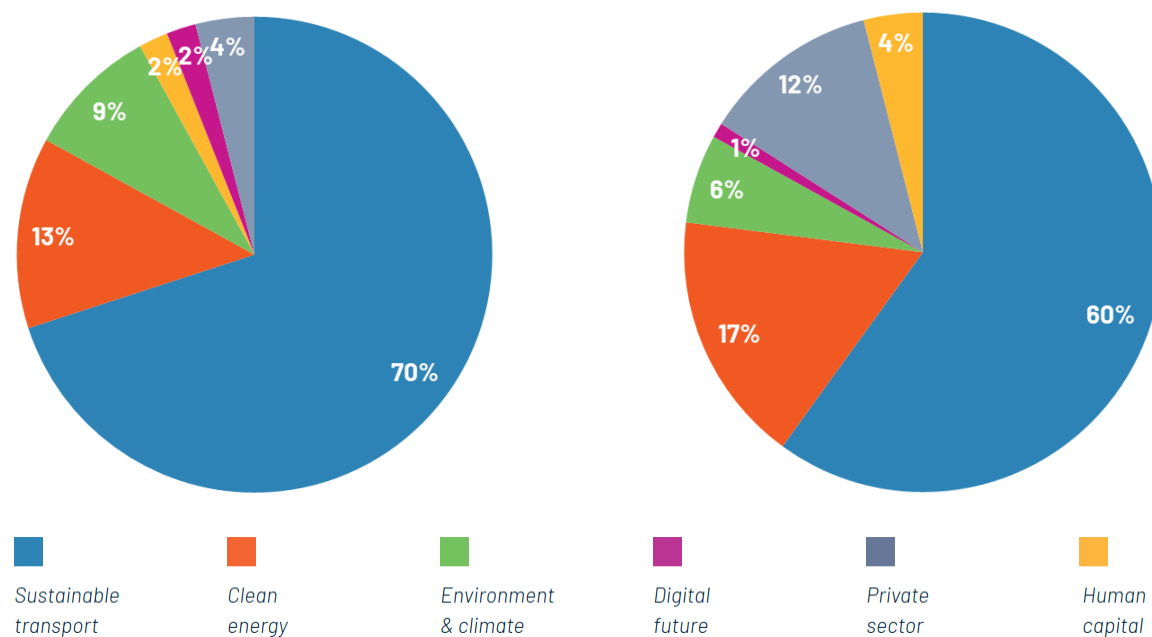
Four calls for proposals for public and private sector blending were completed in 2023. Through these calls, the WBIF Operational Board endorsed 19 EIP flagship investments worth €784 million in grants for an estimated investment volume of €2.8 billion.

Since the start of the EIP's implementation in 2020, the WBIF Operational Board endorsed 68 flagship investments for €10.5 billion in rail, road, and water transport, renewable energy, energy efficiency and power interconnections, waste and water management, education and health facilities, digital infrastructures, and private sector development.⁶ The European Union and the WBIF Bilateral Donors contribute €3 billion in grants to these investments (99% EU and 1% Bilateral Donors).

Figure 2.1: EIP flagship investments per area of intervention 2020-2024

EU and Bilateral Donors grants: €3 billion

Estimated investments: €10.5 billion



⁶ It includes the EIP flagship investments endorsed by the 6th WBIF Operational Board on 2 July 2024 and by written procedure on 5 April 2024.

The principal tangible expected results of these flagship investments are:



Sustainable transport

- 575 km of new and upgraded railway lines
- 169 km of motorway built
- 45 km of waterway upgraded, ensuring safe navigation on the Rhine-Danube Corridor in the region



Clean energy

- 1,920 MW renewable energy generation capacity installed
- 123 km of transmission lines built
- Over 490 GWh of energy saved annually as a result of energy efficiency measures
- 205,000 smart meters installed in Kraljevo, Čačak and Niš in Serbia



Environment & climate

- 1.4 million people have access to improved drinking water and sanitation
- 1.1 million people benefit from improved waste collection and disposal services
- 183,400 m³/day additional wastewater treatment capacity



Digital future

- 368,000 people with access to broadband internet in rural areas in Serbia
- 615 schools equipped with smart labs for over 198,000 students annually in Albania



Human capital

- Better schools for 9,500 students per year in Montenegro
- Innovative learning environments for 15,000 higher education students per year in Serbia
- New building constructed and equipped at University Children's Hospital in Belgrade



Private sector

- 4,700 MSMEs supported
- 6,200 jobs supported and/or sustained

The map below shows the EIP flagship investments endorsed as of 2 July 2024.

EIP flagship investments



Sustainable transport



- 1 Rhine-Danube Corridor: Demining the Right Bank of the Sava River
- 2 Corridor Vc: Johovac - Vukosavlje Motorway Section
- 3 Corridor Vc: Šamac - Rječica Railway Section
- 4 Corridor Vc: Medakovo - Ozimice Motorway Subsection
- 5 Corridor Vc: Ozimice - Poprikuše Motorway Subsection
- 6 Corridor Vc: Mostar North - Mostar South Motorway Subsection
- 7 Corridor Vc: Mostar South - Kvanj Tunnel Motorway Subsection
- 8 Corridor Vc: Kvanj Tunnel - Buna Motorway Subsection
- 9 Rhine-Danube Corridor: Removal of Sunken WWII German Vessels from the Danube, Prahovo Sector
- 10 Corridor X: Belgrade Centre - Velika Plana Railway Section
- 11 Corridor X: Velika Plana - Paraćin Railway Section
- 12 Corridor X: Paraćin - Međurovo Railway Section
- 13 Corridor X: Stalać - Đunis Railway Section
- 14 Corridor Xc: Niš Rail Bypass
- 15 Peace Highway: Pristina - Merdare Section
- 16 Bar - Vrbnica Railway Line
- 17 Bar - Vrbnica Railway Line, Bar - Golubovci Section
- 18 Albania - Montenegro Rail Interconnection: Vorë - Hani i Hotit Section
- 19 Blue Highway: Tirana Bypass
- 20 Corridor VIII: Durrës - Rogožhinë Railway Section
- 21 Corridor VIII: Kriva Palanka - Border with Bulgaria Railway Section
- 22 Corridor VIII: Cut-Slopes Stabilisation on Kriva Palanka - Stracin Express Road Section
- 23 Safe and Sustainable Transport Programme

Clean energy



- 1 Kostolac Wind Farm
- 2 Advanced System for Remote Meter Reading
- 3 Trans-Balkan Electricity Corridor: Serbia - Montenegro - Bosnia and Herzegovina 400kV Interconnection
- 4 Rehabilitation of Bistrica Hydropower Plant
- 5 Vlačić Wind Power Plant
- 6 Poklečani Wind Farm
- 7 Rehabilitation of Čapljina Pump Storage Hydropower Plant
- 8 Reconstruction of Vlasina Hydropower Plant
- 9 Solar4Kosovo: Photovoltaic Plant
- 10 Solar4Kosovo II: Solar District Heating for Pristina
- 11 Rehabilitation of Fierza Hydropower Plant
- 12 Vau i Dejës Floating Solar Photovoltaic Power Plant
- 13 Green Transport Tirana
- 14 Belshi Solar Photovoltaic Power Plant
- 15 Rehabilitation of Six Hydropower Plants Phase 3
- 16 Oslomej 1 Solar Photovoltaic Power Plant
- 17 Oslomej 2 and Bitola Solar Photovoltaic Power Plants
- 18 Energy Efficiency Investments in Healthcare Buildings
- 19 Strengthening the Transmission Network in the Southeast Region
- 20 Bogdanci Wind Park Phase 2
- 21 Regional Energy Efficiency Programme (REEP)

Environment & climate



- 1 Sewage System for Palilula, Belgrade
- 2 Water and Sanitation Republika Srpska II
- 3 Sarajevo Water Project
- 4 Wastewater and Water Supply Systems for Kolašin, Rožaje and Mojkovac
- 5 Nikšić and Pijevlja Wastewater Collection Systems
- 6 Podgorica Wastewater Treatment Plant
- 7 Cetinje Water Supply System Improvement
- 8 Tivat Water Supply and Sanitation
- 9 Boka Bay Water Supply and Wastewater Collection
- 10 Ulcinj Wastewater Treatment Plant and Sewerage
- 11 Skopje Wastewater Treatment Plant
- 12 Regional Waste Management System for Polog, Pelagonija, Vardar, Southwest and Southeast Regions

Human capital



- 1 University Children's Hospital Tirsova 2 in Belgrade
- 2 Energy Efficiency and Integrated Energy Management at Technical Faculties Campus in Belgrade
- 3 Education Infrastructure Improvement in Montenegro

Digital future



- 1 Rural Broadband Rollout Phase 2
- 2 Smart Labs - Network of ICT Laboratories for Pre-University Education System

Private sector



- 1 SMEs Go Green Programme
- 2 Western Balkans Climate Programme
- 3 Green Finance for Inclusion
- 4 GGF: Promoting Green Lending in the Western Balkans II
- 5 Sustainable Access to Finance for Entrepreneurship
- 6 Go Digital in the Western Balkans
- 7 Innovation and Green Transformation Facility

In 2023, the European Commission and the Bilateral Donors launched four WBIF calls for investment projects and technical assistance in the public and private sectors. The results of each call are detailed below.

Round 29, technical assistance for investment project preparation

Eight technical assistance projects were endorsed by the 4th WBIF Operational Board on 30 June 2023 in Oslo for a total WBIF EU IPA grant contribution of €11,216,925. These projects aim to prepare the ground for investments in clean energy, environment and sustainable transport through feasibility studies and designs, environmental and social impact assessments, and tender documents. More specifically, these eight projects will develop technical documentation for electricity interconnections in Albania, Montenegro and Serbia, offshore wind power generation in Albania, sanitation in Albania, integrated waste management in Bosnia and Herzegovina, rehabilitation of the Bar – Vrbnica railway line and the rail interconnection with Albania in Montenegro.

