NEWSLETTER

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BULLETIN OF THE MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

BULLETIN ▪

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Opening speech

Dear readers,

The twenty-fourth issue of the Bulletin on European Integration presents the most important events and activities in the EU accession process during the second quarter of 2023.

The Ministry of European Affairs is dedicated to coordinating the work of the negotiation structure and intensifying activities with the aim of creating tangible results in all chapters, partnership and cooperation with other bodies, as well as strengthening ties and relations with EU institutions and members so that Montenegro takes an equal place among European partners.

And during the previous three months, we continued to implement activities regarding the coordination of the negotiation process, IPA, cooperation with local self-governments and the civil sector, and the organization of appropriate activities and campaigns.

We are convinced that this newsletter also represents a contribution to improving citizens' information, understanding and knowledge about the accession process and future membership of Montenegro in the EU.

MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

SECTOR FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE EU AND THE EU ACCESSION PROCESS - GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF MONTENEGRO

20. VI 2023.

THE 14TH MEETING OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE FOR INTERNAL MARKET AND COMPETITION BETWEEN MONTENEGRO AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Representatives of Montenegrin institutions presented the results achieved in the areas of the right to establish companies and provide services, capital movement, public procurement, commercial law, intellectual property rights, competition, financial services and consumer and health protection, achieved since the previous meeting held in June last year. It was assessed that Montenegro continued with the implementation of reforms and, thanks to good results, recorded significant progress in the chapters related to the areas of competition and internal market.

"Enlargement policy and our partners from the Western Balkans have been and will remain our biggest focus. The President of the European Commission announced the New Growth Plan for the Western Balkans built on four pillars. The ambition is to integrate the Western Balkans into a single market", said the head of Unit D2 for Montenegro and Serbia in the General Directorate for Neighbourhood Policy and Negotiations on the Enlargement of the European Commission, Michael Miller.

"The Commission encouraged Montenegro to use the months ahead to speed up and deepen political and economic reforms. Progress on the rule of law, meeting the interim benchmarks in Chapters 23 and 24, will continue to determine the overall pace of negotiations and chapter closure. This could allow the closing of negotiations in a significant number of chapters in a short period of time," said Miller.

State Secretary at the Ministry of European Affairs, Milena Žižić, said that the meeting of the Subcommittee is an opportunity to exchange opinions and present significant results in the very important negotiation chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 28, that have been translated into clear benefits for our citizens and the economy, which open the perspective of complete integration of Montenegro in the area of the internal market.

She emphasized that the Government remains committed to achieving the standards necessary for the gradual inclusion of Montenegro in the system of the internal market with the clear goal of strengthening its own capacities on the way to final integration.

21. VI 2023.

THE 16TH MEETING OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE FOR TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, ENERGY AND REGIONAL POLICY BETWEEN MONTENEGRO AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

At the meeting, it was assessed that Montenegro continued to improve the situation in the areas of environment, climate change, transport, energy and regional policy. It was pointed out that there is still a lot of work to be done in the mentioned areas, which requires additional improvement of administrative capacities, both at the national and local levels.

Opening the meeting, the Minister of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism and coordinator of the work of the Ministry of European Affairs, Ana Novaković Đurović, thanked the EU for supporting Montenegro's European perspective and fundamental reforms on the way to full alignment with the European standards, emphasizing the Government's full commitment to their implementation and intensification.

She presented the key results, focusing on the most important legal and strategic documents in the areas that were the subject of the meeting. She said that Montenegro remained committed to this priority goal and expressed her firm belief that, with further support from the EU, we would be in a position to report on even better results at the next meeting of the Subcommittee.

22. VI 2023.

STATE SECRETARY MILENA ŽIŽIĆ SPOKE WITH THE HEAD OF THE UNIT FOR MONTENEGRO AND SERBIA IN THE DIRECTORATE FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD AND ENLARGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS, MICHAEL MILLER

State Secretary and National IPA Coordinator at the Ministry of European Affairs, Milena Žižić, met with the head of the Unit for Montenegro and Serbia in the General Directorate for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, Michael Miller.

State Secretary Žižić expressed her satisfaction with the Subcommittee meetings held in Podgorica and with the support that the European Commission constantly provided to Montenegro on its accession path. She introduced the counterpart with the current state of obligations from the integration process and progress in the reconstruction of the negotiation structure. She stressed that Montenegro will continuously work to use all EU financial support instruments, especially bearing in mind the announced new growth plan for the countries of the Western Balkans.

