



European
Commission

#Connectivity
#WesternBalkans
November 2020

EU-WESTERN BALKANS

BOOSTING CONNECTIVITY

Transport links get us to where we need to be, energy systems power our homes and businesses, and digital networks allow us to communicate. The Western Balkans region is surrounded geographically by EU Member States. Improving transport and energy links – both in the region and with the EU – is vital to stimulate economic growth and integration and for business to thrive. Connectivity is the foundation upon which our economies can prosper.

LOOKING FORWARD – INVESTING FOR THE FUTURE

Connectivity is at the heart of the new **Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans**, presented by the European Commission in October 2020. The Plan aims to spur the long-term economic recovery of the region, and accelerate regional integration and convergence with the EU.

Ongoing support to connectivity is vital for the lives of people, for businesses and the economies of the region. The Plan foresees up to €9 billion in EU grants for flagship investments in areas including energy, transport, and the twin green and digital transitions. In addition, the EU can provide guarantees to help reduce the cost of financing for both public and private investments and the risk for investors, through the proposed Western Balkans Guarantee Facility. This is expected to raise up to €20 billion of investment.

*EU Commissioner for Neighbourhood
and Enlargement, Olivér Várhegyi*

“The Economic and Investment Plan should help transform the Western Balkans into one of the most attractive regions for investment in the world.”

The Economic and Investment Plan identifies ten investment flagships in six areas:

- ▶ Sustainable transport
- ▶ Clean energy
- ▶ Environment & climate
- ▶ Digital future
- ▶ Private sector
- ▶ Human capital

up to
€9 billion*
in EU grants
to boost economic growth

*IPA III funding subject to the adoption of the next Multiannual Financial Framework

Enlargement
Negotiations

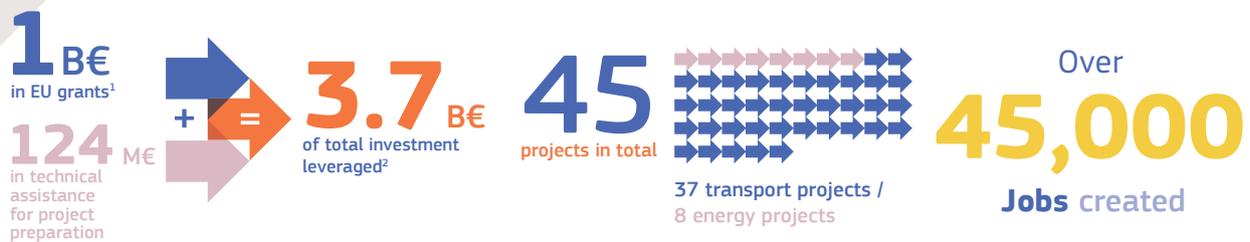


CONNECTIVITY AGENDA – FIVE YEARS OF SUCCESS 2015-2020

In 2015, the EU launched the Connectivity Agenda for the Western Balkans. Since then, over €1 billion from EU pre-accession funds has been allocated through grants to high priority connectivity projects. This has not only delivered better infrastructure across the Western Balkans region, but also driven forward integration with core transport and energy Trans-European Networks. These grants, together with loans of partner Financial Institutions, have generated almost €4 billion in investments and created over 45,000 jobs in the Western Balkans region.

This builds on **three decades of EU investment in the Western Balkans**, which has led to dozens of major road and rail interconnections, upgrades at ports, and transformational energy projects. The EU has contributed more than **€11 billion to transport and energy projects through grants and loans** provided by the European Investment Bank, which has **leveraged €22 billion in total investment**.

Key achievements 2015 - 2020



¹From EU pre-accession funds (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance – IPA)

²All figures from October 2020

Snapshot of results 2015 - 2020



Connectivity Agenda - Sector Support 2015 - 2020 (€ million)

