



WBIF Newsletter July 2023



New investments given green light at WBIF 4th Operational Board

WBIF Operational Board members gave a positive opinion on 30 June in Oslo, to 14 new investments flagships in transport, energy, environment, human capital, and private sector support in the Western Balkans, worth €2.1 billion. The European Commission contributes with €528 million in EU grants from the IPA III, whilst the rest is provided by bilateral contributions from EU Member States and Norway, loans from international financing institutions, and contributions from the economies of the Western Balkans. In addition, a total of 11 technical assistance grants totalling €11.2 million were green-lighted to prepare project investments.

[Read more >>](#)



Find out more about the new investments in the updated Endorsed Flagship Investments 2020-2023 booklet



See an overview of WBIF investments in our new video

Feature story



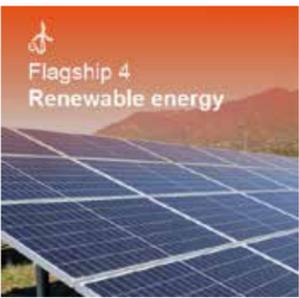
Jaspers

New skills for new rails

The Albanian government's Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy has made the shift back from road to rail a national priority. The Albanian railway company HSH (Hekurudha Shqiptare) has been asked to help turn things around by promoting an ambitious programme to rebuild and modernise the railways. The plan would make transport in Albania greener, more competitive and more sustainable, and improve connections with neighbouring countries and the trans-European railway network.

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Flagship investments

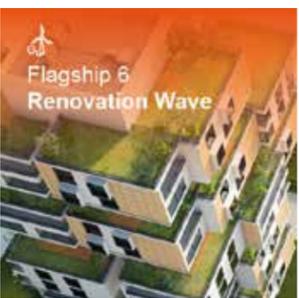


03-07-2023

Grant agreement for the solar plant in Oslomej signed

The European Union and WBIF bilateral donors, together with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), are consolidating their support for solar energy projects in North Macedonia with grant financing for the first large-scale solar plant. A WBIF bilateral donor grant agreement of €1.6 million was signed on 30 June 2023 in Skopje, complementing an EBRD loan of €5.9 million.

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26-06-2023

Works to begin on school building upgrades for energy efficiency

The Ministry of Capital Investments in Montenegro launched a call in July 2023 for works to upgrade the energy performance of schools across the country. The project is financed with a €4.8 million grant from the Regional Energy Efficiency Fund (REEP+), through the WBIF and a loan of €45 million from German development bank KfW. The Government of Montenegro also provides €10 million of its own funds.

[Read more >>](#)



29-05-2023

New EU-grants for major infrastructure investments in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The EU grant agreements to the value of €17.1 million were signed 22 May 2023 at the Council of Ministers premises in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The new funds will target the ongoing construction of the country's major transport road corridor and improving the water supply system in City of Visoko and surrounding settlements.

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Technical assistance



24-04-2023

Kick-off for Montenegro Broadband Infrastructure Development Technical Assistance Project

On 24 March 2023 the kick-off meeting for the Technical Assistance (TA) project for the Montenegro Broadband Infrastructure Development was held in Podgorica. The project includes updating technical documentation, procurement and contract strategies, procurement plans, market models, tender documents, and environmental and social action plan.

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10-04-2023

Phase II begins for Nikšić Wastewater management system, Montenegro

This comprehensive TA package will ensure effective and rapid preparation of the wastewater collection services and safeguard the sustainability of the wastewater treatment plant that is presently under operation, promoting future investments, and contributing to capacity building efforts of the staff.

[Read more >>](#)



04-04-2023

CONNECTA workshops ‘Technical Assistance for the Deployment of Smart and Sustainable Mobility in the Western Balkans’

On 29-30 March, CONNECTA organised in Podgorica, Montenegro, a series of workshops on the Deployment of Smart and Sustainable Mobility in the Western Balkans. A two-day event gathered representatives of the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat, as well as the relevant Ministries of the Western Balkan partners.

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Related events



03-07-2023

EU funding opportunities for private sector in Serbia

More than 1,800 participants attended the first EU Opportunity Week in Serbia, from 21 to 26 June 2023. It was the first time all EU programmes and funds open to Serbians were gathered in one place to share application procedures and opportunities. A further 3,500 participants followed online and interacted with programme representatives in the dedicated online space.

[Read more >>](#)



06-06-2023

Energy efficiency in Sarajevo in images

A photo exhibition was displayed until the end of May near the riverside in Sarajevo as part of the “Energy efficiency in public buildings of the Canton of Sarajevo” project. The exhibition presents the results of the successfully completed first phase of the project, during which 15 public buildings in Sarajevo were renovated.

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26-05-2023

35th WBIF Project Financiers' Group (PFG) Meeting, 24-25 May 2023

On 24 and 25 May 2023, the WBIF Project Financiers' Group (PFG) met in Brussels. The meeting was attended by about 90 representatives from international financial institutions, EU Member States and Norway, bilateral donors, and representatives from the six Western Balkans economies.

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18-05-2023

Connectivity Summit “Sustainable Links-Stronger Economy“

Efficient transportation of people and goods ensures access to jobs and services and enables trade and economic growth. This was a key message at the Connectivity Summit, organised in Budva on 15-16 May by the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat and the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) Secretariat, under the auspices of the Ministry of Capital Investments of Montenegro.

[Read more >>](#)



15-05-2023

New opportunities for vulnerable communities through the socially responsible public procurement

A panel discussion “Can Socially Responsible Initiatives offer new opportunities to vulnerable communities?” took place on 27 April in Brussels. The event aimed to shed light on the potential of socially responsible public procurement to create new opportunities for vulnerable communities, including Roma communities, while promoting gender equality and sustainable infrastructure.

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WBIF publications



From Plan to Action - WBIF Key Achievements 2022 Communication & Visibility Plan and Guidelines

WBIF videos



June 2023
Gas Interconnector Serbia-Bulgaria
 Watch here >>



June 2023
Peace Highway Serbia-Merosina section
 Watch here >>



July 2023
Regional Landfill Živinice, Bosnia and Herzegovina
 Watch here >>



July 2023
Housing and Social Integration of Vulnerable Persons, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Tuzla)
 Watch here >>



July 2023
Housing and Social Integration of Vulnerable Persons, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Kladanj)
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July 2023
Bar Vrbnica Rail Interconnection, Montenegro
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