Round 8, flagship investments, public sector

Eleven investment projects were endorsed by the 4th WBIF Operational Board on 30 June 2023 in Oslo for a total WBIF grant amount of €468,456,447, of which €4,795,137 in Bilateral Donor contribution and €463,661,310 in EU IPA contribution. The 5th WBIF Operational Board endorsed three more projects under this round on 8 December 2023 for a total WBIF EU IPA grant contribution of €74,117,216. These fourteen projects are expected to bring €2 billion in investments and contribute to the implementation of EIP's investment flagships: 1 – Connecting East to West, 2 – Connecting North to South, 4 – Renewable energy, 5 – Transition from coal, 6 – Renovation wave, 7 – Waste and wastewater management, and human capital development.

Round 9, flagship investments, public sector

Two investment projects were endorsed by the 5th WBIF Operational Board on 8 December 2023 in Brussels for a total WBIF EU IPA grant contribution of €179,100,166 to support €348 million in EIP railway flagship investments. These projects contribute to implementing EIP's investment flagships 1 – Connecting East to West and 2 – Connecting North to South.

Round 2, flagship investments, private sector

Under WBIF's 2nd call for proposals, the 4th WBIF Operational Board endorsed three flagship investment programmes on 30 June 2023 in Oslo for a total WBIF EU IPA grant contribution of €62,030,000. This funding is expected to leverage €449 million in EIP flagship investments by supporting local micro-enterprise access to finance, with a focus on social enterprises, SME digitalisation, automation and competitiveness, and replenishing the Green for Growth Fund for households and MSME investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy.

2.2.1 Sustainable transport



EIP investment flagships

Flagship 1 - Connecting East to West

Flagship 2 - Connecting North to South

Flagship 3 - Connecting the coastal regions

The EIP flagship investments endorsed in 2020-2024 contribute to completing major connections on the indicative extension of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) core network, which are of strategic interest to the region and the EU. They speed up the construction of new transport infrastructure and upgrade roads, railways, and waterways to bring the region's core network up to EU standards. To drive regional cooperation and integration, connecting capitals in the region and with the EU is a primary objective of these investments, as well as enabling multimodal transport solutions and modal shift to reduce the transport's impact on the environment in line with the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans.

In 2023, the WBIF Operational Board endorsed six EIP flagship investments of €1,616,463,689 in road and rail transport. These were co-financed by €570,328,413 in WBIF EU IPA grants.

Overall, sustainable transport benefitted from 23 EIP flagship investments in 2020-2024⁶, which directed €6,259,169,343 towards rail, road and water transport investments. The WBIF contributed €2,122,857,954 in grants to these investments, all EU IPA funding. At the end of July 2024, sustainable transport accounted for 60% of the investment volume and 70% of the WBIF grants allocated to EIP flagship projects.

Flagship 1: Connecting East to West

In 2023, the WBIF Operational Board endorsed two EIP investments under this flagship for a total investment volume of €157,242,530. These were co-financed by €76,535,742 in WBIF EU IPA grants.

In total, 11 EIP investments of €2,984,827,651 were endorsed under this flagship in 2020-2024⁶. These were supported by €970,023,278 in WBIF EU IPA grants.

Table 1.1: EIP flagship investments endorsed under Flagship 1 in 2020-2024

#	Investment	Beneficiary	WBIF grant (€)	Estimated investment (€)	Endorsement year	Lead IFI
1	Corridor VIII: Durrës – Rrogozhinë Railway Section	Albania	62,576,107	120,541,665	2023	EIB
2	Rhine/Danube Corridor: Demining the Right Bank of the Sava River	Bosnia and Herzegovina	8,267,477	38,867,477	2020	WB
3	Peace Highway: Pristina – Merdare Section	Kosovo	78,868,904	207,692,568	2020, 2021	EBRD
4	Corridor VIII: North Macedonia – Bulgaria Rail Interconnection, Kriva Palanka – Border with Bulgaria Section	North Macedonia	154,458,911	573,229,910	2021	EIB

#	Investment	Beneficiary	WBIF grant (€)	Estimated investment (€)	Endorsement year	Lead IFI
5	Corridor VIII: Cut-Slopes Stabilisation on Express Road A2, Kriva Palanka – Stracin Section	North Macedonia	13,959,635	36,700,865	2023	WB
6	Rhine-Danube Corridor: Removal of Sunken WWII German Vessels from the Danube, Prahovo Sector	Serbia	16,432,624	29,682,624	2021	EIB
7	Corridor Xc: Niš – Dimitrovgrad Railway Line, Niš Bypass		35,561,788	90,520,528	2021	EIB
8	Corridor X: Belgrade – Niš Railway Line, Stalać – Đunis Section		82,832,827	279,001,513	2021	EIB
9	Corridor X: Belgrade – Niš Railway Line, Paraćin – Međurovo Section		174,617,354	475,633,965	2022	EIB
10	Corridor X: Belgrade – Niš Railway Line, Velika Plana – Paraćin Section		156,447,651	448,382,825	2024	EIB
11	Corridor X: Belgrade – Niš Railway Line, Belgrade Centre – Velika Plana Section		186,000,000	684,573,711	2024	EIB
Total			970,023,278	2,984,827,651		

The key expected outputs of these investments are:

- 312 km of new and upgraded railway lines;
- 50 km of motorway built;
- 5 km of waterway upgraded by removing 21 shipwrecks to eliminate a critical bottleneck on the Danube in Serbia;
- 40 km demined on the right bank of the Sava River in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which will improve navigability on 335 km of inland waterway on the Rhine-Danube Corridor and unlock additional development funds.

These investments contribute substantively to achieving the primary goal of Flagship 1 and its expected outputs. In the case of Rail Corridor X in Serbia, the railway line connecting Belgrade to Niš will be upgraded to high speed. Also, the missing link of the Skopje – Sofia rail interconnection will be built, and the first railway section of Corridor VIII in Albania will be rehabilitated, which further strategic investments co-funded under the Connectivity Agenda to provide connectivity with the EU TEN-T Corridors. Moreover, 40 km will be demined on the right bank of the Sava River in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the existing bottleneck on the Danube in Serbia will be eliminated.

Progress achieved in 2023

The implementation on the ground of EIP investments endorsed under this flagship commenced in 2024 and should be completed by the end of 2030, except for the Pristina – Merdare highway section in Kosovo, which is on hold due to changes in the beneficiary’s investment priorities. Key milestones in 2023 contributing to their implementation include:

- The work to remove sunken vessels from the Danube in Serbia was contracted in July, and preparatory investigations began.

- For the last stretch of North Macedonia’s rail interconnection with Bulgaria, the design-build procurement was launched, and the WBIF grant agreement and the EIB and the EBRD loans were signed in December.
- The technical control of the design for the Niš rail bypass in Serbia was finalised in November, while the procurement of construction works moved closer to contracting.
- The WBIF grant agreements for the Stalać – Đunis and Paraćin – Međurovo railway sections of Corridor X in Serbia were signed in February and March, respectively.

Connectivity Agenda investments contributed to the objective of Flagship 1 with the following milestones:

- The first subsection of the Peace Highway in Serbia was completed in July.
- The Kriva Palanka – Deve Bair road section in North Macedonia was completed in December.
- Construction of the Beljakovce – Kriva Palanka railway section continued in North Macedonia.
- Construction works on the Sićevo – Dimitrovgrad railway section of Corridor Xc in Serbia commenced in November.
- Procurement of works for the first subsection of the Bukojčani – Kičevo motorway and the Skopje – Blace motorway in North Macedonia was launched in July.
- Reconstruction and modernisation work advanced on the Brčko Port in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In total, 18.7 km of new roads were completed in 2023, of which 13.2 km in North Macedonia (Kriva Palanka – Deve Bair road section) and 5.5 km in Serbia (Merošina – Merošina 1 subsection of the Peace Highway). Both investments were co-financed by the EU under the Connectivity Agenda.

Flagship 2: Connecting North to South

In 2023, the WBIF Operational Board endorsed three EIP investments under this flagship for a total investment volume of €964,421,159. These were co-financed by €413,792,671 in WBIF EU IPA grants.

In total, nine EIP investments of €2,213,253,400 were endorsed under this flagship in 2020-2023. These were supported by €865,368,055 in WBIF EU IPA grants.

Table 1.2: EIP flagship investments endorsed under Flagship 2 in 2020-2023

#	Investment	Beneficiary	WBIF grant (€)	Estimated investment (€)	Endorsement year	Lead IFI
1	Corridor Vc: Kvanj Tunnel – Buna Motorway Subsection	Bosnia and Herzegovina	45,703,454	107,129,680	2020, 2021	EIB
2	Corridor Vc: Medakovo – Ozimice Motorway Subsection		81,833,285	383,368,189	2021	EIB
3	Corridor Vc: Mostar South – Kvanj Tunnel Motorway Subsection		31,416,752	81,537,979	2021	EBRD
4	Corridor Vc: Johovac Interchange – Vukosavlje Interchange Motorway Section ⁷		186,107,396	470,327,396	2021	EIB
5	Corridor Vc: Ozimice – Poprikuše Motorway		141,350,233	354,272,988	2023	EIB

⁷ EU funding is suspended. The European Commission will sign the contribution agreement for this investment located in Republika Srpska after the end of the political crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with full functioning of the State institutions.

#	Investment	Beneficiary	WBIF grant (€)	Estimated investment (€)	Endorsement year	Lead IFI
	Subsection					
6	Corridor Vc: Mostar North – Mostar South Motorway Section	Montenegro	155,918,379	382,976,379	2023	EBRD
7	Corridor Vc: Šamac – Doboj – Rječica Railway Section ⁷		85,970,415	165,412,415	2021	EBRD
8	Bar – Vrbnica Railway Line		20,544,082	41,056,582	2020	EIB
9	Bar – Vrbnica Railway Line, Bar – Golubovci Section		116,524,059	227,171,792	2023	EIB
Total			865,368,055	2,213,253,400		

These projects will yield 98 km of motorway and 143 km of rehabilitated railway lines upon completion.

