



## 22<sup>nd</sup> MEETING OF THE WBIF STEERING COMMITTEE

### Minutes of Meeting

Note: the 22<sup>nd</sup> WBIF was conducted as virtual meeting. The list of participants (annex 1) and the chat transcripts (Annex 2) for both days are attached.

#### 09 June: WBIF Policy and Strategy Session

#### Opening Remarks

The **WBIF SC Co-chair DG NEAR, Mrs. Katarína Mathernová**, Deputy Director General, DG NEAR, European Commission welcomed participants to the first virtual WBIF Steering Committee meeting and briefly introduced the European Commissions' response to the devastating impact of the Covid-19 crisis. In an un-paralleled effort, EU institutions, Member States and IFIs embarked on a response as a "Team Europe" in record time. This crisis also clearly demonstrated the importance of regional cooperation, within the EU and within the Western Balkans (WB) and inter-region solidarity. The **WBIF SC Co-chair Austria, Mrs. Elisabeth Gruber**, Head of Department for International Financial Institutions, Federal Ministry of Finance, also welcomed participants and reiterated the importance of continuance of operation of WBIF, showing solidarity with the WB partners in their efforts to meet short, medium and long term challenges, and to capitalise on the achieved development gains.

#### COVID-19 response in the context of Team Europe and Commission's proposal on the Multi-Financial Framework

**DG NEAR** (Mrs. Katarína Mathernová) introduced the European Commission's response to the COVID-19 crisis. The European Commission published, on 08 April 2020, the Communication on the Global EU response to COVID -19, drawing contributions from all EU institutions and combining the resources mobilised by EU Member States and financial institutions, in particular the EIB and the EBRD. Working together, this "Team Europe" musters a critical mass that few others can match and is unparalleled in many ways. The entire "package" exceeds €3 billion and contains: (i) €455 million in Financial Instruments and Technical Assistance to ensure survival in the short-term, and recovery in the medium-term of businesses in the private sector, specifically targeted to support SMEs; this includes reorientation of the Western Balkans Guarantee (€ 120 million), (ii) €750 million Macro-Financial Assistance (MFA) intended as an exceptional EU crisis response instrument in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, to limit the economic fallout. These MFA funds are available for 12 months in the form of loans on highly favourable terms, with specifically light conditionalities. Finally, (iii) through the EIB (including ELM) €1.7 billion are available for additional loans for public sector investments and credit to enterprises, to help safeguard jobs for the many people working in SMEs in the region. The EBRD expects to provide EUR 1.5 - EUR 1.7 billion of financing in the Western Balkans in 2020. Out of these two thirds will be directly linked to Covid-19 crisis response. The rest of the European Commission funded package includes immediate support to the health sector, €38 million to procure medical equipment, €20 million of regional assistance reprogrammable towards supporting the health systems

and vulnerable groups and €389 million IPA bilateral funding to build-up resilience of the national health systems and to cushion for the social and economic impact of the crisis. All this demonstrates clearly that the European Union is by far the strongest supporter of the Western Balkans.

The Economic Reform Program (ERP) too has been adjusted to the COVID crisis, while modalities have been kept on track. ERP policy guidance was jointly agreed with the WB leaders (and Turkey) on 19 May this year, focusing on (i) preserving macroeconomic stability and reinforcing financial stability, (ii) support to the businesses affected by the crisis, in particular SMEs and self-employed, (iii) ensuring transparency on the mitigating and support measures adopted by the countries and (iv) preserving employment, strengthening social protection and the healthcare system's resilience.

On 27 May 2020, the European Commission proposed a revamped long-term EU budget of €1.1 trillion for 2021-2027 and presented the "Next Generation EU Package", worth €750 billion, which will not only support Member States in their recovery efforts, but also support Europe's global partners. Concretely, the "Next Generation EU Package" proposes reinforcements relevant to the Western Balkans: (1) to mobilise under the current EU budget (2020) an additional €1 billion (translating into a guarantee capacity of €2 billion) to the EFSD, while at the same time extending the geographical cover of the EFSD to the Western Balkans. (2) Mobilisation of €10.5 billion under the next EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) (2021-2027), reinforcing the capacity of the External Action Guarantee under the EFSD+ and support partners in their efforts to fight and recover from the impact of the pandemic. This translates into a guarantee ceiling of up to EUR 130 billion worldwide; this will also be accessible to the Western Balkans under the new IPA III. These instruments are particularly appropriate to address the negative consequences of the COVID-19 crisis and show the commitment of the EU to support our partner countries.

#### Presentations "fit for purpose Western Balkan/COVID-19 Guarantees"

**DG NEAR** (Mrs. Katarína Mathernová) informed participants about the re-orientation of the WB Guarantee Facility (€120 million) in the light of the COVID-19 crisis, to ensure the Guarantees are 'specifically fit for purpose as COVID-19 guarantees', targeting the liquidity needs of SMEs. The goal is to deploy this support swiftly and to tackle the short and medium term economic impact of the pandemic. Overall, nine proposals for the WB Guarantee for an amount of circa €241,2 million were submitted by EBRD, EIB, EIF, IFC and KfW. Three proposals were selected and will be presented.

**EBRD** (Mrs. Charlotte Ruhe) introduced EBRD's "Growth4All (women and youth led businesses and agri-businesses)" a guarantee aiming at facilitating MSME short-term working capital and longer-term investment loans through participating financial institutions in all six WB economies. Two pillars are foreseen (1) for crisis response and (2) for recovery support. The programme will enhance access to finance, through credit lines and technical assistance to particularly support women-led SMEs, youth-led SMEs and agribusinesses. This will be complemented by advisory services under the well-established Advice for Small Business Programme, which is supported by a separate EU contribution. Through this Guarantee programme, EBRD expects to mobilise €164 million in financing, with an expected private sector contribution of €14 million. Mrs. Ruhe also highlighted the relevance of the recent top-up granted by the European Commission to the EU-EBRD Regional SME Competitiveness

Support Programme. The Programme, in its original and extended form, is an important measure for SME support in the COVID-19 context.

**IFC** (Mrs. Wiebke Schloemer) introduced the “Western Balkans Agricultural Risk Sharing Facility”. This guarantee targets finance for agriculture producers and more broadly rural areas in all six WB economies (i.e. farmers including women and youth farmers, Agri-MSMEs and businesses in rural areas). This guarantee will mobilize investments for much needed sector modernisation and digital transformation, via a holistic program designed to i) de-risk agri-finance and help reduce transaction costs for FIs in the medium to longer term; ii) promote digitalization of the agri-sector both in local financial intermediaries as well as on end user level; iii) introduce climate smart agriculture concepts and machinery; iv) focus on the MSMEs that have the potential to grow and/or are export oriented and v) address demographic trends.

**KfW** (Mr. Christoph Tiskens) introduced the approach to provide COVID-19 recovery support to MSMEs through local credit guarantee funds, including the Rural Credit Guarantee Foundation (RCGF, [www.rcgf.al](http://www.rcgf.al)) in Albania, the Kosovo Credit Guarantee Fund (KCGF, [www.fondikgk.org/en](http://www.fondikgk.org/en)) and potentially the recently established Serbia Entrepreneurship Foundation. Using counter-guarantees from the EU via KfW, these institutions will be able to reassure the local financial sector to quickly and continuously deploy short-term liquidity and sustainable investment financing. This will safeguard jobs and support a fast rebound of more than 4700 MSMEs, including recently created and micro companies.

### **Discussion**

**CEB** (Mr. Stephan Sellen) informed participants about CEB’s COVID-19 €4 billion emergency loans, of which €200 million are foreseen in Serbia, €35 million in Kosovo \* as CEB’s contribution to the TeamEurope initiative. **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (Mrs. Sabina Dizdarevic) enquired if the KfW guarantee would also be available for other WB countries. **North Macedonia** (Mrs. Suzanna Peneva) enquired if the KfW guarantee / loans were also foreseen for intermediate bodies. **EBRD** (Mrs. Camilla Otto) enquired if there are any material differences between the current and upcoming guarantees, if these will be implemented in parallel and how this will be coordinated. **EIB** (Mr. Matteo Rivellini) enquired about the nature of the “rejected” guarantee bids and the selection criteria. **Germany** (Mrs. Sabrina Brabetz) enquired if there were overlaps between the EFSD if prolonged for one year, topped up and available for the WB and EFSD+ guarantees. **KfW** (Mr. Thomas Adams) requested information on the timeline for the guarantees.

