EU - Western Balkans relations

2020: a key year for the EU-Western Balkans relations

Revised methodology endorsed to drive the enlargement process forward with a stronger political steer and in a more credible, predictable, dynamic way.

Commission proposals to further the EU-Western Balkans agenda with a strong focus on economic development.

EU-Western Balkans Summit in Zagreb

Overview of the EU relations with the Western Balkans

Bosnia and Herzegovina – Population: 3.5 million
Potential candidate
Commission Opinion on EU membership application in May 2019; EU Council conclusions endorsing the 14 key priorities in Dec 2019.

Serbia – Population: 7 million
Candidate country
Opened chapters - 18 📜
Provisionally closed chapters - 2

Kosovo* – Population: 1.8 million
Potential candidate
In April 2016, the Stabilisation and Association Agreement entered into force.

Montenegro – Population: 0.6 million
Candidate country
Opened chapters - 32 📜
Provisionally closed chapters - 3

Albania – Population: 2.9 million
Candidate country
March 2020: Council decides to open accession negotiations.

North Macedonia – Population: 2.1 million
Candidate country
March 2020: Council decides to open accession negotiations.

Economic potential of the EU relations with the Western Balkans

€12.7 billion
Foreign Direct Investments in 2014-2018. EU companies are the biggest investors in the Western Balkans.

Western Balkans is a market of
18 million consumers.

€54 billion
in trade between the EU and the Western Balkans in 2018.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the IJC Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.