

EU mobilises immediate support for its Western Balkan partners to tackle Coronavirus

As part of the global response to the coronavirus outbreak, the European Commission has announced up to €38 million in immediate support for the Western Balkans to tackle the health emergency caused by coronavirus and reallocation of €374 million to help the socio-economic recovery of the region.

At the request of the partners, the Commission is responding to **immediate needs** by supporting the supply of medical devices and personal equipment, such as ventilators, laboratory kits, masks, goggles, gowns, and safety suits.

The EU will assist Albania and North Macedonia to cover the immediate needs of their public health systems with up to €4 million each, Bosnia and Herzegovina with €7 million, meanwhile Montenegro will receive up to €3 million, Kosovo up to €5 million and up to €15 million will go to Serbia, the most affected country until now.

The Commission is also including the Western Balkans in EU initiatives to tackle the coronavirus crisis like the joint procurement schemes of protective personal equipment and has accelerated the implementation of a project with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). Initially envisaged for 2021, this project will enhance their capacities to survey and control communicable diseases, improve their health emergency preparedness capabilities, and support the development of their public health microbiology laboratory systems.

Mitigating the socio-economic impact of the outbreak

To help mitigate the socio-economic impact of the coronavirus, the EU will also redirect funds from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) to help the recovery in the Western Balkan partners in the short and medium term. This will include support to the private sector, increasing social protection, with a specific attention to the vulnerable groups, and strengthening resilience in the public health sector.

For this purpose, the Commission will mobilise up to €46.7 million to support the social and economic recovery of Albania, €73.5 million for Bosnia and Herzegovina, €50 million for Montenegro, whilst North Macedonia will benefit from €62 million, Serbia from €78.4 million and Kosovo will receive up to €63 million.

The Commission is also working closely with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and relevant financing institutions from EU Member States as [TEAM EUROPE](#) to provide a coordinated response to support the real economy, including SMEs, and support liquidity, also of the banking sector.

In addition, the Commission is working with the [Regional Cooperation Council](#) (RCC) and the Secretariats of the [Transport Community Treaty](#) and the Central Europe Free Trade Area (CEFTA) to address issues affecting the supply and the facilitation of movement of goods within the region, and between the region and the EU. To this end, the Commission has included EU-Western Balkans border-crossing points located along the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) in its [Communication on “Green Lanes” of 23 March 2020](#). The EU is now supporting the Western Balkans in expanding the green lanes within the region.

For more information

More information on the European Commission's coordination of a common European response to the coronavirus outbreak click [here](#).

[Factsheet: EU support to the Western Balkans in the coronavirus pandemic](#)

[Source](#)

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