The Head of the Unit, Miller, praised the cooperation of the Ministry with the General Directorate for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations and with the EU Delegation in Montenegro. He referred to the successful subcommittee meetings held this week, as well as recent meetings devoted to the rule of law chapters. He expressed the hope that such dynamics and quality of work will continue during the coming months. He said that Montenegro has an ally in the European Commission on its way to the EU, and that in the coming period it can count on support in implementing reforms and fulfilling the conditions for the EU membership.

April -June

CONSTITUTIVE SESSIONS OF NEGOTIATING WORKING GROUPS

In the period from April to July 2023, 18 constitutive sessions of negotiating working groups were held for chapters 22, 18, 9, 13, 29, 5, 33, 30, 14, 15, 21, 23, 17, 10, 16, 31, 26 and 25.

IPA

05. IV 2023.

THE FIRST MEETING OF THE JOINT SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE IPA CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - MONTENEGRO 2021-2027

The first meeting of the Joint Supervisory Board of the IPA cross-border cooperation programme Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro for the period 2021-2027 was held in Sarajevo.

At the meeting, which was chaired by Acting Director General of the Directorate for European Funds in the Ministry of European Affairs, Bojan Vujović, discussed the publication of the first call for project proposals and the selection of the thematic priority that will be included in the call.

Vujović reminded that the cross-border cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro started in 2008 within the financial perspective 2007-2013 and successfully continued during the financial perspective 2014-2020.

"Successful implementation of the Programme would not be possible without the good cooperation of the Ministry of European Affairs, the Directorate for European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EU Delegation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Joint Technical Secretariat, with the main office in Sarajevo and the office in Nikšić", pointed out Vujović.

For this programme of cross-border cooperation, the European Union allocated grants in the amount of 8.4 million euros.

12. IV 2023.

INFORMATION DAY FOR THE 4TH CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS UNDER THE IPA CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME MONTENEGRO - ALBANIA

At the Info Day held in Podgorica, potential users expressed great interest in the 4th Call for Project Proposals within the IPA programme of cross-border cooperation between Montenegro and Albania.

Representatives of the Ministry of Finance presented the possibilities and rules for submitting project proposals.

The European Union allocated 2.8 million euros for the cooperation of institutions and organizations from the border areas of Montenegro and Albania.

Application deadline: 15 June 2023

20. IV 2023.

MEETINGS OF THE JOINT SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME BETWEEN THE THREE STATES WITHIN THE 2014-2020 PERSPECTIVE AND THE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE SOUTH ADRIATIC PROGRAMME HELD IN KOLAŠIN.

At the meeting, it was announced that institutions and organizations from the Italian regions of Puglia and Molise, Albania and Montenegro are successfully cooperating within the framework of the Interreg IPA cross-border cooperation program Italy - Albania - Montenegro, and even better results of trilateral cooperation are expected within the framework of the new Interreg IPA South Adriatic programme.

The meetings were attended by delegations from Italy, Albania and Montenegro, as well as the European Commission.

"Through the Interreg IPA programme of cross-border cooperation Italy - Albania - Montenegro 2014-2020, 100 projects with a total value of around 82.4 million euros were supported, of which circa 70 million euros were allocated by the European Union", said Bojan Vujović, acting general director of the Directorate for European Funds in the Ministry of European Affairs of Montenegro."

As he stated, EUR 81.3 million has been allocated for the new Interreg IPA South Adriatic programme.

"This gives us an incentive to continue successful cooperation with the aim of solving common challenges and raising the quality of life in the area of the South Adriatic", emphasized Vujović.

05. V 2023.

INFO DAY DEDICATED TO THE FIRST CALL OF THE IPA ADRION PROGRAMME

The Info Day attracted great interest from organizations and institutions from all over Montenegro.

About 65 million euros of grants from the European Union have been earmarked for this call.

At the Info day, it was announced that innovative projects were expected to contribute to the Adriatic-Ionian region being smarter, greener, more resistant to climate change, carbon neutral and better connected.

The deadline for submitting project proposals is 30 June 2023.

10.V 2023.