These investments have a significant impact on achieving the primary goal of Flagship 2 and its expected outputs. Specifically, in the case of Corridor Vc, the cumulative effect of investments endorsed under the EIP and those co-funded via the Connectivity Agenda means that the corridor will be 85% complete; this milestone exceeds the original target set in the EIP by over 10%. Likewise, upgrading the Bar – Vrbnica railway line will create a multimodal maritime-rail transport route from the port of Bar in Montenegro to the broader region.

Progress achieved in 2023

The implementation on the ground of EIP investments endorsed under this flagship commenced in 2023 and should be completed by the end of 2029, except for two investments in Bosnia and Herzegovina that are currently on hold (Johovac Interchange – Vukosavlje Interchange motorway section and Šamac – Doboj – Rječica railway section of Corridor Vc in Republika Srpska)⁷. Key milestones in 2023 contributing to their implementation include:

- Construction of the Medakovo – Ozimice motorway subsection of Corridor Vc commenced in December.
- Procurement of works for the Mostar North – Mostar South and Ozimice – Poprikuše motorway sections of Corridor Vc in Bosnia and Herzegovina was launched in January and April, respectively.
- The EBRD loan agreement for the Mostar North – Mostar South motorway section of Corridor Vc in Bosnia and Herzegovina was signed in December.

Connectivity Agenda investments contributed to the objective of Flagship 2 with the following milestones:

- The construction of the Ponirak – Vraca/Zenica Tunnel motorway subsection of Corridor Vc in Bosnia and Herzegovina was completed in September, while the tunnel electro-mechanical equipment will be installed in 2024. Also, on the same corridor, works on the Putnikovo 2 Tunnel – Medakovo motorway subsection commenced in June and advanced on four other sections with several milestones achieved.
- Rehabilitation of the Mitrovičë/Mitrovica – Border with North Macedonia railway sections continued in Kosovo.
- Procurement of works for the last three tunnels included in the Connectivity Agenda project approved in 2015 for Montenegro’s Bar – Vrbnica railway line was launched in October.

No investment projects were completed under Flagship 2 in 2023.

Flagship 3: Connecting the coastal regions

Two EIP investments of €566,288,292 were endorsed under this flagship in 2020-2023. These were co-financed by €207,466,621 in WBIF EU IPA grants.

Table 1.3: EIP flagship investments endorsed under Flagship 3 in 2020-2023

#	Investment	Beneficiary	WBIF grant (€)	Estimated investment (€)	Endorsement year	Lead IFI
1	Blue Highway: Tirana Bypass	Albania	69,438,962	248,398,133	2020, 2021	EBRD
2	Albania – Montenegro Rail Interconnection: Vorë – Hani i Hotit Section		138,027,659	317,890,159	2021	EBRD
Total			207,466,621	566,288,292		

The key expected outputs of these investments are 120 km of railway line rehabilitated and a 21.5 km-long motorway bypass built.

Progress achieved in 2023

The implementation of the EIP railway investment on the ground will commence in 2025 and should be completed by the end of 2030. Progress is lagging behind with the preparation of the Tirana bypass project.

Connectivity Agenda investments contributed to the objective of Flagship 3 with the following milestones:

- Rehabilitation works on the Durrës – Tirana railway line and construction of the railway link to Tirana airport in Albania advanced steadily and are due for completion in 2025.

No investment projects were completed under Flagship 3 in 2023.

Safe and Sustainable Transport Programme

The *Safe and Sustainable Transport Programme (SSTP)* aims to enhance transport safety and sustainability in the Western Balkans, aligned with the EU’s Green Agenda. Funded by the EU and World Bank, the programme supports *road safety improvements, alternative fuel infrastructure, and investments in intelligent transport systems.*



Using existing World Bank projects, such as the Western Balkans Trade and Transport Facilitation Project and Serbia Railway Modernisation Project, SSTP collaborates with public partners and the

private sector. The programme facilitates the region’s long-term recovery, the greening of transport, economic integration, and improved quality of life for Western Balkans residents. Through SSTP, the region can benefit from technical assistance and knowledge, moving forward with the green and digital transition in transport. The programme was officially launched in December 2023.

The map below shows the WBIF investments in sustainable transport co-funded under the EIP and Connectivity Agenda.



Albania

- 1 Durrës - Tirana Railway Line and New Railway Link to Tirana Airport
- 2 Blue Highway: Tirana Bypass
- 3 Albania - Montenegro Rail Interconnection: Vorë - Hani i Hotit Section
- 4 Corridor VIII: Durrës - Rogozhinë Railway Section

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- 5 Gradiška Cross-Border Bridge
- 6 Corridor Vc: Svilaj Cross-Border Bridge, Svilaj - Odžak Motorway Section
- 7 Corridor Vc: Johovac - Vukosavlje Motorway Section
- 8 Corridor Vc: Johovac - Rudanka Motorway Section
- 9 Corridor Vc: Rudanka - Putnikovo Brdo 2 Tunnel Motorway Subsection
- 10 Corridor Vc: Putnikovo Brdo 2 Tunnel - Medakovo Motorway Subsection
- 11 Corridor Vc: Medakovo - Ozimice Motorway Subsection
- 12 Corridor Vc: Ozimice - Poprikuše Motorway Subsection
- 13 Corridor Vc: Poprikuše - Nemila Motorway Subsection
- 14 Corridor Vc: Ponirak - Vraca/Zenica Tunnel Motorway Subsection
- 15 Corridor Vc: Zenica Tunnel - Donja Gračanica Motorway Subsection
- 16 Corridor Vc: Tarčin - Ivan Motorway Subsection I
- 17 Corridor Vc: Ivan Tunnel Motorway Subsection
- 18 Corridor Vc: Mostar North - Mostar South Motorway Section
- 19 Corridor Vc: Mostar South - Kvanj Tunnel Motorway Subsection
- 20 Corridor Vc: Kvanj Tunnel - Buna Motorway Subsection
- 21 Corridor Vc: Buna - Počitelj Motorway Subsection
- 22 Corridor Vc: Počitelj - Zvirovići Motorway Subsection
- 23 Corridor Vc: Šamac - Doboј - Rječica Railway Section
- 24 Rhine-Danube Corridor: Demining the Right Bank of the Sava River
- 25 Rhine-Danube Corridor: Brčko Port

Kosovo

- 26 Route 10: Fushë Kosova/Kosovo Polje - Border with North Macedonia Railway Section (Phase 1)
- 27 Route 10: Fushë Kosova/Kosovo Polje - Mitrovicë/Mitrovica Railway Section (Phase 2)
- 28 Route 10: Signalling and Telecoms for Mitrovicë/Mitrovica - Border with North Macedonia Railway Sections (Phases 1&2)
- 29 Peace Highway: Pristina - Merdare Section

Montenegro

- 30 Montenegro - Serbia Interconnection: Bar - Vrbnica Railway Line
- 31 Montenegro - Serbia Interconnection: Bar - Vrbnica Railway Line
- 32 Montenegro - Serbia Interconnection: Bar - Vrbnica Railway Line
- 33 Montenegro - Serbia Interconnection: Bar - Vrbnica Railway Line, Bar - Golubovci Section

North Macedonia

- 34 Corridor VIII: Beljakovce - Kriva Palanka Railway Section
- 35 Corridor VIII: Kriva Palanka - Border with Bulgaria Express Road Section
- 36 Corridor VIII: Bukojčani - Kičevo Motorway Subsection
- 37 Corridor X: Tabanovce Joint Border Railway Station
- 38 Skopje (Stenkovec Interchange) - Blace Motorway Section
- 39 Corridor VIII: Kriva Palanka - Border with Bulgaria Railway Section
- 40 Corridor VIII: Cut-Slopes Stabilisation on Kriva Palanka - Stracin Express Road

Serbia

- 41 Corridor X: Intermodal Terminal in Batajnica, Belgrade
- 42 Corridor X: Niš - Brestovac Railway Section
- 43 Corridor Xc: Sičevo - Dimitrovgrad Railway Section
- 44 Corridor Xc: Niš - Dimitrovgrad Railway Line, Electrification & Signalling
- 45 Peace Highway: Niš (Merošina) - Pločnik (Beloljin) Section
- 46 Corridor X: Belgrade - Niš Railway Line, Belgrade Centre - Velika Plana Section
- 47 Corridor X: Belgrade - Niš Railway Line, Velika Plana - Paraćin Section
- 48 Corridor X: Belgrade - Niš Railway Line, Paraćin - Međurovo Section
- 49 Corridor X: Belgrade - Niš Railway Line, Stalać - Bunis Section
- 50 Corridor Xc: Niš Rail Bypass
- 51 Rhine-Danube Corridor: Removal of Sunken WWII German Vessels from the Danube, Prahovo Sector

Regional Programme

- 52 Safe and Sustainable Transport Programme (SSTP)

2.2.2 Clean energy



EIP investment flagships

Flagship 4 - Renewable energy

Flagship 5 - Transition from coal

Flagship 6 - Renovation wave

The EIP flagship investments endorsed in 2020-2023 support the energy transition from highly polluting coal to more sustainable energy sources. The focus is on renewable energy generation, energy efficiency, low-carbon transition, and performant electricity transmission lines. These investments' contribution to decarbonising energy production and consumption is critical to delivering on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans and avoiding potentially negative consequences of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism.

In 2023, the WBIF Operational Board endorsed eight EIP flagship investments of €567,121,386 in renewable energy, energy efficiency in the health sector, and strengthening transmission networks. These were co-financed by €127,216,846 in WBIF grants, of which €125,005,296 was EU IPA funding and €2,211,550 was Bilateral Donor funding.