**KfW** (Mr. Christoph Tiskens) clarified that the KfW guarantee is, for the time being, restricted to the countries listed and initially focused on Albania and Kosovo\*, since this ensures fast deployment through existing credit guarantee funds as well as complementarity with existing MSME support schemes. **DG NEAR** (Mrs. Katarína Mathernová and Mr. Colin Wolfe) clarified the guarantees will be implemented in parallel, thus overlaps are possible; the other proposals submitted for the WB Guarantee scheme will be put on a “reserve list” and can be implemented as soon as new funding will

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\* 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.

become available. DG NEAR will officially notify IFIs concerned in the coming days. Further details will be shared with WBIF stakeholders in the near future.

### **Western Balkans State of play – Political context and challenges ahead**

**DG NEAR** (Mrs. Genoveva Ruiz-Calavera) presented political context and challenges in the WBs and reminded participants of the responsiveness of the European Commission even before the COVID-19 crisis, for example, the European Union's immediate response to the disastrous earthquake in Albania, providing much needed relief to the worst affected. In February this year, a revised enlargement methodology was published, and accession negotiations were opened with Albania and North Macedonia in March. Once the full scale of the unprecedented COVID related crisis became apparent, efforts were employed to supporting the Western Balkan partners in their fight against COVID-19. In April, the Commission adopted a Communication "Support to the Western Balkans in tackling COVID-19 and the post-pandemic recovery" which announced an unparalleled financial package of EUR 3.3 billion that the EU, together with the EIB, has mobilised. This package is designed to help the WBs to address the immediate needs in the health sector but also to take the first measures to mitigate the socio-economic impact and to inject liquidity to small and medium sized companies in the Western Balkan region. In addition to financial assistance, the Western Balkan partners were given access to European Union instruments, for example with the Joint Procurement Initiative to buy medical supplies like masks and ventilators, export restrictions were also removed and "green corridors" introduced, ensuring unhindered flow of essential goods and supplies (foods, medicines, etc.).

The EU-Western Balkans leaders met virtually on 6 May for the Zagreb Summit and endorsed, inter alia, the idea of drawing up an "Economic and Investment Plan" with the aim to spur medium to long-term recovery, to create jobs by boosting economic growth, to increase further trade flows within the region and with the EU and finally to support the necessary reforms required on the EU path. The Plan will be further aligned with the priorities of the European Commission and there will be a strong focus on Trans-European transport and energy links and upgrading infrastructures that are crucial for economic development. The Green transition and the Digital transformation will play also a central role. In addition, support will be provided for an economy that works for people: support to education, strengthening the health and social protection systems, as well as research and innovation potential will be key components. The "Economic and Investment Plan" is expected to be presented in autumn 2020.

The WBIF will play a key role in delivering this Economic and Investment Plan and its priorities. The Commission will substantially increase grants to all WBIF sectors over the next 7-year period – details depending of course on agreement on the final MFF later this year.

Institutionally, in line with the recent reforms adopted at the 21<sup>st</sup> WBIF SC, the WBIF governance structures will be kept intact, to the extent possible under the future architecture which needs to be duly discussed and built in alignment with relevant provisions in the proposed draft IPA III and NDICI (EFSD+) legislation; further close consultations with the WBIF stakeholders will take place. Operationally, WBIF has been instrumental for preparing and implementing a high number of infrastructure projects and delivering on the 1 billion EUR Connectivity Agenda pledge. Under IPA III, a more strategic and efficient approach will be needed with the increased funding opportunities. Four aspects will be crucial:

- (1) Further enhancement and establishment of a corridor approach;
- (2) The enhanced corridor approach will need to be based on updated and transparent investment priorities, made visible through the Single Project Pipelines;
- (3) Speeding up implementation and addressing of bottlenecks; and
- (4) Better visibility, people must be able to see and feel the impact of WBIF on the ground.

### **Discussion**

**Germany** (Mrs. Sabrina Brabetz) enquired if the “Next Generation EU” would entail additional funds for IPA as IPA is the instrument for supporting the WB. **CEB** (Mr. Stephan Sellen) raised two additional concerns at the WBs, (a) the ongoing brain-drain, exacerbated now by skilled labor drain which is resulting in delays in project implementation and additional costs, and (b) the migration crisis. He indicated that CEB would present a paper regarding the brain- drain and skilled labor drain for the winter meeting. **EBRD** (Mrs. Zsuzsanna Hargitai) requested details on the status of the green agenda.

**DG NEAR** (Mrs. Genoveva Ruiz-Calavera) clarified that €10.5 billion under EFSD+ are foreseen for the “Next Generation EU”. The EU is aware of these (other) systemic problems at the WBs, brain drain and the migration crisis; under IPA €22 million have been allocated to Bosnia and Herzegovina alleviating the refugee crisis, another €11 million are planned for Serbia. If suitable refugee or “brain drain” initiatives are brought forward by the WB partners, WBIF might be in a position to take these further. Discussion on the Green Agenda continue with a view to announce it later in the year.

### **Statement by WBIF SC Co-chair Austria “Bilateral Donor’s priorities”**

The **WBIF SC Co-chair Austria**, (Mrs. Elisabeth Gruber) informed participants about the priorities set by the Bilateral Donors for 2020. In light of the current pandemic, priorities have shifted this year; the implications of COVID-19 are far-reaching and span from grave immediate challenges in the health sector, to multifaceted socio-economic hardships across Europe, including the Western Balkans. The Bilateral Donors reconfirm their solidarity and support to the Western Balkan region and its people in these challenging times. The Bilateral Donors greatly welcome the wide range of COVID-19 response initiatives providing targeted support in this respect. In the light of this potentially transformative reform momentum, the Bilateral Donors support the call for a comprehensive, sustainable and green recovery, in order to facilitate lasting benefits to people and economies. The WBIF remains well-placed to comprehensively contribute to the joint endeavour of improving the quality of peoples’ lives in the Western Balkans, across all sectors. The Bilateral Donors also welcome the renewed commitment to a credible EU perspective for the Western Balkans, as recently reaffirmed at the virtual EU-Western Balkans summit, as this is a strong sign of continuous engagement and mutual interest for our shared European future. The Bilateral Donors also took note of the European Commission’s intention to devote more funding to the region in the new MMF and look forward to learn more about the Commission’s regional economic and investment development plan.

Against this background, current reform efforts should be used to make the WBIF fit for the future. The Bilateral Donors acknowledge first steps of implementation of reforms, and the need for further exchange with all stakeholders on open issues, such as the Commission’s proposal of a separate, specific governance for the Western Balkans in the EU under the WBIF in this respect; and questioned the justification of such changes with notable structural implications for the WBIF – a successful, well-

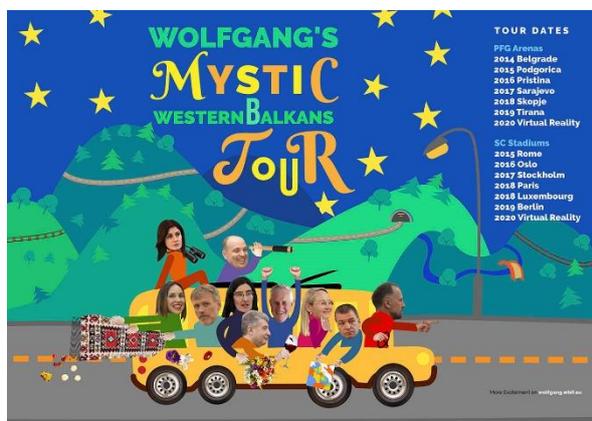
placed, best-practice regional blending platform for investments in the Western Balkans, primarily aimed at addressing the region's infrastructure needs – for the mere integration of an additional financing instrument. Apart from this fundamental question, several other open questions remain. This topic deserves comprehensive discussion and due consultation within the WBIF before taking any decision on substance.

