

WESTERN BALKANS
INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK
**COMMUNICATION
AND VISIBILITY
GUIDELINES**

**2026
2027**



Co-funded by
the European Union

Western Balkans
Investment Framework **WBIF**
BUILDING THE EUROPEAN FUTURE TOGETHER



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INTRODUCTION

The Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF) is the EU's main financial vehicle to address the region's extensive infrastructure needs. By blending EU grants with bilateral donors' contributions, loans from international financial institutions and national contributions, the WBIF supports strategic investments in six intervention areas: sustainable transport, clean energy, environment and climate, digital future, competitiveness of the private sector and human capital development.

Communication and visibility activities are an essential part of EU External Action funding to clearly demonstrate EU support and the value of partnership with the beneficiary as well as to strengthen transparency and accountability. These **WBIF Communication and Visibility Guidelines** set out the requirements and practical steps for consistent, high-quality outputs across all WBIF-funded activities.

In these guidelines you will find:

- ✓ **mandatory visibility requirements to acknowledge WBIF and EU support**
- ✓ **roles and responsibilities for each stakeholder**
- ✓ **processes for coordinating communication actions**


IMPROVING VISIBILITY COMPLIANCE

Following the **European Court of Auditors' 2026** findings that visibility requirements were not consistently met, the WBIF Secretariat carried out an internal review of visibility actions for past projects. The review found that around 50% of the sampled projects did not fully meet the EU and WBIF visibility requirements.

In response, these guidelines have been updated to clarify stakeholders' roles and responsibilities. They now include **clearer instructions, a checklist, and examples to support and ensure compliance**. Related WBIF documents (including the Grant Application Form and its guidance) have also been updated, and C&V-related monitoring has been strengthened.

1. VISIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

WBIF stakeholders are bound by the WBIF Communication and Visibility Guidelines and Grant Application Form (GAF), both aligned with the EU's:

Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for External Actions (July 2022) 

Recipients of EU funding have a **general obligation** to acknowledge the origin and ensure the visibility of any EU funding received. The **EU emblem** is the single most important visual brand used to acknowledge the origin and ensure the visibility of EU funding. The EU emblem must be accompanied by a **funding statement** (*'Funded by the European Union'* or *'Co-funded by the European Union'*) mentioning the EU's support. Both the EU emblem and the funding statement are essential to acknowledge EU support. As a rule, they always go hand in hand and must not be separated.

WBIF contributes directly to Global Gateway which means that **WBIF and Global Gateway logo come in addition to the EU emblem.**

QUICK CHECK!



WBIF logo set includes:

- **EU emblem** and financial statement ("Co-funded by the European Union")
- **WBIF logo** (WBIF + Global Gateway)
- **Disclaimer** ([see section 1.3](#))



Never:

- Use an old or incorrect /incomplete logo
- Forget to credit EU and WBIF in all C&V materials
- Skip submitting C&V materials to WBIF Secretariat prior to the event

1.2. WBIF LOGO SET USE

Billboards / display panels

Display panels must identify key deliverables and project management structures. They must be clearly visible so passers-by can read them and understand the action and the EU's role as donor. They must be placed beside site access routes from the start of works until six months after completion.

Commemorative plaques

EU contributions to the construction of permanent structures such as buildings roads and bridges must be acknowledged by permanent commemorative plaques. These must be placed, for example during the opening ceremony, in the most visible part of the structure, such as the main entrance, or in front of the building.

Event branding

Branding for any event promoting a WBIF-funded investment may include:

- **vertical roll-up**
- **backdrop or banner**
- **lectern or podium visuals**

Each event branded material must display the WBIF logo set where it will be most prominently visible.