Overall, clean energy benefitted from 21 EIP flagship investments in 2020-2023, which directed €1,768,408,901 towards investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency and electricity transmission. The WBIF contributed €386,676,837 in grants to these investments, of which €380,188,793 was EU IPA funding and €6,488,044 was Bilateral Donor funding. At the end of July 2024, clean energy accounted for 17% of the investment volume and 13% of the WBIF grants allocated to EIP flagship projects.

Flagship 4: Renewable energy

In 2023, the WBIF Operational Board endorsed six EIP investments under this flagship for a total investment volume of €504,888,862. These were co-financed by €117,018,002 in WBIF EU IPA grants.

In total, 16 EIP investments of €1,081,365,429 were endorsed under this flagship in 2020-2023. The WBIF contributed €257,643,545 in grants to these investments, of which €253,367,051 was EU IPA funding and €4,276,494 was Bilateral Donor funding.

Table 1.4: EIP flagship investments endorsed under Flagship 4 in 2020-2023

#	Investment	Beneficiary	WBIF grant (€)	Estimated investment (€)	Endorsement year	Lead IFI
1	Rehabilitation of Fierza Hydropower Plant	Albania	8,722,449	48,722,449	2020	KfW
2	Vau i Dejës Floating Solar Photovoltaic Power Plant		2,692,698	12,055,891	2021	EBRD
3	Belshi Solar Photovoltaic Power Plant		9,583,587	41,783,587	2023	EBRD
4	Green Transport Tirana		32,129,483	111,299,483	2023	KfW
5	Rehabilitation and Modernisation of Čapljina Pump Storage Hydropower	Bosnia and Herzegovina	3,048,632	18,864,632	2023	KfW

#	Investment	Beneficiary	WBIF grant (€)	Estimated investment (€)	Endorsement year	Lead IFI
	Plant					
6	Poklečani Wind Farm		43,665,747	200,292,147	2023	EIB
7	Vlašić Wind Power Plant		20,867,882	91,762,882	2023	KfW
8	Solar4Kosovo - Photovoltaic Plant	Kosovo	32,839,493	104,839,493	2022	KfW
9	Solar4Kosovo II – Solar District Heating for Pristina		22,320,162	81,520,162	2022	KfW
10	Oslomej 1 Solar Photovoltaic Power Plant	North Macedonia	1,583,796	8,868,368	2021	EBRD
11	Oslomej 2 and Bitola Solar Photovoltaic Power Plants		5,124,802	25,615,802	2021	EBRD
12	Bogdanci Wind Park Phase 2		9,219,318	30,323,577	2022	KfW
13	Rehabilitation of Six Hydropower Plants Phase 3		11,119,564	36,319,564	2022	KfW
14	Kostolac Wind Farm	Serbia	31,003,040	145,061,040	2022	KfW
15	Reconstruction of Vlasina Hydropower Plant		16,000,221	83,150,221	2022	EBRD
16	Rehabilitation of Bistrica Hydropower Plant		7,722,671	40,886,131	2023	EIB
Total			257,643,545	1,081,365,429		

These well-targeted investments are a comprehensive mix of hydro, solar, and wind energy projects. They address Flagship 4's goals of increasing renewable energy generation aligned with the region's potential and national preferences. The region's renewable power generation capacity from hydro, wind, and solar sources will increase by 1,898 MW, and clean urban transport will be introduced in Tirana, Albania.

Progress achieved in 2023

The implementation on the ground of EIP investments endorsed under this Flagship commenced in 2021, with the first project finalised in 2022, and should be completed by the end of 2029. Key milestones in 2023 contributing to their implementation include:

- Construction of the Kostolac wind farm in Serbia commenced in December, and the project's WBIF grant agreement was signed the same month.
- Procurement of works for the Fierza hydropower plant in Albania was launched in November.
- Supervision of works for the Vau i Dejës floating photovoltaic power plant in Albania was contracted in May.
- Project implementation support and supervision of works for the Oslomaj 2 and Bitola photovoltaic power plants in North Macedonia were contracted in June.
- Project implementation support for rehabilitating six large hydropower plants in North Macedonia was contracted in July, and the WBIF grant and EBRD loan agreements on the project were signed in February.
- Procurement of project implementation support for green transport in Tirana was launched in May, and the WBIF grant and KfW loan agreements on the project were signed in December and November, respectively.
- The EIB loan agreement for the Vlašić wind power plant in Bosnia and Herzegovina was signed

in October.

- The WBIF grant and KfW loan agreements for the photovoltaic power plant in Kosovo were signed in October.

No investment projects were completed under Flagship 4 in 2023.

Flagship 5: Transition from coal

In 2023, the WBIF Operational Board endorsed one EIP investment of €34,720,974 under this flagship, co-financed by a €7,987,294 WBIF EU IPA grant.

In total, three EIP investments of €124,115,002 were endorsed under this flagship in 2020-2023, supported by €24,904,822 in WBIF EU IPA grants.

Table 1.5: EIP flagship investments endorsed under Flagship 5 in 2020-2023

#	Investment	Beneficiary	WBIF grant (€)	Estimated investment (€)	Endorsement year	Lead IFI
1	Strengthening the Transmission Network in the Southeast Region of North Macedonia	North Macedonia	7,987,294	34,720,974	2023	EBRD
2	Trans-Balkan Electricity Corridor: Serbia – Montenegro – Bosnia and Herzegovina 400 kV Interconnection	Serbia	8,815,400	41,126,900	2021	KfW
3	Advanced System for Remote Meter Reading Phase 1A		8,102,128	48,267,128	2021	EBRD
Total			24,904,822	124,115,002		

The key expected outputs of these investments are:

- Regional electricity transmission capacity increased by 1,000 MW by constructing an 84 km-long 400 kV power interconnection in Serbia;
- 38.7 km of electricity transmission line upgraded in North Macedonia to support the development of renewable energy sources;
- 205,000 smart meters installed in Kraljevo, Čačak and Niš in Serbia.

These investments and those endorsed under Flagship 4 constitute a meaningful step towards transitioning from coal to more sustainable energy sources.

Progress achieved in 2023

The EIP investments endorsed under this flagship will start implementation on the ground in 2025 and should be completed by the end of 2028. Key milestones in 2023 contributing to their implementation include:

- Procurement of smart meters for the electricity distribution systems of Kraljevo, Čačak and Niš in Serbia was launched in November.
- Procurement of project implementation support for the last section of the Trans-Balkan Electricity Corridor in Serbia was launched in July, and the project's WBIF grant agreement was signed in January.

Connectivity Agenda investments contributed to the objective of Flagship 5 with the following milestones:

- Construction of Albania’s power interconnection with North Macedonia commenced in September.
- Procurement of works for the Obrenovac – Bajina Bašta grid section of the Trans-Balkan Electricity Corridor in Serbia was launched in July.
- Procurement of works for the North Macedonia – Greece gas interconnector was launched in November.
- On the Trans-Balkan Electricity Corridor in Montenegro, the implementation consultant commenced activities on the last grid section in December.

No investment projects were completed under Flagship 5 in 2023.

Flagship 6: Renovation wave

In 2023, the WBIF Operational Board endorsed one EIP investment under this flagship for a total investment volume of €27,511,550, co-financed by a €2,211,550 WBIF Bilateral Donor grant: the World Bank-led project in North Macedonia “Public Sector Energy Efficiency Project: Energy Efficiency Investments in Healthcare Buildings”.

The EU IPA replenishment of the Regional Energy Efficiency Programme (REEP) and the energy efficiency project in North Macedonia contribute to achieving Flagship 6's primary objective of reducing energy consumption in the region's building sector by renovating public and private buildings to energy performance standards. The key expected outputs of these two EIP flagship investments are 496 GWh/y of energy saved and 21 MW of renewable energy generation capacity installed.

REEP was established in 2013 by the EBRD jointly with the European Commission, the Energy Community Secretariat, WBIF and bilateral donors. The programme blends policy support with loans, technical assistance, and incentives to support **energy efficiency and renewable energy investments** in the public and private sectors of the Western Balkans.



The EBRD and the KfW manage the programme, which operates directly and through intermediaries and is a key instrument for implementing the EIP.

Since its inception, REEP has reached 2,000 SMEs, 34,000 households and 540 public buildings. Related investments translate into 1,220k MWh/year of energy saved and 730,000 tCO2/year of emissions avoided.

The map below shows the WBIF investments in clean energy co-financed under the EIP and Connectivity Agenda.