The Bilateral Donors remain firmly committed to engage in further comprehensive discussions in a timely and transparent manner. The principles of cooperation and partnership are and should remain the distinctive characteristic of the WBIF at its institutional core. Thus, one of the key priorities will be continuation of constructive dialogues, on how to best use and jointly shape the WBIF as equal stakeholder groups. The Bilateral Donors look forward to building the European future together.

### EIB's Response to the Covid-19 crisis including through the EU External Lending Mandate (ELM)

**EIB** (Mr. Matteo Rivellini) presented EIB's set of emergency measures for the WB (including through ELM), implemented to address liquidity and investment constraints of businesses and public sector. €1.7 billion were activated as crisis response for the WBs, within the €3.3 billion Team Europe package. Three pillars are being implemented: Pillar 1, for immediate response to health care and civil protection emergencies; Pillar 2 for health sector preparedness and recovery; and and Pillar 3 for medium term support to the economy. Across these 3 Pillars the EIB will mobilise i) €450 million financing with fast-track action, ii) a €500 million regional facility for the public sector to support the health care sector and SMEs, iii) a €400 million regional facility for commercial banks to support SMEs and Mid-caps and iv) accelerate €350 million of existing pipeline. As part of these support measures, new financing will be provided at flexible terms, disbursements will be accelerated, existing facilities will be topped up and/or re-purposed, in order to increase economic impact and accelerate response time. However, EIB's view goes also beyond the (current) crisis and emphasis is put on the green agenda principles, innovation and digitisation, better infrastructure and connectivity, job creation and impact finance.

### AOB



The entire WBIF community thanked Mr Wolfgang Schläger (DG NEAR), for his service to WBIF and wishes him all the best for his future.

### Opening remarks

The **WBIF SC Co-chair Austria** (Mrs. Elisabeth Gruber) welcomed participants, reaffirmed the Bilateral Donor’s (BD) solidarity with the WBs, especially during this pandemic. The BD community looks particularly forward to a close consultation of all WBIF stakeholders for the design of the WBIF 3.0 architecture and stressed the importance of a green recovery in the WBs.

The **WBIF SC Co-chair DG NEAR** (Mr. Colin Wolfe) also welcomed participants to the traditional Infrastructure session and reaffirmed WBIF’s and the European Union’s strong commitment to and solidarity with the WBs and its people. It was impressive to see how the WBs, so far, have coped with the pandemic, as no significant delays were noted at the WBs, constructions projects continued, technical assistance projects were and are delivered, only public hearings had to be rescheduled. During the last months, some European Union principles have emerged from ongoing discussions, for example the “Corridor Approach”; focus should be given to projects that complete the Corridors, INV for physical infrastructure and TA, preparing INV projects and/or addressing bottlenecks. To swiftly advance on this, the Western Balkan partners are expected to produce solid Single Project Pipelines with clear priorities and mature projects. Overall, implementation speed needs to increase, and bottlenecks need to be addressed and resolved. Finally, additional efforts will be employed to increase visibility on the ground, in the WBs, in a way that people understand and feel the impact of all the good work done. Every crisis also brings opportunities, and WBIF will capitalise on these, and for example strongly support the de-carbonisation process in the WBs. This is where policy (and strategy) steer has a direct impact to the operational aspects of WBIF; initiatives such as the European Energy Community Secretariat deliver most valuable input and information from the front lines, allowing for respective decisions under WBIF to support policy and strategy principles.

### Energy Community Secretariat “current work on energy and climate aspects”

**ECS** (Mr. Dirk Buschle, Deputy Director) presented the status at the WBs in their efforts to implement policies aimed at de-carbonisation of their economies. One of the main challenges throughout the WBs is the liquidity of the energy utilities, especially during and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Every recovery process, however, also bear opportunities and the energy sectors are being rebuilt based on the “Green Deal” objectives. Following the introduction of the EU “Large Combustion Plant Directive” in 2018, also in the WBs, all “old” combustion plants have expiry labels attached and coal is being phased out. This phase out of (old) coal is contingent on support to the WB partners, in their attempts to de-carbonise their economies and on the provision of valid alternatives; these include focus on renewables, energy efficiency and gas. In fact, renewables experienced a boom in recent years, but this transition requires “smart” policies. For example, auctions; a recent example from Albania shows that, if structured well, tariffs below market prices can be achieved. Off take risks need to be addressed in a sustainable way, allowing for long term offtake agreements. The potential in the energy efficiency market are also huge, large scale building renovation must be implemented and the investment needs in the residential sector in the WBs are estimated at €42 billion. The WB Guarantee fund should be opened for energy efficiency projects. Gas, while a “carbon” fuel, is much cleaner than coal and should be considered where no other alternatives are available. An integrated gas market, however, requires a liquid gas market, which is not available throughout the WBs. Coal subsidies should be phased out and Emission Trading Scheme should be comprehensively introduced. Any

transition needs to be socially just, support for the low income and vulnerable groups need to be provided. Finally, any de-carbonisation process needs to be monitored, on regional and national levels. The ECS is in the process of designing such a monitoring and reporting tool.

**KfW** (Mrs. Susanne Schroth) enquired if and to which extent national stand-alone energy efficiency projects can be supported under IPA III. **Serbia** (Mrs. Aleksandra Radinovic) requested further details on the Green Agenda and the funds available. **EBRD** (Mrs. Zsuzsanna Hargitai) requested details on the authors for the Green Agenda and whether a draft version can be shared.

**DG NEAR** (Mr. Colin Wolfe) clarified that the regional energy market consists of “integrated” stand-alone projects, thus support under IPA III will be available also to national energy efficiency projects. Details on the Green Agenda and specific further details and information can be expected for autumn, since the Green Agenda is now also being redrafted given the pandemic situation. Once further information on the Green Agenda becomes available, DG NEAR will share it with the WBIF stakeholders.

#### Status update European Western Balkans Joint Fund

**EBRD** (Mrs. Jasmin Khalaf) presented the status of the European Western Balkans Joint Fund and announced a new pledge by Germany over €1 million. The available balance of the Joint Fund, unallocated and subject to Bilateral Donor’s priorities is approximately €3.61 million.

#### WBIF Project Approval Session TA Round 23

The **PFG Co-chair DG NEAR** (Mr. Wolfgang Schläger) reiterated the eligibility criteria for TA Round 23, set at the 21th WBIF SC: “Only priority projects in the digital infrastructure, environment and social sectors are eligible. Application for projects already existing in these three sectors in the WBIF portfolio as well as for new projects are accepted in this new round.” Overall the 8 applications were received for a total (original) grant amount €9.77 million split over the WB partners: ALB 3, BIH 2, KOS 1, SRB 2 and sectors: 4 DII, 2 ENV and 2 SOC. During screening and assessment, the grant amounts were revised, resulting in a total (fees included) TA Rd 23 grant request of €8.31 million. The grant applications were introduced and then presented “en-bloc” by the beneficiaries, the IFIs reaffirmed their support.