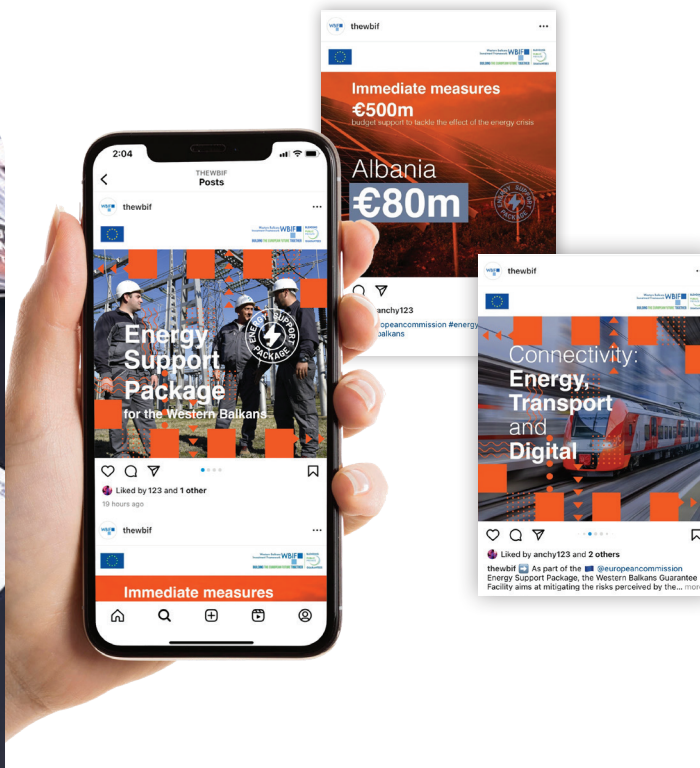
Publications

When a stakeholder's own publication features a WBIF project, this should be acknowledged as part of the visual or written reference to the project. An appropriate disclaimer should be used as set out in **section 1.3.**



Digital assets

Examples of digital assets include webpages, visuals, infographics and powerpoint slides. The WBIF logo set should appear on the first page or in a prominent position.



Video

Videos produced should ensure that the intro and outro frames show the WBIF logo set.



Other types of production

Any other C&V productions related to projects benefitting from WBIF support and not covered above should be checked with the WBIF Secretariat on a case-by-case basis.

1.3. DISCLAIMER

The EU is not responsible for the contents of communication materials related to EU co-funded actions prepared by implementing partners, all of which must include a standard disclaimer, translated into (the) local language(s) where appropriate.

This publication/video/website [delete as appropriate] was co-funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the [Lead IFI/ Contractor, etc. As appropriate] and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

1.4. BUDGET

Visibility counts as an **eligible cost**. Any expenditure related to visibility is part of the action and can benefit from EU funding. Given that individual projects will not include a dedicated visibility budget, any costs necessary to ensure compliance with contractual visibility requirements should be factored into the budget foreseen for the relevant objectives and activities of the action. The applicable guidelines for calls make this clear.



2. STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION

WBIF is a multi-stakeholder investment platform, and **each stakeholder has a role in meeting the EU visibility requirements** and promoting the actions and their results by providing coherent, effective and proportionate targeted information to multiple audiences, including the media and the public.

This section outlines the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in communication and visibility actions and provides guidance on how activities are coordinated.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAKEHOLDERS

Lead IFI is responsible for full and consistent implementation of visibility requirements (WBIF logo set) on all C&V products and during events and timely coordination with the other stakeholders to maximise the impact.

Beneficiary is, together with the lead IFI, responsible for full and consistent implementation of visibility requirements (WBIF logo set) on all C&V products and during events and timely coordination with the other stakeholders to maximise the impact.

EU Delegation is consulted on all C&V outputs and provides assistance, as appropriate.

WBIF Secretariat is consulted, provides guidance and assistance, as appropriate.

Bilateral donors confirm participation upon request and coordinate any donor-specific visibility elements, speaking roles and acknowledgements.



2.1. SHARED CALENDAR

Timely information on project status, milestones and upcoming C&V opportunities is necessary to align and maximise strategic communication impact.

The WBIF Secretariat has put in place a joint online calendar, one dedicated place where information is shared and updated among stakeholders.

[Link to read-only calendar:](#) 

Aim: a user-friendly tool to mark dates of communication actions:

- project milestone events
- media opportunities
- high-level summits
- social media campaigns etc.

The calendar can be filtered by:

- beneficiary
- lead IFI
- type of event
- sector
- keyword

Attachments such as agenda or visibility material can be added to check compliance with visibility requirements.


Who should update it?

- The organiser of the event (Lead IFI, EUD, Beneficiary) is responsible for updating the calendar.
- WBIF Secretariat is responsible for the calendar management), and will also update the calendar with events and other activities.

When to update it?

The organiser adds the event to the calendar at least 4 weeks ahead of the event and updates it along developments **(see below 2.2 on event organisation).**

Who can view it?

All WBIF stakeholders can view the calendar by accessing it via the [link](#)  (made available by the WBIF Secretariat).

Who to contact?