THE CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - MONTENEGRO 2021-2027 PROMOTED IN NIKŠIĆ

In the premises of IPC Tehnopolis in Nikšić, the promotion of the IPA cross-border cooperation programme Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro 2021-2027 was held, for which the European Union allocated 8.4 million euros. At the promotional event, speakers presented opportunities for funding under the Programme and discussed about the importance of the participation of local communities in the Programme. The participants had the opportunity to see and hear about the results achieved so far and the plans for the next period.

One of the goals of the event was the announcement of the first call for submission of project proposals within the mentioned Programme.

Acting Director General of the Directorate for European Funds in the Ministry of European Affairs, Bojan Vujović, expressed satisfaction with the announcement of the opening of the first call for project proposals within the framework of the IPA cross-border cooperation program Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro 2021-2027.

16. V 2023.

A MEETING OF NATIONAL COORDINATORS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY FOR THE DANUBE REGION HELD IN BRDO NEAR KRANJ

On behalf of Montenegro, the meeting was attended by Bojan Vujović, acting General Director for European Funds in the Ministry of European Affairs, as the national coordinator for the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region. At the meeting, participants discussed current and future activities within the Slovenian presidency of this macro-regional strategy, as well as common potentials and obstacles for economic growth and development of the macro-region. The importance of capacity development for the efficient use of European Union funds through various programmes was particularly emphasized, in order for the participating countries to provide as many funds as possible for the implementation of projects that contribute to the goals of the strategy.

17. V 2023.

PROMOTION OF THE CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - MONTENEGRO 2021-2027 IN KOLAŠIN

The promotion of the IPA cross-border cooperation programme Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro 2021-2027, for which the European Union allocated 8.4 million euros, was held at the Culture Centre of Kolašin. At the event, funding opportunities within the Programme were presented to beneficiaries from the northern part of Montenegro, which belongs to the programme territory, with a special focus on the importance of participation of local communities in the Programme.

The event was also an opportunity for the announcement of the first call for submission of project proposals within the mentioned Programme. Representative of the Ministry of European Affairs, Irena Bošković, emphasized the importance of the cross-border cooperation programme for the development of local areas and communities, and the improvement of living conditions, and pointed out that in the 2014-2020 financial perspective, 270 projects were contracted through territorial cooperation programmes where Montenegrin beneficiaries received about 55 million of EU funds. She expressed her belief that in the third cycle of programme cooperation there will be even more successful projects that will improve living conditions in the cross-border area.

18. V 2023.

PREMIERE OF A DOCUMENTARY FILM ABOUT ECOTOURISM ON THE TERRITORY OF MONTENEGRO, ALBANIA AND KOSOVO

The Ministry of European Affairs of Montenegro organised a premiere of the documentary film "Promotion of ecotourism on the territory of Montenegro, Albania and Kosovo" in the European House.

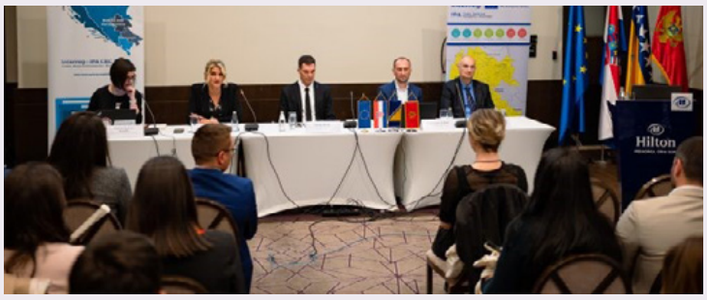
The fifteen-minute documentary film, which takes viewers on a journey through the border area between Montenegro and Albania and Montenegro and Kosovo, presents the results achieved under 8 cross-border cooperation projects in this area.

Emphasizing the importance of cross-border cooperation between Montenegro and Albania and Kosovo, acting General Director of the Directorate for European Funds in the Ministry of European Affairs, Bojan Vujović, said that the dedication of the three operational structures, with all involved parties, enabled significant results to be shown in the field of tourism promotion and cultural and natural heritage.

"As part of the IPA II Cross-Border Cooperation Programme, Montenegro - Albania, 21 projects with a total value of over 7 million euros have been supported so far, in the fields of tourism, employment, and environmental protection, all with the aim of improving the standards and quality of life of people in the programme area. Also, under the programme with Kosovo, 23 projects with a total value of over 7 million euros were supported" emphasized Vujović.