#	Code	Beneficiary	Sector	Short title	Lead IFI	Grant submitted (€)	Grant revised (€)	Grant incl. imp. fee (€)	Source of funds
1.	WB23-ALB-DII-01	Albania	DII	Broadband Atlas for Albania: Pre-feasibility Study	AFD	500,000	250,000	251,250	IPF
2.	WB23-ALB-DII-02	Albania	DII	Smart Cities – Smart Villages: Conceptual Design, Feasibility Study, ESIA	EBRD	700,000	191,000	191,955	IPF
3.	WB23-ALB-DII-04	Albania	DII	HPC Infrastructure: Pre-feasibility Study, Needs Assessment	EIB	700,000	400,000	402,000	IPF
4.	WB23-BIH-ENV-01	Bosnia and Herzegovina	ENV	Sarajevo Water Project: Technical Assistance for Supervision of Works Financed by Tranche 2 Loan	EBRD	500,000	500,000	520,000	JF
5.	WB23-BIH-SOC-01	Bosnia and Herzegovina	SOC	Housing and Social Integration of Vulnerable Persons Living in Collective Accommodation: Technical	CEB	600,000	600,000	624,000	JF

#	Code	Beneficiary	Sector	Short title	Lead IFI	Grant submitted (€)	Grant revised (€)	Grant incl. imp. fee (€)	Source of funds
				Assistance for Project Implementation, Management and Coordination					
6.	WB23-KOS-DII-01	Kosovo	DII	Advancing Digital Connectivity for Economic Development in the Municipality of Prizren: Pre-feasibility Study	EIB	1,000,000	350,000	351,750	IPF
7.	WB23-SRB-ENV-01	Serbia	ENV	Development and Implementation of Integral Torrential Floods and Erosion Protection Measures, Works and Structures Based on a Green Solution in Krupanj Pilot Area, Jadar River Basin: Conceptual Solution, Feasibility Study, ESIA, Preliminary Design	AFD	770,000	770,000	773,850	IPF
8.	WB23-SRB-SOC-01	Serbia	SOC	Greening the Public Sector - Rehabilitation of VMA Hospital: Technical Assistance for Project Preparation and Implementation	KfW	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,200,000	JF
<b>Total</b>						<b>9,770,000</b>	<b>8,061,000</b>	<b>8,314,805</b>	

The **22<sup>nd</sup> WBIF SC** unanimously approved the TA Round 23 Grant Applications, for a **total grant allocation of €8,314,805**, whereas **5 projects for €1,970,805** will be financed by the IPF instrument and **3 projects for €6,344,000** will be financed by the **European Western Balkan Joint Fund<sup>2</sup>**.

The **WBIF Secretariat** will issue the Grant Award Notifications upon effectiveness of the minutes of meeting.

#### Eligibility Criteria and Launch of TA Round 24 & INV Round 06

**DG NEAR** (Mr. Wolfgang Schläger) presented the approximate status of available funds for TA Round 24. Under the IPF instrument, including the expected funds under IPF 10, adjusted by written procedures and unallocated ToR from past rounds, and TA Round 23 deducted, approximately €18 million are available. The European Commission will further inject €19 million for TA into the Joint Fund, of which €6.3 are needed for the TA Round 23 projects. In addition, €3.8 million are needed for other projects (€2.1 M for WB15-MKD-TRA-01, €500k for WB20-KOS-ENV-01, and €1.2 M for WB9-HR-SOC-01).

The **22<sup>nd</sup> WBIF Steering Committee** took note of an approximate, unallocated **Joint Fund** balance of **€8.4 million (excl. administration fee) of European Commission contributions** and **€3.61 of unallocated Bilateral Donor contributions**. Under the **IPF instrument**, approximately **€18 million** will be available.

The **WBIF SC Co-Chair Austria** (Mrs. Agnes Drimmel) informed participants of the Bilateral Donors' decision not to commit currently limited BD contributions in the Joint Fund to any current project applications at this stage. BDs positively noted that the Commission is willing to cover TA23 projects with funds are expected to be available; once there is clarity on the overall funding situation in 2020

<sup>2</sup> The TA projects allocated to the EWBIF in TA Round 23 will be financed from the European Commission's contribution to the EWBIF.

on the basis of potential additional contributions to the JF, partly delayed due to the pandemic, BDs will take a decision on the allocation of Bilateral Donors' funds, with particular focus on INV05 ENV and SOC projects that do not yet apply for Commission funding under the current MFF.

**DG NEAR** (Mr. Wolfgang Schläger) further informed participants about the advanced discussions of the European Commission, the Bilateral Donors, EIB and EBRD about a planned funding swap. The European Commission cannot finance a project originally allocated to the IPF instrument, Zadar University, due to legal reasons relating to Croatia's EU membership; the Bilateral Donors agreed, in principle, to fund this project from their contributions to the Joint Fund, and DG NEAR will allocate an equal amount into the Joint Fund to be used in agreement with bilateral donors for additional projects under the WBIF Joint Fund. A written procedure to the extent has been launched.

#### TA Round 24

**DG NEAR** (Mr. Wolfgang Schläger) proposed, given the somewhat positive funding situation, an open unrestricted round for TA Round 24, and restrict the transport sector to the core network.

The **22nd WBIF Steering Committee unanimously set the eligibility criteria for TA Round 24**: Grant Applications are invited in all sectors, DII, ENE, ENV and SOC and are not restricted; applications in the TRA sector must be on the Core Network.

#### INV Round 06

**DG NEAR** (Mr. Wolfgang Schläger) informed participants about the ongoing deliberations in various EU institutions pertaining to IPA III. Unfortunately, also due to the pandemic, these discussions are still ongoing, thus various conditionalities especially for the non-connectivity sectors are not yet at a level that would allow for a clear transposition into the WBIF. In addition, in the DII sectors, deliberations on the eligible sub-sectors and appropriate co-financing rates are still ongoing. Since INV Round 06 projects will be financed under IPA III, Commission funds will be open to all sectors, subject to such conditions as will be required under IPA III; in connectivity sectors TRA and ENE, these conditionalities are clear and visible. For these reasons, it is proposed to launch INV Round 06 in a phased approach, with TRA and ENE launched following this SC meeting and the other sectors to be launched at the 23rd WBIF SC meeting in December 2020, or, if the situation so allows, by written procedure at an earlier date. In any case, it was requested that further details of INV Round 06 will be shared with WBIF stakeholders in due time. The call for DII, SOC and ENV would be reduced to 12 months, which, given the maturity requirements of such projects and the "need" to speed up implementation, should be enough.

The following eligibility criteria were proposed: **TRA** projects must be part of the Core Network as defined under the Indicative Extension of the TEN-T Network to the Western Balkans, in order to reinforce the focus on a corridor approach for the future and **ENE** projects must demonstrate a potential regional impact and/or a perspective to accelerate the clean energy transition of the region, except for smart grids in transmission and distribution lines as well as smart meters.

**KfW** (Mr. Pablo Alvarez and Mrs Susanne Schroth) enquired if stand-alone energy efficiency project would be eligible; further, clarity on the roles of the EUDs in preparing and programming of WBIF funding under IPA III. **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (Mrs. Nermina Saracevic and Mrs. Sabina Dizdarević)

enquired if stand-alone renewable energy and energy efficiency projects would be eligible under INV Round 06, and if urban transport projects could be supported in future rounds.

**DG NEAR** (Mr. Colin Wolfe and Mr. Wolfgang Schläger) confirmed that stand-alone energy efficiency projects will be eligible under INV Round 06, urban transport will not be eligible under this round, but could be considered in the future. The exact role and engagement of the EUDs in WBIF’s programming will need to be addressed further in the context of IPA III, maximum complementarity of the available instruments need to be ensured.

The **22nd WBIF Steering Committee unanimously agreed to launch INV Round 06 in a phased approach**, with ENE and TRA sectors launched following this 22nd WBIF SC meeting and the DII, SOC and ENV sectors to be launched at the 23rd WBIF SC meeting in December 2020, or at an earlier stage via Written Procedure. The **eligibility criteria for INV Round 06 (TRA and ENE)** are: Grant Applications are invited in the TRA sector, projects must be part of the Core Network as defined under the Indicative Extension of the TEN-T Network to the Western Balkans, in order to reinforce the focus on a corridor approach for the future, and ENE sector projects must demonstrate a potential regional impact and/or a perspective to accelerate the clean energy transition of the region, except for smart grids in transmission and distribution lines as well as smart meters.

#### Update INV Round 05

**DG NEAR** (Mr. Wolfgang Schläger) updated participants on the status of project applications under INV Round 05, launched at 20th WBIF SC in Berlin, in June 2019. Overall 17 applications received for a grant request of over €415 million. Of these, 11 screened and assessed positive so far (1 ENE, 3 ENV, 1 SOC and 6 TRA). In addition, one project is rolled over from a previous round (due to funding shortage), namely IG04-BIH-TRA-05. In total this leads to an overall grant request of €241 million.