In case of any issues with the calendar, contact WBIF Secretariat:

ENEST-WBIF@ec.europa.eu

2.2. EVENTS

Events are the bedrock of WBIF communication. Stakeholders are expected to organise C&V actions at key project milestones:

- **Start of works / Groundbreaking event**
- **Project implementation milestones** (such as site visit, press conference)
- **Completion of works event**
- **Opening / inauguration ceremony**

Timeline for events organisation

Time	4 weeks before	2 weeks before	1 week before	During the event	After the event
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Send save the date email to WBIF Secretariat ✓ Add event to WBIF joint calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Invite representatives (EC / EUD / BD) ✓ Share draft event materials with the WBIF Secretariat for a visibility compliance check ✓ Confirm with the WBIF Secretariat any supporting materials needed (see section 3 below for available support) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Share final agenda with WBIF Secretariat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure photographer / videographer captures event ✓ Gather statements from key speakers and end beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Send press release to WBIF Secretariat
Responsible	Lead IFI	Lead IFI (with Beneficiary)	Lead IFI	Beneficiary (with Lead IFI)	Beneficiary (cleared by Lead IFI)

2.3. PRESS RELEASES

Most often issued after events, press releases are an established way of sharing important updates and progress with local media. They also provide the basis for a news article on wbif.eu and other EU communication channels.

The press release is the opportunity to put the particular investment or action in context:

- **What is the aim of the project?**
- **Who will benefit and what are the main impacts?**
- **How does it fit in with national and EU priorities?**
- **How EU funding through WBIF helps achieve the project aims?**



The WBIF logo set should be present on all press materials.



All relevant stakeholders should be quoted in the press release, including EU Delegation, Bilateral Donor representative where relevant.



The press release should clearly indicate the source(s) of financing through WBIF. The text should include the funding statement 'co-financed by the European Union'.



A draft press release should be circulated in advance of publication to WBIF Secretariat for consultation.

3. WBIF SUPPORT

The WBIF Secretariat is responsible for information and communication activities of WBIF through a range of channels. **Annex** provides a summary of the C&V survey measuring WBIF Secretariat progress with this objective. Social media channels also target more broadly audiences interested in the Western Balkans and their accession process to the EU.

This section outlines the main focus of the different WBIF productions, and how stakeholders are expected to align the type of content they produce with the narrative appropriate to each channel.

Which content on which channel?

<i>Channel</i>	<i>Narrative focus</i>
Social media	Human stories, beneficiaries, hero shots
Publications	WBIF governance bodies decisions and developments, scale of support, impact
Events	EU partnership (Team Europe), impact, future outlook
Video	Transformation, before/after, human stories



Are you planning a dedicated campaign on WBIF projects?

- **In a certain sector?**
- **In a specific beneficiary country or region?**

Let us know!

We can join forces and amplify the message and the reach.

3.1. WBIF PRODUCTIONS

Social media

WBIF runs social media channels on:

- LinkedIn
- Instagram
- Facebook
- X (Twitter)
- YouTube



Original content (reels, visuals, posts, videos) is posted 3-4 times per month.



Stakeholder content is shared and re-posted as available. Stakeholders should tag [@theWBIF](#) in their social media posts about WBIF content to facilitate reposting.

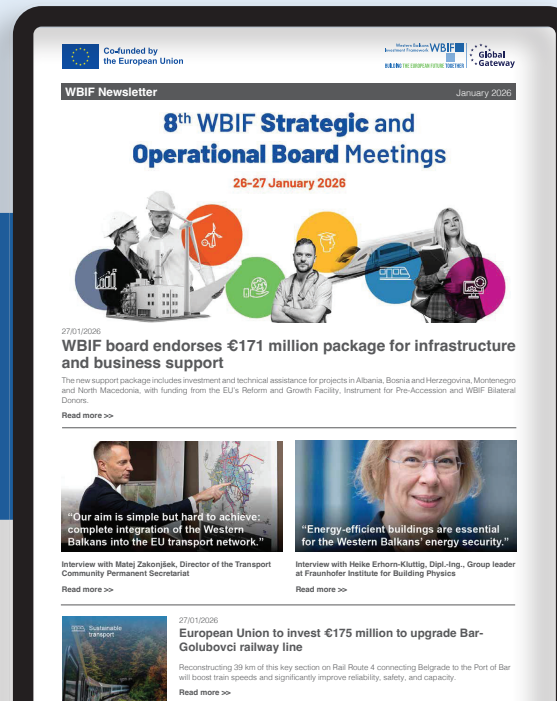
Newsletter, News flashes

Regular **news updates** are published on [wbif.eu](#), based on **press releases** provided by IFIs / other stakeholders informing about project milestones, implementation and related activities.

See section 2.3. for content to be included in press releases

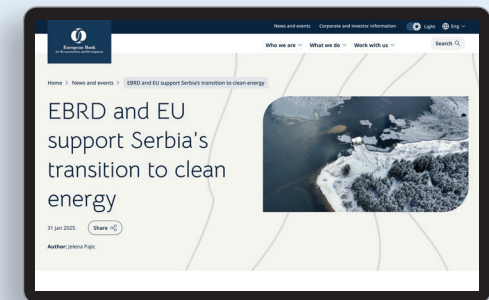
News items are accompanied by a dedicated **newsflash** – an email to subscribers to inform that a new article is published.

