



Berlin Summit 2021: Western Balkans Strengthen Regional Cooperation and Foster Closer Ties with the EU

On 5 July, President of the Commission, **Ursula von der Leyen**, and Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, **Olivér Várhelyi**, participated in the Western Balkans Summit in the context of the so-called “Berlin Process”. The summit brought together for the eighth time Heads of State or Government from the Western Balkans and their counterparts from nine EU Member States, high-level EU representatives and the United Kingdom, to advance on their regional cooperation and European integration agenda. The virtual meeting was hosted by the German Chancellor **Angela Merkel**.

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Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF) Informal Meeting

The WBIF informal meeting, held on 24 June was co-chaired by Katarína Mathernová, Deputy Director-General, EC-DG NEAR and WBIF Bilateral Donors’ representative Harald Waiglein, Director General for Economic Policy, Financial Markets & Customs Duties, Federal Ministry of Finance, Austria.

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31st WBIF Project Financiers’ Group Meeting

The Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF) held its 31st Project Financiers’ Group Meeting (PFG) on 19 and 20 May 2021. Overall more than 100 participants from the European Commission, financial institutions (EIB, EBRD, CEB, KfW, WBG, AFD, EIF), Bilateral Donors, Western Balkans beneficiaries, Energy Community Secretariat, Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community and Regional Cooperation Council, attended the meeting.

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First EU Funded Vaccines for the Region and Support Package for Serbia

Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Olivér Várhelyi travelled to the Western Balkans begin May as the first COVID-19 vaccines, shared and funded by the European Union, arrived to the region. As announced by the European Commission and Austria on 20 April, in total 651,000 BioNTech/Pfizer doses will be delivered to the region in weekly instalments from the beginning of May to August.

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Feature Story



Introduction of Nearly Zero-Energy Buildings in the Western Balkans

Through the WBIF project Regional Energy Efficiency Programme for the Western Balkans (REEP Plus), the KfW Development Bank on behalf of the German Federal Government has focused on the highly efficient public buildings – Nearly Zero-Energy or even Energy Plus buildings which form an indispensable building block on the way to carbon neutrality.

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Economic and Investment Plan Flagship Projects Update

Private Sector • Flagship 9 • Investing in the Competitiveness of the Private Sector



Grand Finale of PowerUP, the Western Balkan Entrepreneurial Excellence Award

The final event of the PowerUP programme which supports innovative SMEs and startup companies from the Western Balkans took place on 29 June 2021. Eleven finalist companies had the opportunity to pitch their businesses in the best light in front of eminent investors from the region.
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1st Western Balkans Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (WB EDIF) Business Forum

On 25 June, the Western Balkans Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (WB EDIF) held its first virtual Business Forum. The event was organized by the Enterprise Europe Network and supported by the European Commission and the European Investment Fund.
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EU and EFSE Unleash Additional €40 Million in Response to Coronavirus Crisis

The European Commission has invested an additional €40 million into the European Fund for Southeast Europe (EFSE) to help combat the economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic in the Western Balkans and EU Eastern Neighbourhood Region. The capital will be used to bolster the ability of local financial institutions to support micro and small enterprises in overcoming the challenges of the crisis.
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Sustainable Transport • Flagship 1 • Connecting East to West



Beginning of Works on the Modernization of the Port of Brcko

On 15 June, the beginning of preparatory works on the reconstruction and modernization of the port of Brcko, a project co-funded by the European Union, was officially marked. The event was attended by the Mayor of Brcko, the President of the Brcko Assembly, representatives of the European Union, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Office of the High Representative..
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Clean Energy • Flagship 5 • Transition from Coal



EU Support to Construction of the Gas Interconnector Serbia-Bulgaria

The European Union and the European Investment Bank (EIB) support Serbia's energy security with the blending of €25 million loan and €49.5 million EU grant (from the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance – IPA II) for the construction of the Serbian section of the Bulgaria-Serbia gas interconnector.
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Environment and Climate • Flagship 7 • Waste and Waste Water Management



EU Grant Signed For Water and Sanitation Systems in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has signed a €2.1 million EU grant agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina for financing the construction of the wastewater and drinking water systems in the municipalities of Jajce and Zvornik. This investment will help to improve existing and develop new water and sanitation infrastructure that will increase the capacity of water wells, reduce water losses and decrease water pollution.
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New Home for 62 Displaced Families in Srebrenik, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Begin April, the keys to 62 newly built apartments in Srebrenik, Bosnia and Herzegovina, were handed to 164 displaced persons, former residents of the collective centres. The construction of the multi-apartment building is part of the larger EU and Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) supported the project “Housing and Social Integration of Vulnerable Persons Living in Collective Centres”, implemented by the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
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Preparing Flagship Investments: Technical Assistance Update

Sustainable Transport • Flagship 2 • Connecting North to South



EU-Funded Project Kicks-off for the Modernisation of the Golubovci-Bar Railway Line in Montenegro

The virtual kick-off meeting of the Technical Assistance project for the “Modernisation of Rail Route 4, Golubovci – Bar” took place end April 2021. The objective of the EU-funded project is the rehabilitation and upgrade of the 39 km long railway section between Golubovci and Bar stations, which is part of the most important railway line of Montenegro, connecting the port of Bar with Podgorica and the border with Serbia.

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Completion of the EU-funded Technical Assistance to Flood Protection Infrastructure in Albania

The recently completed EU-funded Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) and Detailed Design for the WBIF project “Mati River Flood Protection Infrastructure” were implemented by COWI-IPF Consortium (Infrastructure Project Facility 8) in close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Albania and the National Water Resources Management Agency.

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WBIF Publications



The WBIF Annual Report 2020 Online

The WBIF 2020 Annual Report provides a comprehensive overview of 2020 developments - governance and policy, flagship projects, sector and beneficiary portfolios - and comes with a detailed project and grant directory, showcasing all past and current WBIF operations.

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The WBIF Annual Report 2020 Summary Online

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Berlin Process Summit 2021

Ahead of the Berlin Summit 2021, the WBIF has produced a number of new animations, video graphics, and reports. These products highlight results and achievements during the Berlin Process, as well as look ahead to future support under the EU’s Economic and Investment Plan.



WBIF Sector Overview 2021



Decades of Engagement



Committed to Progress



Solidarity in Action



Making a Difference: Beneficiary Testimonials I



Making a Difference: Beneficiary Testimonials II



Road Corridor Vc in Bosnia and Herzegovina



Gradiška Bridge (R2a) in Bosnia and Herzegovina



WBIF Visibility Report

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