Sector	No	Grant incl. imp. fee (€)	Beneficiary	No	Grant incl. imp. fee (€)
Energy	1	8,548,000	Albania	2	41,159,306
Environment	3	21,863,977	Bosnia and Herzegovina	5	117,296,784
Social	1	3,069,000	Kosovo	2	43,860,000
Transport	7	207,729,290	Montenegro	1	20,133,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>241,210,267</b>	North Macedonia	2	18,760,977
			Serbia	0	0
			<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>241,210,267</b>

The European Commission has approximately €135 million available this year for the connectivity relevant projects, which brings the overall Commission allocation over the originally pledged €1 billion. The projects will be further discussed, and a package will be proposed for political endorsement to the next “Berlin process” summit (expected in autumn). Any positively screened (and assessed) projects in INV Round 05, that cannot be financed due to funding shortages, will automatically be included in INV Round 06 and will enjoy priority.

**The WBIF Secretariat** (Mrs. Stine Andresen) presented the findings of the latest WBIF Monitoring Report. Overall, WBIF supported (to date) 194 projects, for an estimated project value of €20.8 billion, with loan signed over €6.1 billion and another €7.1 in estimated additional loans. The total allocated grant amount (excluding cancellations) is €1.3 billion, with 334 grants awarded in 22 rounds for TA and 5 rounds for investment. The monitoring report also shows the achieved and expected results and is thus a reliable source for indicators. Exemplary highlights are:

- ENE sector: 90 MW renewable power generation achieved, another 750 MW planned;
- TRA sector: 137 km motorway built, planned another 846 km;
- ENV sector: improved water and wastewater systems for 2 million people achieved, planned for another 6 million;
- SOC sector: better healthcare for 1.8 million people achieved and the same planned for another 9.7 million people.

### Cancellations

The following 2 projects were proposed for cancellation:

#	Grant code	Title	Lead IFI	Amount €	Source of funds
1	WB21-ALB-SOC-01	Albania, Academic and Recreational Infrastructure for the Student City of the University of Tirana: Feasibility Study, Preliminary Design	EIB	502,500	IPF
2	WB15-SRB-SOC-01	Housing Reconstruction in Kraljevo	CEB	300,000	JF (BD funds)
<b>Total</b>				<b>802,500</b>	

Regarding WB21-ALB-SOC-01: the Albanian Council of Ministers Decision No. 908, dated 20.11.2019, decided on the Public Private Partnership procedures for the construction of the Tirana University Campus. As such a WBIF financed Feasibility Study is no longer needed. Regarding WB15-SRB-SOC-01, the Municipality of Kraljevo decided to finance the supervision from their own funds. The respective IFIs and NIPAC confirmed.

The **22nd WBIF SC took note of the WBIF Monitoring Report and the Cancellations** for WB21-ALB-SOC-01 and WB15-SRB-SOC-01, the respective sums will be credited to the original sources.

### WBIF 3.0 Working Group

The **WBIF Secretariat** (Mrs. Stine Andresen) informed participants about the advances of the WBIF 3.0 Working Group (WG), which was re-activated following 22nd WBIF SC in December 2019. Activities conducted include the update of the Vademecum and Guide to WBIF (website, MIS), and relating to the remaining IPF recommendations, several written exchanges took place and one virtual meeting (26 May). The WG further discussed an EIB proposal “Beneficiaries sign up to GC” and the next WG (virtual) meeting is planned for the end of June. As another concrete outcome of the WG’s deliberations, the WBIF Secretariat Coordination Meeting Working Group (TAWG, consisting of IPFs, IFICO and EIB) are charged with the drafting of an IPF code of conduct, where issues such as the relationship of the implementing IPF and the Lead IFI will be addressed.

The WBIF 3.0 WG will also be charged with drafting of recommendations for WBIF’s new architecture under IPA III, along the maturing of the discussions of IPA III. These will be presented to the next PFG. Upon request, the invitations to the WBIF 3.0 WG will be extended to the NIPACs not already in the WG and to the EUDs.

### Communication and Visibility

**The WBIF Secretariat** (Mrs. Stine Andresen) presented the updated Communication and Visibility Plan and the WBIF Annual Report 2019 (available on the WBIF website). In addition, in the last period, the sector and country factsheets were updated, new Bilateral Donor Factsheets were produced and a Corridor Vc Factsheet; based on the latter, an overall Corridor – all WBs – brochure will be produced. In addition, the WBIF Secretariat carried out a C&V performance review. The result shows an overall good performance, but room for improvement (especially local visibility); in a first response, several PR materials are now being translated into local languages. Focus of the upcoming C&V activities will be enhanced visibility on the ground, in the WBs.

### Timeline

The timeline will be disseminated following the WBIF SC meeting. The planned dates and venues are:

#### TA Round 24 (virtual and / or physical meetings)

- Pre-notification: 14 August
- Submission: 04 September
- Endorsement: 11 September
- Screening: 02 October
- 1<sup>st</sup> PG: 08 October
- Assessment: 30 October
- 2<sup>nd</sup> PG & 29<sup>th</sup> PFG: 10-11 November
- 23<sup>rd</sup> WBIF SC meeting: 10-11 December

#### INV Round 06 (part 1): ENE and TRA

- Pre notification: 30th November 2020
- Endorsement: 31st January 2021
- Screening and assessment: 1st half 2021 (PFG, PGs)

#### INV Round 06 (part 2): ENV / SOC / DII

- Will be launched at 23rd WBIF SC

### Written Procedures

The 22<sup>nd</sup> WBIF SC takes note of the following written procedures:

Nr.	Title	Budget € M
WBIFWP: 034_22/01/20	<b>Increase grant amount</b> for WB18-MKD-TRA-01: Orient/East-Med Corridor (Road R6a), Construction of A4 Skopje – Blace Motorway, Section Interchange Stenkovec – Blace: Detailed Design, ESIA, Tender Documentation	€1,514,280
WBIFWP: 035_04/03/20	<b>Increase of grant amount</b> for “WB20-KOS-ENV-01 Kosovo, Mitrovica and Gjilan Wastewater Treatment Plants: Tender Dossier, PIU Support”.	€500,000

Nr.	Title	Budget € M
WBIFWP: 036_06/03/20	<b>Reallocation of budget and change in scope</b> for “Regional Energy Efficiency Programme for the Western Balkans (“REEP Plus”) – EBRD Programme Implementation” – to WBIF Steering Committee.	/
WBIFWP: 037_08/04/20	<b>Increase of grant amount</b> for “WB17-BIH-TRA-04, Construction of Border Crossing Point Svilaj” – to WBIF Steering Committee.	€30,900
WBIFWP: 038_15/04/20	<b>Increase of grant amount</b> for WB18-KOS-ENV-01 “Kosov River Basins Drini i Bardhe, Lepenc and Sitnica: Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment”.	€101,072.48
WBIFWP: 039_28/04/20	<b>Change of Lead IFI</b> for “WB18-BIH-TRA-02 Mediterranean Corridor (Road Cvc), Construction of Tarin - Konjic Motorway Section, Subsection Ivan Ovčari: Feasibility Study, ESIA, Detailed Design”	/
WBIFWP: 040_11/05/20	<b>Change of Scope</b> for WB20-BIH-TRA-02 “Mediterranean Corridor, Bosnia and Herzegovina – Croatia Vc Road Interconnection, Exit Prenj Tunnel – Mostar North Subsection: Detailed Design”.	/