Clean energy flagship investments



Albania

- 1 Albania – North Macedonia Power Interconnection: Grid Section in Albania (Fier – Elbasan – border between the two states)
- 2 Rehabilitation of Fierza Hydropower Plant
- 3 Vau i Dejës Floating Solar Photovoltaic Power Plant
- 4 Belshi Solar Photovoltaic Power Plant
- 5 Green Transport Tirana

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- 6 Vlačić Wind Power Plant
- 7 Poklečani Wind Farm
- 8 Rehabilitation of Čapljina Pump Storage Hydropower Plant

Kosovo

- 9 Solar4Kosovo: Photovoltaic Plant
- 10 Solar4Kosovo II: Solar District Heating for Pristina

Montenegro

- 11 Trans-Balkan Electricity Corridor: Grid Section in Montenegro (Lasta – Pjevlja – border with Serbia)

North Macedonia

- 12 North Macedonia – Albania Power Interconnection: Grid Section in North Macedonia (Bitola – Ohrid – AL border)
- 13 North Macedonia – Greece Gas Interconnector
- 14 Oslomej 1 Solar Photovoltaic Power Plant
- 15 Oslomej 2 and Bitola Solar Photovoltaic Power Plants
- 16 Rehabilitation of Six Hydropower Plants Phase 3
- 17 Bogdanci Wind Park Phase 2
- 18 Strengthening the Transmission Network in the Southeast Region
- 19 Energy Efficiency Investments in Healthcare Buildings

Serbia

- 20 Serbia (Niš) – Bulgaria Gas Interconnector
- 21 Trans-Balkan Electricity Corridor: Kragujevac – Kraljevo Grid Section
- 22 Trans-Balkan Electricity Corridor: Obrenovac – Bajina Bašta Grid Section
- 23 Trans-Balkan Electricity Corridor: Bajina Bašta – Montenegro – BiH Borders Section
- 24 Advanced System for Remote Meter Reading Phase 1A
- 25 Kostolac Wind Farm
- 26 Rehabilitation of Bistrica Hydropower Plant
- 27 Reconstruction of Vlasina Hydropower Plant

Regional Programme

- 28 Regional Energy Efficiency Programme for the Western Balkans (REEP)

2.2.3 Environment & climate

EIP investment flagships

Flagship 7 - Waste and wastewater management



The EIP, together with the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, sets out that significant investment should be directed towards greening the Western Balkans and mainstreaming environmental and climate requirements in other sectors. The EIP flagship investments endorsed in 2021-2024 support sustainable water supply, wastewater collection and treatment, and waste disposal.

In 2023, the WBIF Operational Board endorsed one EIP flagship investment in environment and climate for a total investment volume of €33,087,987, co-financed by a €2,583,587 WBIF grant by Bilateral Donors.

Overall, environment and climate benefitted from 12 EIP flagship investments in 2021-2024⁶, bringing €645,827,556 of investments in water supply, sanitation, and solid waste management. The WBIF contributed €274,484,975 in grants to these investments, of which €267,877,275 was EU IPA funding and €6,607,700 was Bilateral Donor funding. At the end of July 2024, environment and climate accounted for 6% of the investment volume and 9% of the WBIF grants allocated to EIP flagship projects.

Table 1.6: EIP flagship investments endorsed under Flagship 7 in 2020-2024

#	Investment	Beneficiary	WBIF grant (€)	Estimated investment (€)	Endorsement year	Lead IFI
1	Sarajevo Water Project: Reconstruction of Water Supply Network	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2,583,587	33,087,987	2023	EBRD
2	Water and Sanitation Republika Srpska II		17,315,198	43,098,886	2024	EIB
3	Podgorica Wastewater Treatment Plant	Montenegro	23,713,493	76,639,493	2021	KfW
4	Wastewater and Water Supply Systems Improvement for Kolašin, Rožaje and Mojkovac		23,346,186	34,909,629	2022	EIB
5	Niksic and Pljevlja Wastewater Collection Systems		18,063,663	32,152,689	2024	EIB
6	Ulcinj Wastewater Treatment Plant and Sewerage		31,032,198	61,803,969	2024	KfW
7	Boka Bay Water Supply and Wastewater Collection		4,024,113	33,971,815	2024	KfW
8	Tivat Water Supply and Sanitation		9,823,708	24,842,796	2024	KfW
9	Cetinje Water Supply System Improvement		13,043,498	21,652,419	2024	EIB
10	Skopje Wastewater Treatment Plant	North Macedonia	72,224,502	139,142,644	2021	EIB
11	Regional Waste Management System for Polog, Pelagonija,		22,562,513	60,577,513	2022	EBRD

#	Investment	Beneficiary	WBIF grant (€)	Estimated investment (€)	Endorsement year	Lead IFI
	Vardar, Southwest and Southeast Regions					
12	Sewerage System for Palilula, Belgrade	Serbia	36,752,316	83,947,716	2022	EIB
Total			274,484,975	645,827,556		

The key expected outputs of these investments are:

- 1.4 million people have access to improved drinking water and sanitation;
- 1.1 million people benefit from improved waste collection and disposal services;
- 183,400 m³/day additional wastewater treatment capacity.

Progress achieved in 2023

The EIP investments endorsed under this flagship started implementation on the ground in 2024 and should be completed by the end of 2029. Key milestones in 2023 contributing to their implementation include:

- The preliminary design for the wastewater treatment plant in Podgorica, Montenegro, was completed in October.
- The design-build works for the Skopje wastewater treatment plant in North Macedonia were contracted in April, and the design work commenced. The contract for the supervision of works and the WBIF grant agreement on the project were signed in March.
- The procurement planning for Kolašin, Rožaje and Mojkovac water and wastewater systems in Montenegro was finalised in October, and work continued on designs and tender dossiers.
- Project implementation support for regional waste management systems in North Macedonia was contracted in April, and preparation of tender dossiers for works and supervision services commenced. The EBRD loan on the project was signed in January.

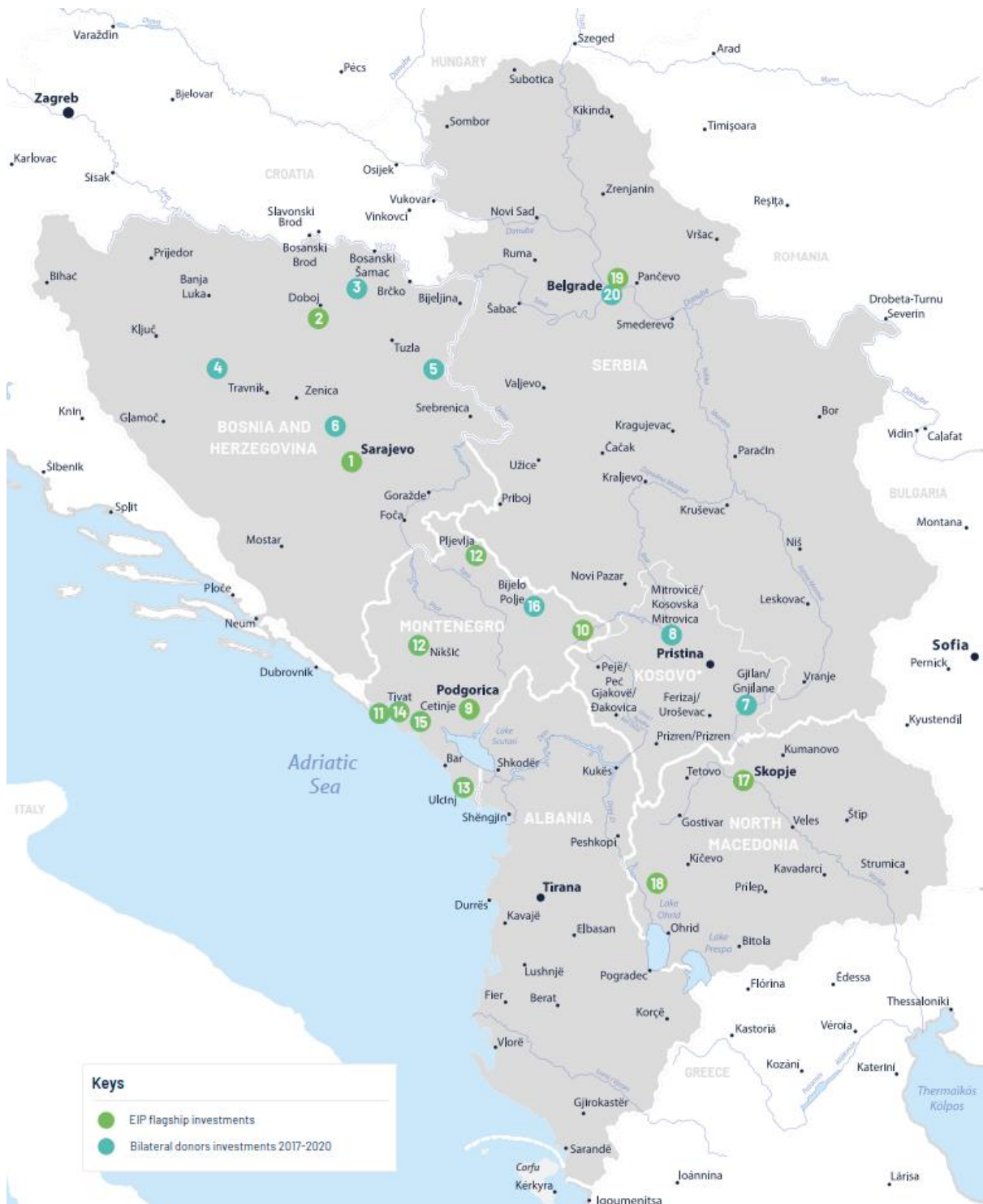
Investment projects co-financed by the WBIF Bilateral Donors in 2017-2020 contributed to the objectives of Flagship 7 with the following milestones in 2023:

- Works on water supply in Gradačac, Bosnia and Herzegovina, progressed and were completed in early 2024, while those in the Jajce municipality reached 80% completion.
- For Gijlan in Kosovo, design-build procurement for the wastewater treatment plant and supervision of works was launched in July, followed by the procurement of sewerage extension works in September.
- Design-build procurement for Montenegro's Bijelo Polje wastewater treatment plant was launched in October.
- The WBIF grant and EBRD loan agreements for the Makis water treatment facilities in Belgrade were signed in June, and work on tender documents advanced.

No investment projects were completed under Flagship 7 in 2023.

The map below shows the WBIF investments in environment and climate.