A **quarterly newsletter** sent electronically collates all the news published in the previous quarter.



Feature stories

Beneficiary-focused feature stories on selected flagship projects, key milestones or strategic events, giving room to testimonials, **showcasing benefits and results**. These can be published on WBIF's website, on IFI and beneficiaries' websites, in dedicated publications and / or on social media.



Video/photo team

WBIF works with contracted videographers and photographers to capture content at WBIF meetings and events.

In some cases, the costs of capturing an event can be shared with stakeholders – check with WBIF Secretariat in advance.

WBIF publications

Publication	Focus	Period updated
WBIF booklet	Based on annual report, this provides a succinct overview of WBIF implementation so far, with a focus on new projects approved in the previous year.	Annually (after Annual Report production)
Private sector booklet	An overview of all running private sector programmes.	Annually
Sector factsheets	One-pager with key figures on investments, impacts and project examples per sector: sustainable transport, clean energy, environment and climate, human capital, digital, private sector development.	Twice yearly
Beneficiary factsheets	One-pager with key figures on investments, impacts and project examples per beneficiary.	Twice yearly
Bilateral donor factsheet and project booklet	One-page factsheet providing overview of BD contributions and projects financed. Project booklet details full list of BD-supported projects.	Twice yearly



Webalkans

The [WeBalkans.eu](https://webalkans.eu) portal is a one-stop shop for news, stories, funding opportunities, and related information on cooperation between the European Union and the Western Balkans, targeted to the general public. They are a media partner of WBIF. The WBIF Secretariat provides project information, suggestions for feature stories or speakers at events to demonstrate the impact of WBIF investments.



4. REPORTING AND MONITORING



Reporting

Implementing Partners (IFIs and beneficiaries) are contractually required to report regularly on visibility. This is done through the Annual Implementation Reports and in MIS; both include dedicated sections for presenting and reporting visibility actions.

Monitoring

The WBIF Secretariat monitors whether visibility requirements are respected. This effort is further reinforced by the European Court of Auditors' recommendation to ensure the EU's support for WBIF actions is more visible.

Self assessment checklist for C&V compliance will be added as Annex to the GAF.

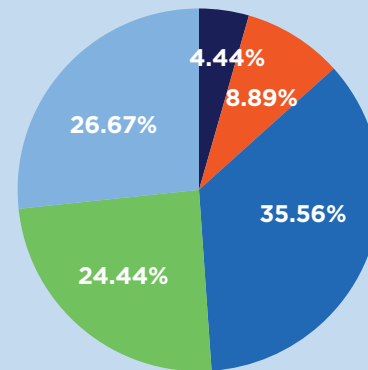
ANNEX: WBIF ANNUAL C&V SURVEY RESULTS

The annual survey of WBIF stakeholders to gather feedback on communication and visibility activities in 2025-26 was open from 4 to 22 April 2026, with 46 respondents.

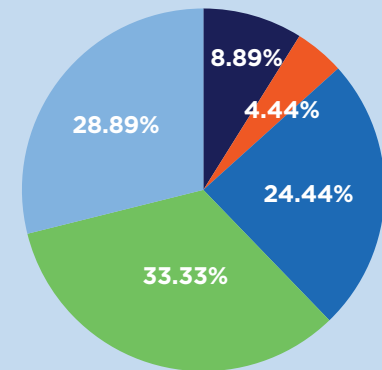
Key results

Around 67% of respondents say their overall knowledge of WBIF operations has increased in past year, which is a slight dip from last year (70%).

(1) My overall knowledge of WBIF operations in the region has increased in the last year.



(2) I am satisfied with my organisation's cooperation with the WBIF Secretariat (including IFICO) regarding the C&V activities.



● Strongly disagree (0.00%) ● Disagree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Agree ● Strongly agree ● No answer

The level of satisfaction with WBIF co-operation regarding the C&V actions for projects and activities remains high, and slightly increased on last year, with a score of 4.1 on average (out of 5).

Over three-quarters of respondents indicated they know where to find the C&V guidelines (mandatory question). Of those who answered the question, more than half indicated they were familiar with the visibility requirements, half said they understood the role of stakeholders in visibility actions, while just under half said they were familiar with the steps to take when organising events.

Suggested improvements

The three main suggestions for how stakeholders can collaborate more effectively with WBIF on visibility are:

- **More local campaigns**, with WBIF material in local languages.
- **Timely information sharing**, in particular when organising events.
- Clearer **definition of visibility responsibilities** for each stakeholder group.

The Communication and Visibility Guidelines already take these suggestions into account.



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