*End of MOM.*

**Annexes:**

- 1. Annex 1: List of Participants**
- 2. Annex 2: Chat transcript**



## 22<sup>nd</sup> MEETING OF THE WBIF STEERING COMMITTEE

### Annex 1: List of Participants

#### Video conference, Day 1 - 09 June 2020

No.	Organisation	Name
1.	European Commission	Katarina Matherová
2.	European Commission	Genoveva Ruiz Calavera
3.	European Commission	Colin Wolfe
4.	European Commission	Michael Voegele
5.	European Commission	Wolfgang Schlaeger
6.	WBIF Head of Secretariat	Stine Andresen
7.	European Commission	Barbara Banki
8.	European Commission	Antonio Garcia Suarez
9.	European Commission	Anna Soltysik - Pawlic
10.	European Commission	Judit Gyori
11.	European Commission	Aleksandra Kostova
12.	European Commission	Jesus Lavina

13.	European Commission	Ingrid Sager
14.	European Commission	Cordula Glitzner
15.	European Commission	Alessandra Viezzer
16.	European Commission	Elena Andonova
17.	European Commission	Engin Goksu
18.	European Commission	Roberto Estellés – Colom
19.	European Commission	Lukas Vesely
20.	European Commission	Youssef Tadros
21.	EU Delegation to Serbia	Yngve Engstroem
22.	EU Delegation Skopje	Katerina Kus-Ivanova Filkova
23.	EU Delegation to Albania	Ardian Metaj
24.	EU Delegation Kosovo*	Besime Kajtazi
25.	EU Delegation Kosovo*	Lendita Gashi
26.	Austria	Elisabeth Gruber
27.	Austria	Agnes Drimmel
28.	France	Roger Del Rio
29.	France	Aude Portal
30.	Germany	Sabrina Brabetz
31.	Greece	Vassilios Tselios
32.	Italy	Raffaella Di Emidio

33.	Italy	Carlo Segni
34.	Italy	Alessandra Mariani
35.	Luxembourg	Miguel Marques
36.	Norway	Olav Reinertsen
37.	Norway	Guri Rusten
38.	Slovenia	Martin Zdovc
39.	Sweden	Johan Willert
40.	EBRD	Zsuzsanna Hargitai
41.	EBRD	Camilla Otto
42.	EBRD	Charlotte Ruhe
43.	EBRD	Donald Mishaxhiu
44.	EBRD	Jasmin Khalaf
45.	EBRD	Alessandro Vittadini
46.	EBRD	Ines Rocha
47.	EBRD	Biljana Scekcic
48.	EBRD	Nia Evans
49.	EBRD	Fabio Serri
50.	EIB	Massimo Cingolani
51.	EIB	Jean-Marc Arnoux
52.	EIB	Giorgio Watschinger

53.	EIB	Matteo Rivellini
54.	EIB	Guido Clary
55.	EIB	Antonio Lorenzo
56.	EIB	Gianluca Massimi
57.	EIB	Dragan Soljan
58.	EIB	Alessandro de Concini
59.	EIB	Isabelle Van Grunderbeeck
60.	EIB/JASPERS	Markus Pfeffer
61.	CEB	Stephan Sellen
62.	CEB	Gamze Deveci Durubal
63.	CEB	Miles Vitomir Raguz
64.	CEB	Florian Meyerhoefer
65.	KfW	Christoph Tiskens
66.	KfW	Suzanne Schroth
67.	KfW	Constanze Isabel Kreiß
68.	KfW	Thomas Adams
69.	KfW	Markus Aschendorf
70.	KfW	Pablo Obrador Alvarez
71.	KfW	Sasa Filipovic
72.	KfW	Markus Aschendorf

73.	World Bank	Linda Van Gelder
74.	World Bank	Lada Strelkova
75.	World Bank	Alexander Rowland
76.	World Bank	Massimiliano Paolucci
77.	World Bank	Simon David Ellis
78.	World Bank	Mario Guadamillas
79.	World Bank	Sanela Ljuca
80.	World Bank	Anara Tokusheva
81.	AFD	Guillaume Pluntz
82.	AFD	Ramona Radu
83.	AFD	Grégory Villeneuve
84.	IFC	Mariya Stankeva Hake
85.	IFC	Aleksandra Krstic
86.	IFC	Wiebke Annika Schlomer
87.	IFC	Andrea Engel
88.	IFC	Antonija Vidakovic
89.	RCC	Maja Handjiska Trendafilova
90.	Energy Community Secretariat	Violeta Kogalniceanu
91.	Albania	Ervis Sulejmani
92.	Albania	Stela Ademi

93.	Albania	Eriselda Çobo
94.	Albania	Elona Ajazi
95.	Albania	Bora Muzhaqi
96.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Nermina Saracevic
97.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Sabina Dizdarevic
98.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Jasmina Cengic
99.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Amra Nisic
100.	Kosovo*	Kastriot Halili
101.	Kosovo*	Mimoze Veliu
102.	Kosovo*	Binasa Ukaj
103.	Kosovo*	Lum Mita
104.	North Macedonia	Evgenija Serafimovska Kirkovski
105.	North Macedonia	Suzana Peneva
106.	North Macedonia	Edon Kadriu
107.	North Macedonia	Arlinda Beqiri
108.	North Macedonia	Aleksandar Andovski
109.	Montenegro	Bojan Vujovic
110.	Montenegro	Marko Dragas
111.	Serbia	Aleksandra Radinovic
112.	Serbia	Tamara Dundjerovic

113.	EIF	Alfio LO Castro
114.	EIF	Marco Giuliani
115.	IFICO	Falko Sellner
116.	IFICO	Steven Van der Touw
117.	IFICO	Jasa Gabrijan
118.	IFICO	Alexandru Trelea
119.	IFICO	Elena Postolache
120.	IFICO	Iulian Ciuca
121.	IFICO	Detlef Pulsack
122.	IFICO	Diana Dumitru
123.	IFICO	Aleksander Olsen
124.	IFICO	Adriana Alecse
125.	IFICO	Vlad Stan
126.	IFICO	Orhideja Kaljoshevska
127.	IFICO	Aleksandra Ploco
128.	IFICO	Roza Dedja
129.	IFICO	Alush Grosha
130.	IFICO	Danko Gavrilovic
131.	IFICO	Veljko Karadzic
132.	IFICO	Ana Dasic

133.	IPF5	Jeremy Lazenby
134.	IPF 6	Marek Lorinc
135.	IPF7	Martyn Osborn
136.	IPF7	Dimitrios Galanis
137.	IPF8	Vassillis Evmolpidis
138.	IPF8	Richard Thadani
139.	IPF9	Frédéric Moury
140.	Connecta	Christos Germanakos
141.	OECD	Umur Gökçe
142.	OECD	Marzena Kisielewska
143.	OECD	Jovana Pavlovic
144.	IRFCG	Vasilije Djurovic

## 22nd MEETING OF THE WBIF STEERING COMMITTEE

### List of Participants

Day 2 - 10 June 2020

No.	Organisation	Name
1.	European Commission	Colin Wolfe
2.	European Commission	Michael Voegele
3.	European Commission	Wolfgang Schlaeger
4.	WBIF Head of Secretariat	Stine Andresen
5.	European Commission	Antonio Garcia Suarez
6.	European Commission	Judit Gyori
7.	European Commission	Aleksandra Kostova
8.	European Commission	Jasmina Ilibasic
9.	European Commission	Alessandra Viezzer
10.	European Commission	Elena Andonova
11.	European Commission	Roberto Estellés – Colom
12.	European Commission	Engin Goksu
13.	EU Delegation Skopje	Katerina Kus-Ivanova Filkova

14.	EU Delegation to Albania	Ardian Metaj
15.	EU Delegation Kosovo*	Besime Kajtazi
16.	EU Delegation Kosovo*	Lendita Gashi
17.	EU Delegation Kosovo*	Arta Musa-Krasniqi
18.	Austria	Elisabeth Gruber
19.	Austria	Agnes Drimmel
20.	France	Roger Del Rio
21.	France	Aude Portal
22.	Germany	Sabrina Brabetz
23.	Italy	Raffaella Di Emidio
24.	Italy	Francesca Cataldo
25.	Italy	Alessandra Mariani
26.	Luxembourg	Miguel Marques
27.	Norway	Olav Reinertsen
28.	Norway	Guri Rusten
29.	Slovenia	Martin Zdovc
30.	Sweden	Johan Willert
31.	EBRD	Zsuzsanna Hargitai
32.	EBRD	Charlotte Ruhe
33.	EBRD	Donald Mishaxhiu