Environment & climate flagship investments



Bosnia and Herzegovina

- 1 Sarajevo Water Project: Reconstruction of Water Supply Network
- 2 Water and Sanitation Republika Srpska II
- 3 Gradačac Water Supply Project
- 4 WATSAN FBiH: Water Supply and Water Loss Reduction in Jajce Municipality
- 5 WATSAN Republika Srpska: Lokanj-Pilica Water Supply Phase 1 and Wastewater Treatment Plant for Tabanci in Zvornik Municipality
- 6 Visoko Water Supply Project: Mostre Subsystem and Water Network Reconstruction Phase 3

Kosovo

- 7 Wastewater Treatment Plant and Sewerage Network Extension and Rehabilitation in Gjilan
- 8 Wastewater Treatment Plant and Sewerage Network for Mitrovica

Montenegro

- 9 Podgorica Wastewater Treatment Plant
- 10 Wastewater Treatment and Water Supply for Kolasin, Rozaje and Mojkovac
- 11 Boka Bay Water Supply and Wastewater Collection
- 12 Nikšić and Pljevlja Wastewater Collection Systems
- 13 Ulcinj Wastewater Treatment Plant and Related Infrastructure
- 14 Tivat Water Supply and Sanitation
- 15 Cetinje Water Supply Improvement
- 16 Bijelo Polje Wastewater Treatment Plant

North Macedonia

- 17 Skopje Wastewater Treatment Plant
- 18 Regional Waste Management System for Polog, Pelagonija, Vardar, Southwest and Southeast Regions

Serbia

- 19 Sewerage System for Palić, Belgrade
- 20 Upgrade of Makis Water and Wastewater Treatment Facilities, Belgrade

2.2.4 Digital future



EIP investment flagships

Flagship 8 - Digital infrastructure

Accelerating the region’s digital transformation is an EIP priority to enable the twin green and digital transition. The EIP flagship investments endorsed in 2021-2022 contribute to the roll-out of ultra-fast and secure broadband in rural areas to ensure universal access and equip schools with smart labs. The Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans is a reference in designing interventions co-funded through WBIF. At the same time, alignment with the EU’s 5G cybersecurity toolbox and technology neutrality are critical requirements.

The digital future benefitted from two EIP flagship investments in 2021-2023, which directed €169,619,559 towards rural broadband connectivity and digital education infrastructure. The WBIF contributed €44,648,002 in grants to these investments, all EU IPA funding. At the end of July 2024, the digital future accounted for 1% of the total investment volume and 2% of the WBIF grants allocated to EIP flagship projects.

Table 1.7: EIP flagship investments endorsed under Flagship 8 in 2021-2023

#	Investment	Beneficiary	WBIF grant (€)	Estimated investment (€)	Endorsement year	Lead IFI
1	Rural Broadband Rollout Phase 2	Serbia	34,164,134	135,614,134	2021	EBRD
2	Establishment of Smart Labs – Network of ICT Laboratories for Pre-University Education System	Albania	10,483,868	34,005,425	2022	CEB
Total			44,648,002	169,619,559		

Both investments fit with the goal of this flagship, which is to continue digitalising and rolling out national broadband infrastructures in the Western Balkans. In Albania, 615 schools will have smart labs, benefitting over 198,000 students annually. In Serbia, 368,000 people will have access to broadband internet in rural areas.



Progress achieved in 2023

The EIP investments endorsed under this flagship will start implementation on the ground in 2025 and should be completed by the end of 2027. Key milestones in 2023 contributing to their implementation include:

- Procurement of works and project implementation support for rural broadband in Serbia was launched in August and September, respectively.

No investment projects were completed under Flagship 8 in 2023.

2.2.5 Human capital

EIP investment flagships

Flagship 10 - Youth guarantee

The Economic and Investment Plan shifts focus from social infrastructures to investments in human capital, recognising the importance of education and skills, health, and social protection in unleashing economic growth. Principal WBIF areas of intervention are investments in digitalisation and energy efficiency in the education and health sectors.



In 2023, the WBIF Operational Board endorsed one EIP flagship investment of €169,570,407 in higher education facilities, co-financed by a €21,544,983 WBIF EU IPA grant.

Overall, human capital development benefitted from three EIP flagship investments in 2021-2023, which directed €398,013,695 towards investments in education and health facilities. The WBIF contributed €69,104,420 in grants to these investments, of which €62,386,386 was EU IPA funding and €6,718,034 was Bilateral Donor funding. At the end of July 2024, human capital development accounted for 4% of the investment volume and 2% of the WBIF grants allocated to EIP flagship projects.

Table 1.8: EIP flagship investments endorsed for human capital development in 2021-2023

#	Investment	Beneficiary	WBIF grant (€)	Estimated investment (€)	Endorsement year	Lead IFI
1	University Children's Hospital Tirsova 2 in Belgrade	Serbia	36,170,213	164,120,213	2021	CEB
2	Improvement of Energy Efficiency and Integrated Energy Management of the Campus of Technical Faculties in Belgrade		21,544,983	169,570,407	2023	CEB
3	Education Infrastructure Improvement	Montenegro	11,389,224	64,323,075	2022	EIB
Total			69,104,420	398,013,695		

Through these flagship investments, 9,500 students in the pre-university system in Montenegro and 15,000 higher education students in Serbia will benefit from innovative learning environments annually. Furthermore, a new building will be built and equipped at the University Children's Hospital in Belgrade to increase the hospital's capacity and bring novel diagnostic and treatment technologies, robotic surgery facilities, more sophisticated patient monitoring and new fields of therapeutic diagnosis.



University Children's Hospital Tirsova 2 in Belgrade

Progress achieved in 2023

The implementation of EIP investments on the ground commenced in 2023 and should be completed by the end of 2029. Key milestones in 2023 contributing to their implementation include:

- Construction of the first school under Montenegro's project for education infrastructure improvement commenced in August, and the ICT equipment for schools was contracted in November.
- Procurement of works for the University Children's Hospital Tiršova 2 in Belgrade was launched in July.

The investment project co-financed by the WBIF Bilateral Donors in 2020 for physical education facilities in schools also contributed to the objectives of this intervention area with the following milestone in 2023:

- Rehabilitation works and equipping physical education facilities in 10 primary and secondary schools in North Macedonia kicked off in October.

No investment projects were completed in this area of intervention in 2023.

2.2.6 Private sector

EIP investment flagships

Flagship 9 - Investing in the competitiveness of the private sector



The Economic and Investment Plan focuses on developing a robust, innovative, and competitive private sector through blending and guarantee instruments to facilitate the access to finance of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and create a favourable business climate to attract investors in the region.

Since 2020, support to private sector development has been consolidated under WBIF private sector blending to encompass several prominent initiatives, notably the Western Balkans Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (WB EDIF), the European Fund for Southeast Europe (EFSE), the Green for Growth Fund (GGF), and programmes approved through calls for proposals for private sector blending operations.

In 2023, the WBIF Operational Board endorsed three EIP flagship investments in the private sector for a total investment volume of €449,030,000, supported by €62,030,000 in WBIF EU IPA grants.

Overall, the private sector benefitted from seven EIP flagship investments in 2022-2024⁶, which directed €1,242,693,779 towards investments in digital transformation and innovation, green transition, trade and value-chain innovation, and financial inclusion. The WBIF contributed €132,693,779 in grants to these investments, all EU IPA funding. As of July 2024, private sector development accounted for 12% of the total investment volume and 4% of the WBIF grants allocated to EIP flagship projects.

Table 1.9: EIP flagship investments endorsed under Flagship 9 in 2022-2024

#	Investment	Beneficiaries	WBIF grant (€)	Estimated investment (€)	Endorsement year	Lead IFI
1	SME Go Green Programme	Regional	24,943,625	144,943,625	2022	EBRD
2	Western Balkans Climate Programme	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Serbia	17,000,000	200,000,000	2022	IFC
3	Green Finance for Inclusion	Regional	10,057,540	130,057,540	2022	CDP
4	Sustainable Access to Finance for Entrepreneurship	Regional	10,400,000	40,400,000	2023	CDP
5	Go Digital in the Western Balkans	Regional	27,630,000	177,630,000	2023	EBRD
6	GGF: Promoting Green Lending in the Western Balkans II	Regional	24,000,000	231,000,000	2023	KfW
7	Innovation and Green Transformation Facility	Regional	18,662,614	318,662,614	2024	EIB
Total			132,693,779	1,242,693,779		

Progress achieved in 2023

The EIP investments endorsed under this flagship started implementation on the ground in 2023 and should be completed by the end of 2029. Key milestones in 2023 contributing to their implementation include:

- Under the “SME Go Green” programme, over €29 million was made available to MSMEs in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia through four credit lines signed with local Partner Financial Institutions (PFIs) in December 2023. Additional agreements were negotiated with PFIs across the region under the “SME Go Green” and the “Green Finance for Inclusion” programmes in 2023, which are expected to result in a further €150 million in financing for local businesses.
- The “Go Digital in the Western Balkans” began implementation in 2023, focusing on selecting PFIs to channel financing to MSMEs on the ground.

Other former WB EDIF programmes continued supporting the objectives of Flagship 9, as follows:

- The Enterprise Expansion Fund (ENEF) Phase 2 made its first investments; two transactions totalling €12.5 million were signed in Kosovo, supporting the introduction of new products, expansion of production capacity and sustainability improvements of investee companies.
- The Guarantee4SME Resilience, the last WB EDIF guarantee, kick-off implementation on the ground by signing contracts with 5 PFIs, covering all Western Balkans economies.
- Under the Regional SME Competitiveness Support Programme, PFIs provided 146 sub-loans to support 128 investments with 98 SMEs for a total value of €21.7 million.
- The Advice for Small Businesses programme continued to assist SMEs in the region, and by the end of 2023, over 600 tailored-made advisory projects were supported, achieving over 70% of targeted results.
- The Star Venture Programme selected 16 additional high-potential start-ups and initiated 25 new advisory projects in 2023. Market development activities included 4 ecosystem development and visibility events and 3 capacity-building sessions, which supported 19 early-stage ventures and engaged over 1,500 stakeholders.

European Fund for Southeast Europe (EFSE)

Since 2006, the European Commission has invested €109.9 million in C-shares, enabling €3.4 billion in financing for micro and small enterprises (MSEs), farmers and private households in the Western Balkans. Through its network of 28 intermediate financing institutions, EFSE supported over 520,000 borrowers by the end of 2023.

In addition, the EFSE Development Facility provided tailored advisory support through 648 projects worth €45.6 million. The Western Balkans benefitted from 573 projects amounting to €20.8 million or 46% of the total value of the EFSE’s support for capacity development by the end of 2023.

Progress achieved in 2023

- A further €209 million in sub-loans were extended to over 19,000 borrowers in the region. Most new loans (78%) were allocated to Serbia (€88.5 million) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (€74.7 million).
- At the end of 2023, the EFSE portfolio of key products committed in the Western Balkans comprised 52% MSEs, 33% housing loans, and 15% rural.

- Overall, 61% of the EFSE's committed portfolio, reflecting €1,243.4 million at the end of 2023, consisted of loans to MSEs. The Western Balkans region accounted for 28% of this portfolio (€349.9 million).

Green for Growth Fund (GGF)

Since GGF was established in 2009, the European Commission has contributed around €68.6 million in C-shares, enabling about €479 million in loans from 20 intermediate financing institutions throughout the Western Balkans.

Additionally, the Western Balkans benefitted from the GGF Technical Assistance Facility, with 605 projects implemented in the region, amounting to €7.8 million, or nearly 32% of the total capacity development support.

Progress achieved in 2023

- €62.4 million in new debt financing was provided for around 5,000 sub-loans to MSMEs and households. Of the total new sub-loans, 97% or €60.6 million were distributed to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Serbia. At the same time, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo attracted the highest number of sub-loans, accounting for over 4,550 out of 5,000 (91%).
- The GGF's impact in the six Western Balkans economies materialised in 1,404 GWh of energy savings (or 30% of the total) and 425k tons of CO₂ emissions avoided (or 35% of the total) last year. This marks an increase of 100.4 GWh in annual energy savings, along with an additional reduction of 31,600 tons in CO₂ emissions per year in the region.

2.2. Western Balkans Guarantee Facility

Guarantees share the risk of investing and lending to encourage private investors and development banks to finance entrepreneurs or investments.

The Western Balkans Guarantee Facility was established under the WBIF to attract private investment, complementing existing initiatives and preparing the region's integration into the EFSD+ framework 2021-2027.

The EFSD+ focuses on six thematic areas for investments: (1) Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs); (2) Connectivity: Energy, Transport and Digital; (3) Sustainable Agriculture, Biodiversity, Forests and Water; (4) Sustainable Cities; (5) Sustainable Finance and Impact Investing; and (6) Human Development. In the Western Balkans, these thematic areas contribute to the implementation of the EIP and are aligned with the Plan's investment areas. Under a pilot call for proposals launched in December 2019, two guarantees were endorsed in 2020:

- "WB EDIF Guarantee4SME Resilience" to increase the availability of affordable finance to MSMEs, especially targeting micro-businesses; and
- "Supporting Entrepreneurs and MSMEs to Safeguard Employment" to unlock financing for MSMEs, prioritising start-ups and MSMEs operating in rural areas and the manufacturing sector.

Furthermore, three guarantees from the reserve list were proposed to be carried forward for financing under the EFSD+ framework with a total coverage of up to €125 million. The 1st Joint EFSD+ Operational Board endorsed these guarantees in April 2022.

Gradually transitioning to the next generation of guarantees, the EFSD+ first call for Proposed Investment Programmes (PIPs) under open architecture investment windows resulted in an additional 17 EFSD+ guarantees also covering the Western Balkans.

Overall, 22 guarantees were endorsed between 2020 and 2023, with a maximum coverage of €985 million and technical assistance of up to €49.6 million. These guarantees contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic development in the Western Balkans.

An overview of the guarantees endorsed in 2020-2023 is provided below.

#	Investment Programme	Lead IFI	Total guarantee coverage up to (€m)	TA up to (€m)	Endorsement
Western Balkans Guarantee Facility 2020					
1	WB EDIF Guarantee4SME Resilience	EIF	60	n/a	2020
2	Supporting Entrepreneurs and MSMEs to Safeguard Employment	KfW	48	2	2020
Carry-forward guarantees					
3	Growth4All	EBRD	40	4.0	Apr 2022
4	Risk-sharing Instrument for Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy and Digital project	EIB	45	3.5	Apr 2022
5	Western Balkans Agricultural Risk Sharing Facility	IFC	40	3.0	Apr 2022
EFSD+ guarantees					
6	HI-BAR	EBRD	50	2.5	Dec 2022

#	Investment Programme	Lead IFI	Total guarantee coverage up to (€m)	TA up to (€m)	Endorsement
7	Municipal, Infrastructure & Industrial Resilience Programme (Resilience)	EBRD	50	2.5	Dec 2022
8	Connectivity	EIB	34	1.44	Dec 2022
9	Better Futures Programme (BFP)	IFC	40	2	Dec 2022
10	Supporting Market-Oriented Green Transformation in the Eastern Neighbourhood and Western Balkans	KfW	200	10	Dec 2022
11	EIBG Multi-thematic (Uncapped Guarantee) Support for SMEs in the Western Balkans	EIF	120	3.5	Dec 2022
12	Inclusive Finance for the Western Balkans	EIF	30	2.0	Dec 2022
13	EIF-UNDP Inclusive Growth Initiative for the Western Balkans	EIF	20	3.0	Dec 2022
14	Financing and Accelerating the Sustainable Transition of Cities (FAST-Cities)	AFD	20	1.0	Jan 2023
15	Digital Transformation Platform	EBRD	20	0.76	Jan 2023
16	Risk Sharing for ESG Projects	EBRD	12.75	0.64	Jan 2023
17	Credit Enhancement of Green Bonds - Global Green Bonds TEI	EBRD	10	0.5	Jan 2023
18	MSME Access to Green, Growth and Inclusive Finance	EIB	20	1.0	Jan 2023
19	The MSME Guarantee Platform (MGP)	KfW	50	2.5	Jan 2023
20	EDFI Carbon Sinks	EDFI	12	0.6	Jan 2023
21	Global Green Bond Initiative	EIB	48	2.4	Jan 2023
22	EU Market Creation Facility (EUMCF)	KfW	15	0.75	Jan 2023
Total			984.75	49.59	

3. Overview of WBIF contributions

3.1. European Commission contribution

By the end of 2023, the European Commission contributed a total of €492,210,149 to the Joint Fund, up from €311,791,013 at the end of 2022⁸.

In parallel, the European Commission committed €790,125,617 in EU IPA grants, accounting for 99% of the WBIF total grant funding endorsed in 2023, for financing the following projects:

- Seventeen EIP flagship investments in the public and private sectors for a total grant amount of €778,908,692;
- Six technical assistance projects under the Infrastructure Project Facility (IPF) for a total grant amount of €8,480,027;
- Two technical assistance projects under the Joint Fund for a total grant amount of €2,736,898.

3.2. Bilateral Donor contribution

In 2023, the Bilateral Donors contributed €3,281,127⁸ to the Joint Fund, as follows:

- Austria: €1,000,000
- Germany: €1,531,127
- Hungary: €250,000
- Poland: €500,000

Moreover, the Bilateral Donors committed €4,795,137 in grants, accounting for 1% of the WBIF total grant funding endorsed in 2023, for financing two EIP flagship investments.

By the end of 2023, the Bilateral Donor contributions to the Joint Fund totalled €130,859,266.

3.3. Joint Fund 2023 & WBIF leverage

Total contributions to the Joint Fund reached €622,340,082 in 2023, up from €438,639,819 in 2022⁸, of which €186,880,000 was transferred from the Joint Fund to implementing entities for seven technical assistance and nineteen investment projects during the year.

In 2023, the European Commission and Bilateral Donors committed to financing two technical assistance projects and sixteen EIP flagship investments in the region's public and private sectors through the Joint Fund.

In summary, the 4th and 5th WBIF Operational Boards endorsed a total grant amount of €794,920,754 in 2023. Of this, €719,615,590 in EU IPA funds and €4,795,137 in Bilateral Donor funds were endorsed for funding through the Joint Fund.

WBIF works on the principle of leverage. Each investment grant aims to mobilise loans and other public and private financial resources for an overall investment (total project cost) exceeding the size of the grant. The multiplier effect reflects the additional amount of finance a grant can help to mobilise as a financial input into an investment project that will then deliver beneficial results in line with policy

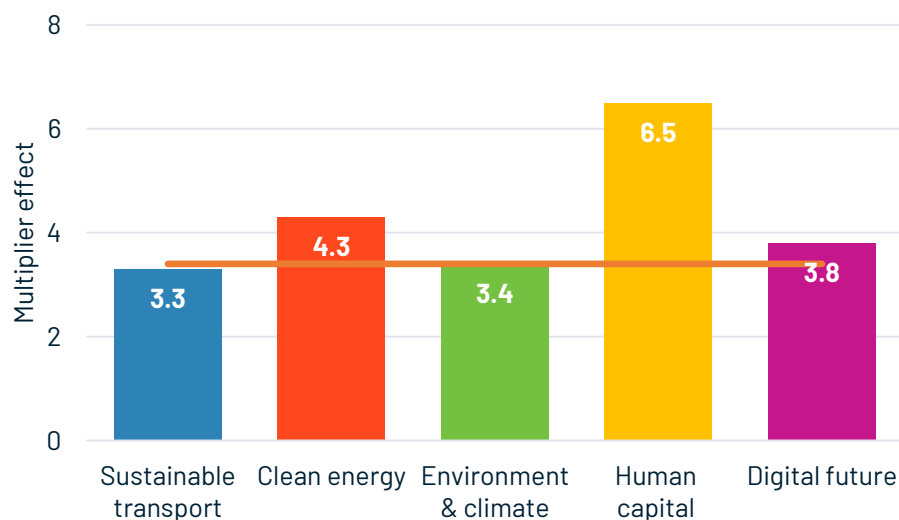
⁸ Joint Fund audited financial statements for 2023.

objectives.