34.	EBRD	Jasmin Khalaf
35.	EBRD	Alessandro Vittadini
36.	EBRD	Ines Rocha
37.	EBRD	Biljana Scekcic
38.	EBRD	Nia Evans
39.	EBRD	Fabio Serri
40.	EBRD	Alexander Chirkov
41.	EBRD	Carla Ciccantelli
42.	EBRD	Frederique Dahan
43.	EBRD	Manuel Mendez Huerta
44.	EBRD	Claudio Viezzoli
45.	EIB	Massimo Cingolani
46.	EIB	Jean-Marc Arnoux
47.	EIB	Giorgio Watschinger
48.	EIB	Matteo Rivellini
49.	EIB	Guido Clary
50.	EIB	Dragan Soljan
51.	EIB	Alessandro de Concini
52.	EIB	Isabelle Van Grunderbeeck
53.	CEB	Stephan Sellen

54.	CEB	Gamze Deveci Durubal
55.	CEB	Miles Vitomir Raguz
56.	CEB	Florian Meyerhoefer
57.	KfW	Suzanne Schroth
58.	KfW	Constanze Isabel Kreiß
59.	KfW	Thomas Adams
60.	KfW	Pablo Obrador Alvarez
61.	World Bank	Alexander Rowland
62.	World Bank	Maja Andjelkovic
63.	World Bank	Simon David Ellis
64.	World Bank	Mario Guadamillas
65.	World Bank	Pascal Frerejacque
66.	World Bank	Sanela Ljuca
67.	AFD	Guillaume Pluntz
68.	AFD	Ramona Radu
69.	AFD	Grégory Villeneuve
70.	IFC	Antonija Vidakovic
71.	RCC	Maja Handjiska Trendafilova
72.	Energy Community Secretariat	Violeta Kogalniceanu
73.	Albania	Ervis Sulejmani

74.	Albania	Stela Ademi
75.	Albania	Eriselda Çobo
76.	Albania	Elona Ajazi
77.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Nermina Saracevic
78.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Sabina Dizdarevic
79.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Brankica Pandurevic
80.	Kosovo*	Flamur Junuzi
81.	Kosovo*	Mimoze Veliu
82.	Kosovo*	Binasa Ukaj
83.	Kosovo*	Lum Mita
84.	Kosovo*	Bojan Stanic
85.	North Macedonia	Evgenija Serafimovska Kirkovski
86.	North Macedonia	Suzana Peneva
87.	North Macedonia	Edon Kadriu
88.	North Macedonia	Arlinda Beqiri
89.	North Macedonia	Aleksandar Andovski
90.	Montenegro	Bojan Vujovic
91.	Montenegro	Marko Dragas
92.	Montenegro	Natasa Batricevic
93.	Serbia	Aleksandra Radinovic

94.	Serbia	Una Kecman
95.	Serbia	Tamara Dundjerovic
96.	Serbia	Eva Zlatkovic Ristic
97.	Serbia	Miona Popovic Majkic
98.	EIF	Alfio LO Castro
99.	EIF	Marco Giuliani
100.	EIF	Alison Burney
101.	EIF	Damir Gubic
102.	EIF	Massimi Gianluca
103.	EIF	Sofia Margariti
104.	EIF	Sofia Margariti
105.	IFICO	Falko Sellner
106.	IFICO	Ognjen Miric
107.	IFICO	Steven Van der Touw
108.	IFICO	Jasa Gabrijan
109.	IFICO	Alexandru Trelea
110.	IFICO	Elena Postolache
111.	IFICO	Iulian Ciuca
112.	IFICO	Detlef Pulsack
113.	IFICO	Diana Dumitru

114.	IFICO	Aleksander Olsen
115.	IFICO	Adriana Alecse
116.	IFICO	Vlad Stan
117.	IFICO	Orhideja Kaljoshevska
118.	IFICO	Aleksandra Ploco
119.	IFICO	Roza Dedja
120.	IFICO	Alush Grosha
121.	IFICO	Danko Gavrilovic
122.	IFICO	Veljko Karadzic
123.	IFICO	Ana Dasic
124.	IFICO	Calin Trelea
125.	IPF5	Jeremy Lazenby
126.	IPF7	Martyn Osborn
127.	IPF7	Dimitrios Galanis
128.	IPF8	Vassillis Evmolpidis
129.	IPF8	Richard Thadani
130.	IPF8	Claus Hvashoej Joergensen
131.	IPF9	Frédéric Moury
132.	Connecta	Christos Germanakos
133.	OECD	Umur Gökçe

134.	OECD	Marzena Kisielewska
135.	OECD	Jovana Pavlovic
136.	Innovation Fond	Milena Kostadinovic



## 22nd MEETING OF THE WBIF STEERING COMMITTEE

### Annex 2: Chat transcript

#### Day 1 (9 June 2020)

**Katerina Kus – Ivanova:** Good morning!

**Genoveva Ruiz-Calavera:** Good morning

**Geraminos Dontas:** Good morning everybody, I have been connected through a colleague's PC, so where you see Geraminos Dontas it is Vassilis Tselios

**Stephan Sellen:** Good morning and Bonjour

**Wolfgang Schlaeger:** Good morning to all :)

**Matteo Rivellini** to everyone: not if they are organized in Prishtine

**Matteo Rivellini:** otherwise, definitely

**NIPAC BiH Sabina Dizdarevic:** what about other WB countries? will they be involved in the KfW programme?

**North Macedonia Suzana Peneva:** what is the treatment of those PCG in terms of the public debt due to the fact that will be provided from the state-owned institutions towards private SME'S via commercial banks?

**Stephan Sellen:** CEB (Stephan) is asking for the floor;

**NIPAC BIH Nermina Saracevic:** Can you please clarify 3,3 bn of EU financial assistance as presented by Katerina in the intro? What is it exactly and how it will be distributed (loans, guarantee, etc)? Many thanks

**NIPAC BiH Sabina Dizdarevic:** general question related to all three programmes-how are NIPAC offices going to get more info on these programmes during their implementation (is there going to be a web site or...), on selected financial intermediaries in WB countries, on TA provided to these intermediaries...

**Zsuzsanna Hargitai:** Asks for the floor - clarification on information sharing on EU WB Guarantee supported EBRD MSME programme.

**NIPAC BiH Sabina Dizdarevic:** could Mr. Tiskens repeat which institutions KfW cooperates with in Albania, Kosovo and Serbia?

**Zsuzsanna Hargitai:** Zsuzsa Hargitai - to clarify info availability on EBRD programme;

**Colin Wolfe:** In response to BiH NIPAC question, COM is shortly to write to all NIPACs with full information. We also intend to update the NIPACs in more detail tomorrow and in further upcoming EDIF/WBIF mtgs;

**Sabrina Brabetz:** Will the presentations be available after the meeting?

**Wolfgang Schlaeger:** yes, all presentations will be made available.

**Sabrina Brabetz:** Okay, thank you.

**Camilla Otto:** Can we get some more information about how the EFSD guarantee for WB will work compared to the WB guarantee. Similarities and differences.

**Matteo Rivellini:** may i ask a question?

**Wolfgang Schlaeger:** sure.

**Raffaella Di Emidio:** Which are the complementarity features between the three Team Europe programmes and the EDIF instruments which include guarantees by the European Investment Fund? Thank you

**NIPAC BiH Sabina Dizdarevic:** thank you

**Sabrina Brabetz:** Please, be a bit more explicit on the overlapping of ESFD topping up including the Western Balkans and EFSD+.

**Thomas Adams:** Similar to Matteo Rivellini: A few more infos on the allocation mechanism and timeline for the EFSD top-up would be welcome.

**Wolfgang Schlaeger:** any other questions? 10 min left :)

**Raffaella Di Emidio:** Clapping

**North Macedonia Suzana Peneva:** 👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍

**Linda Van Gelder:** clapping - thank you Wolfgang.

**Charlotte Ruhe:** BRAVO! We will miss you Wolfgang!

**Camilla Otto:** Thanks for everything and for holding together so well this disperse WBIF family!

**Biljana Scekcic:** thank you Wolfgang for everything and we will miss you. Good luck!

**IFICO Falko Sellner:** The video will go up on the "Wolfgang website" after the meeting...

**Zsuzsanna Hargitai:** Many thanks, Wolfgang, for all the strategic steer and flexibility 🏆 - and friendship! - wishing all the very best for the future endeavours - your co-chair from 2019.

**Pablo Obrador Alvarez:** 🙌 Thank you!!

**Lum Mita:** Thank you, Wolfgang, for the amazing job and experience!

**Sabrina Brabetz:** The Next Generation EU does not include more funds for IPA in the next MFF (but for other EU external instruments) as far as I know. Could you please elaborate a bit on the reasoning for this?

**Stephan Sellen:** Hi Wolfgang, can CEB please have the floor? Stephan

**Wolfgang Schlaeger:** sure...

**Sabrina Brabetz:** Is not IPA not THE instrument for the Western Balkans?

**Linda Van Gelder:** I don't need to come in (in virtual person), but I wanted to record in the comments the World Bank's appreciation for the strong response from the EU/EC to the Western Balkans to address

consequences of COVID-19. The World Bank welcomes strong collaboration with members of the WBIF and other development partners to support these countries. In addition to immediate World Bank support that focused on saving lives through support to health and non-health interventions that promote social distancing, we are now working closely with authorities on how best to program support for a resilient recovery.

**Linda Van Gelder:** The World Bank will continue with a strong focus on supporting medium-term development challenges – including environmental issues, inefficiencies and quality problems in the social sectors, addressing inequality, and strengthening regional economic integration – as well as priorities reforms that support aspirations for EU membership, we are examining closely with the authorities on how interventions can/should be adapted. The World Bank welcomes the continued strong partnership we have with many of you on this work.

**Zsuzsanna Hargitai:** Would be interested in hearing what is the status of the Green Agenda for Western Balkans, it's place in the economic & investment package and how Just Transition fits in these.

**Aleksandra Radinovic:** Can we receive the statement from Austria, as the sound was not that good.

**Elisabeth Gruber:** Of course, we can make this brief intervention available.

**Aleksandra Radinovic:** Great. Thank you!

**Katerina Kus – Ivanova:** It would be good to have Matteo's PPpT as well.

**Guri Rusten:** I agree.

**Wolfgang Schlaeger:** absolutely, will all be distributed.

**Stephan Sellen:** May I add a word on the upcoming SCM in December? Logistics. Thanks Stephan (CEB).

**IFICO Falko Sellner:** wolfgang.wbif.eu

**Michael Voegele:** wolfgang.wbif.eu

**Raffaella Di Emidio:** Thank you.

## Chat transcript

Day 2 (10 June 2020)

**Vassilis Evmolpidis:** Good morning to everyone, Vassilis Evmolpidis

**Wolfgang Schlaeger:** Good morning all :)

**Guri Rusten:** Good morning from Oslo

**Katerina Kus – Ivanova:** Good morning

**Wolfgang Schlaeger:** please all put microphones on mute, thank you!

**MK NIPAC office Evgenija S. Kirkovski:** Wolfgang could we have a very brief in writing the presentation of the Energy community. This seems very important and drives very closely what we need to do in the sector energy sector in the future and under WBIF and IPA III

**MK NIPAC office Evgenija S. Kirkovski:** Thank you, Colin.

**Susanne Schroth:** We need a green deal agenda in parallel to connectivity agenda. Allow for national stand-alone clean energy projects to foster transition.

**Aleksandra Radinovic:** Please provide us more information for Green Agenda for WB. Will there be a special fund established for this purpose and how other sectors of Green Agenda will be supported, beside the energy sector.

**Zsuzsanna Hargitai:** Would be grateful for information on who are the parties that are working on the Green Agenda for Western Balkans and whether any draft would be available for contributions and discussions

**Vassilis Evmolpidis:** THE FEASIBILITY STUDY BY IPF8 IS ALMOST COMPLETED;

**Gregory Villeneuve:** Confirmed on AFD side.

**Donald Mishaxhiu:** Same from EBRD

**Gregory Villeneuve:** It is essential to support IWRM, resilient infrastructures and flood prevention in the whole region (at upstream level or downstream). We are keen on finding similar project in other WB Countries.

**Stephan Sellen:** CEB (Stephan) can have the floor?

**Agnes Drimmel:** We want to briefly come in too, please.

**Sabrina Brabetz:** Agnes, thank you for this important intervention.

**Agnes Drimmel:** Can you confirm my calculations that there is a total of roughly EUR 30M to be potentially available for TA24 from the Commission side – EUR 20M in IPF for Connectivity you just confirmed, + EUR 9M remaining of the Commission allocation to the JF?

**Agnes Drimmel:** Tentative would be sufficient - thank you.

**Falko Sellner:** this will be in the minutes (Agnes);

**Agnes Drimmel:** Thank you.

**NIPAC BIH Sabina Dizdarevic:** will you consider supporting urban transport in the future rounds (as you did in the past)?

**Susanne Schroth:** What will be the role of the EU delegations in regard to programming, coordination and funding of projects under IPA III?

**NIPAC BIH Nermina Saracevic:** Wolfgang, can you pls clarify the eligibility for ENE under IG 06, stating that projects contributing to climate change can go through. Does it mean that we can apply with Renewable energy and Energy efficiency projects now without any restrictions? thank you

**Sabrina Brabetz:** Would it not be better in the sense of equal treatment to launch the INV Round 06 for all sectors at the same time?

**Zsuzsanna Hargitai:** We second this - it was not clear why it cannot be done.

**Susanne Schroth:** Do you consider shorten the INV Round 06 for the ENV and SOC sector to 12 months?

**Aleksandra Radinovic:** I think they have not still decided the amount of available funds for investment grants for these sectors. They are waiting to see the proposals from Beneficiaries for IPA 2021 2022.

**NIPAC BIH Sabina Dizdarevic:** what would be the deadline for submission of TRA and ENE in IG6? in the paper you provided, the deadline for prenotification and for endorsement is given (not for submission)?

**Agnes Drimmel:** We take note that specifics of INV06 are proposed to be worked out in further detail and call for more concrete information in this regard in due time.

**NIPAC BIH Sabina Dizdarevic:** as always, pls provide details in the official letter as soon as possible. thx

**Falko Sellner:** date proposals will be in the next presentation (Stine's) and in the MoM

**Massimo Cingolani:** One question: the next WB6 summit is it still in 2020 or 2021? Thanks, Massimo

**NIPAC BIH Sabina Dizdarevic:** if the requested grant amount will not be approved (the whole amount), do we need to apply again for the remaining in the 6IG call, or not?

**Wolfgang Schlaeger:** no, they will be automatically rolled over to the next year

**NIPAC BIH Nermina Saracevic:** In regard to WBIF 3.0 participation, benef. countries asked at November PFG to be included in the email communication (all 6 NIPACs). Now that the group has been re-activated this spring, we would like to kindly ask you to include all NIPACs in the group communication, especially because of IPA 3 novelties

**MK NIPAC office Evgenija S. Kirkovski:** Thank you Nermina. Indeed, we reached this decision last year. MK NIPAC office is fully committed to contribute with our experience in improving the quality of work and effectiveness under WBIF 3.0. and aligned it to new generation IPA

**Katerina Kus – Ivanova:** The same should be applied to the WBIF Focal Points in the EU Delegations as well. We should be included in the 3.0 group once again.

**MK NIPAC office Evgenija S. Kirkovski:** thank you, Colin.

**Katerina Kus – Ivanova:** Thank you!

**Gamze Durubal:** CEB Gamze; just a word on next SC

**Wolfgang Schlaeger:** Thank you, Colin for great chairing :)