In 2009-2023, the WBIF allocated €3.2 billion in investment grants for €11.5 billion in investments in the public sector. Additionally, these investments benefitted from €73.6 million in technical assistance for project preparation and implementation.

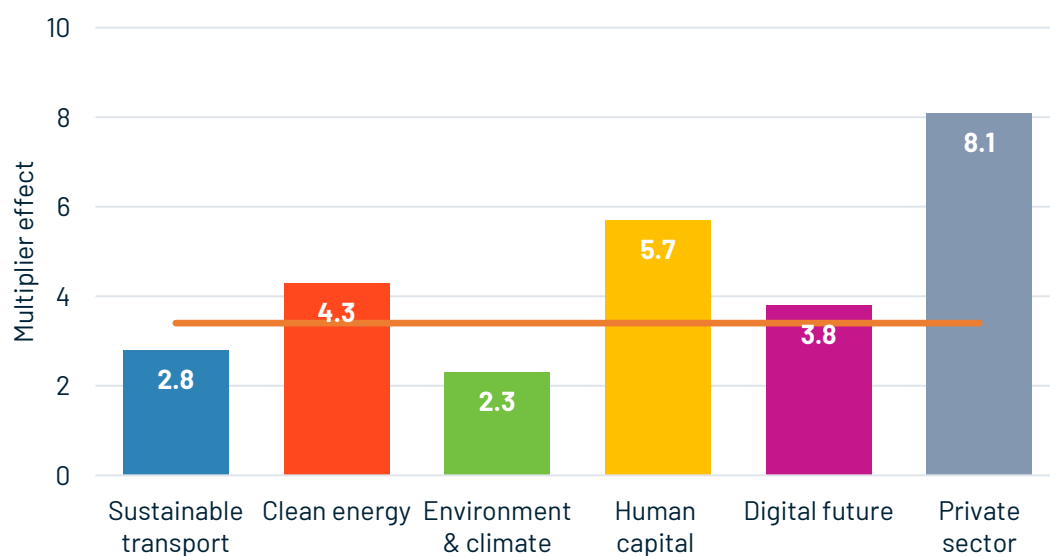
Thus, the multiplier effect⁹ of public sector projects co-financed by investment grants in 2009-2023 is 3.5 times the grant component. It varies from 3.3 for transport projects to 6.5 for human capital projects, depending on the co-financing rate, sector, beneficiary economy, and investment specifics.

Figure 3.1: Multiplier effect of public sector projects co-financed by investment grants 2009-2023



The ratio decreases to 3.4 times the grant component for the EIP flagship investments endorsed in 2020-2023. It remains above 2 in all areas of intervention, ranging from 2.3 for environmental projects to 8.1 in the private sector.

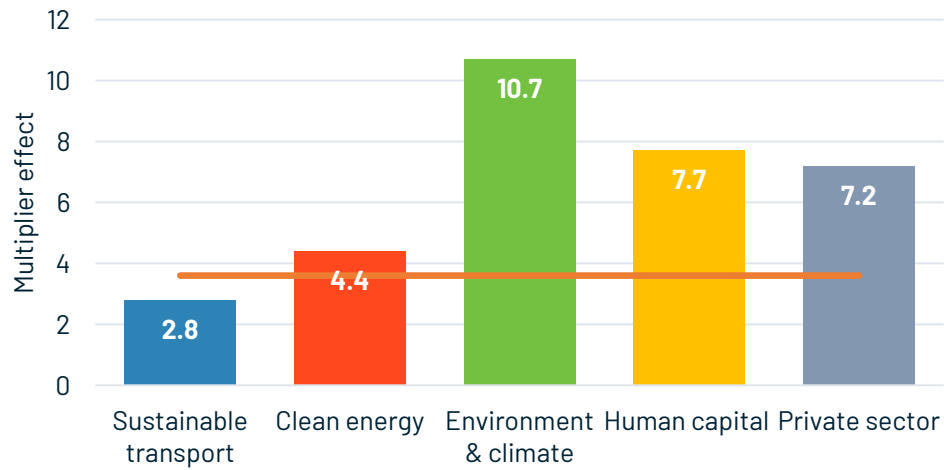
Figure 3.2: Multiplier effect of EIP flagship investments endorsed in 2020-2023



⁹ Ratio between total investment against WBIF grants for projects co-financed by investment grants.

For the EIP flagship investments endorsed in 2023, the multiplier effect is 3.6 times the grant component, ranging from 2.8 for transport projects to over 7 for human capital and the private sector, with a maximum of 10.7 for environmental projects.

Figure 3.3: Multiplier effect of EIP flagship investments endorsed in 2023



Annex 1: Visibility events 2023

The WBIF communication and visibility activities progressed and were promoted on the WBIF website and social media channels ([LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#)).

Key achievements of communication and visibility activities in 2023 were:

- Over 20 high-level visibility events supported
- 29,430 visitors on WBIF website
- 45 newsflashes published and disseminated
- Over 50 original posts promoted on social media
- 3 feature stories on supported investments published
- 18 publications and 11 videos produced

The main events in 2023 are shown below.

#	Event	Location	IFI	Date
1	SME Go Green Programme kick-off in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina	EBRD	15 December
2	Serbia – Bulgaria gas pipeline opened to diversify energy supplies	Serbia	EIB	12 December
3	Support project for preparing the gas interconnection between North Macedonia and Serbia launched	Serbia, North Macedonia	EBRD	21 November
4	Western Balkans to benefit from increased advisory support through JASPERS	Brussels	EIB, JASPERS	8 November
5	European Commission’s President spells-out new Growth Plan during visit to the Western Balkans	Western Balkans	-	6 November
6	A new home for 50 displaced families in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina	CEB	16 October
7	Works start on the first school under WBIF-supported education programme in Montenegro	Montenegro	EIB	4 September
8	First section of the EU-financed Peace Highway in Serbia open	Serbia	EIB, EBRD	28 July
9	Grant agreement for the solar plant in Oslomej signed	North Macedonia	EBRD	3 July
10	EU funding opportunities for private sector in Serbia	North Macedonia	EBRD	3 July
11	Works to begin on school building upgrades for energy efficiency in Montenegro	Montenegro	KfW	26 June
12	New skills for new rails	Albania	EBRD, EIB	19 June
13	Energy efficiency in Sarajevo in images	Bosnia and Herzegovina	EBRD	6 June
14	New EU grants for major infrastructure investments in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina	EBRD	29 May
15	Kick-off for Montenegro Broadband Infrastructure Development Technical Assistance Project	Montenegro	EBRD	24 April
16	Phase II begins for Nikšić wastewater management system, Montenegro	Montenegro	EIB	10 April
17	Sarajevo summit discusses digital development in the	Bosnia and	EBRD, EIB,	30 March

#	Event	Location	IFI	Date
	Western Balkans	Herzegovina	RCC	
18	Kick-off meeting for WBIF EU-funded project for Secondary Sewerage Network for Mostar City	Bosnia and Herzegovina	EIB	27 March
19	EU invests €70 million in largest wastewater treatment plant in North Macedonia	North Macedonia	EIB	24 March
20	Energy Challenges Conference in Tirana, Albania	Albania	EBRD	17 March
21	EU disburses €80 million to North Macedonia as part of energy support package	North Macedonia	-	13 March
22	EU energy support package of €30 million to help most vulnerable households and SMEs in Montenegro	Montenegro	-	10 March
23	Work begins on energy-efficient Student City I campus dormitories in Tirana	Albania	KfW	10 March
24	€35 million in EU support for Children Hospital Tiršova 2, Serbia – first patients expected in 2026	Serbia	CEB	9 March
25	From Belgrade to Niš at 200 km/h – EU financial package of €2.2 bn for Railway Corridor X	Serbia	EIB, EBRD	3 March
26	Energy Support Package in action - The rehabilitation of six hydropower plants in North Macedonia	North Macedonia	KfW	28 February
27	EU energy support of €165 million to help most vulnerable households and SMEs in Serbia	Serbia	-	14 February
28	Additional EU support for the railway network modernisation in Kosovo	Kosovo	EIB	13 February
29	Signing of works contracts for flood protection measures in Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina	EIB	9 February
30	The Bilateral Donor Community activities in 2022	Western Balkans	n/a	6 February
31	Start of works on the Bulgarian stretch of Serbia - Bulgaria gas interconnector	Serbia	EIB	3 February
32	EU supports the final section of the Trans-Balkan Electricity Corridor in Serbia	Serbia	KfW	31 January
33	North Macedonia stirring towards a greener future	North Macedonia	KfW	16 January

Abbreviations

AFD	Agence Française de Développement
CDP	Cassa Depositi e Prestiti
CEB	Council of Europe Development Bank
COM	Communication
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EDFI	European Development Finance Institutions
EFSD+	European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus
EFSE	European Fund for Southeast Europe
EIB	European Investment Bank
EIBG	EIB Group
EIF	European Investment Fund
EIP	Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans
ENEF	Enterprise Expansion Fund
ESG	Environmental, Social, and Governance
EU	European Union
GGF	Green for Growth Fund
GWh	Gigawatt-hour
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFI	International Financial Institution
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IPARD	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance for Rural Development
IPF	Infrastructure Project Facility
JASPERS	Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
Lead IFI	Lead Financial Institution
MSEs	Micro and Small Enterprises
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MW	Megawatt
MWh	Megawatt-hour
PFI	Partner Financial Institution
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
REEP	Regional Energy Efficiency Programme for the Western Balkans
SMEs	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
SSTP	Safe and Sustainable Transport Programme
TA	Technical Assistance
TEN-T	Trans-European Transport Network
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	World Bank
WB EDIF	Western Balkans Enterprise and Innovation Facility
WBIF	Western Balkans Investment Framework