17. V 2023.

INFO DAY ON THE FIRST CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS UNDER THE NEW INTERREG VI-A IPA PROGRAMME CROATIA – BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA – MONTENEGRO 2021-2027



At the info day, it was announced that, within the new Interreg VI-A IPA programme Croatia - Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro 2021-2027, more than 41 million euros of grants from the European Union will be available for cross-border projects.

Milena Žižić, State Secretary in the Ministry of European Affairs of Montenegro and National IPA Coordinator, pointed out that the cooperation between Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro is an example of how well neighbourly relations can work in practice.

"Montenegro has been cooperating with Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2007, first through bilateral programmes within the perspective of IPA I, and then also within the framework of the trilateral programme within the perspective of IPA II. The previous Interreg IPA cross-border cooperation programme Croatia - Bosnia and Herzegovina Montenegro 2014-2020 produced 59 successful projects with a total value of around 67.3 million euros, with 57.2 million euros provided by the European Union" said Žižić.

18. V 2023.

INFO DAY ON THE FIRST CALL OF THE INTERREG VI-A IPA PROGRAMME CROATIA - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - MONTENEGRO 2021-2027

In addition to the great interest of institutions and organizations from Montenegro, the info day held in Budva also attracted the attention of potential users from Croatia and B&H, who had the opportunity to connect with Montenegrin partners.

25. V 2023.

MEETING OF THE GROUP OF FUNDERS OF THE WESTERN BALKANS INVESTMENT SUPPORT EU

The meeting, which was organized by the European Commission on May 24-25 in Brussels, was attended by representatives of the Ministry of European Affairs and the Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism. Mechanisms aimed at accelerating the transitions of the economies of the Western Balkan countries were presented at the meeting, especially through cooperation with international financial institutions and the strengthening of sources for infrastructure financing and private sector development.

Under the Western Balkan investment framework, the Western Balkan countries were given the opportunity to additionally use new financial instruments for the development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

Acting Director General for European Funds, Bojan Vujović, presented the current situation regarding the implementation of key infrastructure projects financed by the EU in Montenegro under the Western Balkans Investment Framework. He emphasized that non-reimbursed support from the EU is extremely important for completing the financial framework for financing projects in the field of infrastructure in Montenegro, especially in the context of challenges regarding the planning of new projects. In addition to the importance of the development of connections in the field of transport and energy, he particularly pointed out the importance of projects in the field of environmental protection and improvement of infrastructure in the field of education. "With gratitude for the previous support from EU funds, Montenegro remains committed to good cooperation with the countries of the region and EU institutions, in order to create adequate conditions for the financing and implementation of new infrastructure projects," said Vujović.

29. V 2023.

THE FINAL CONFERENCE OF THE PROJECT "BETTER SERVICE THROUGH JOINT ACTION" HELD IN BIJELO POLJE

At the project's final conference, head of the Directorate for Regional and Infrastructure Projects in the Ministry of European Affairs of Montenegro Marko Dragaš pointed out that under the IPA III programme framework, which covers the period from 2021 to 2027, the Serbia-Montenegro cross-border cooperation programme will be provided with EU funds in the amount of 8.4 million euros.

The project "Joint action to better service" is supported under the IPA Programme of cross-border cooperation Serbia - Montenegro 2014-2020, and it is implemented by the Centre for Children and Youth with Developmental Disabilities "Tisa" from Bijelo Polje and the Association for the

cultural inclusion, environmental protection and encouraging adaptation to climate change, as well as the development of tourism potential through the valorisation of natural and cultural heritage. The goal of these projects is to improve the standards and quality of life of people in the programme area

Help of Mentally Underdeveloped Persons "Tahir Tasa Delić" from Novi Pazar.

"Under the IPA II Programme of cross-border cooperation between Serbia and Montenegro, 24 projects with a total value of over 6.74 million euros have been supported so far, namely in the areas of employment, workforce mobility, social and of the two countries" said Dragaš.

Under the IPA Programme of cross-border cooperation Serbia - Montenegro 2014-2020, the contracting of the remaining 4 projects from the Third Call is underway, which will bring the total number of projects supported through this programme to 28.

26. V 2022.

PUBLICATION OF THE BROCHURE ON CROSS-BORDER AND TERRITORIAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES

The Ministry of European Affairs of Montenegro published a bilingual brochure on cross-border and territorial cooperation programmes in which Montenegro has been participating under the IPA III programme 2021-2027.

The aim of the brochure is to provide potential users from Montenegro with basic information about the possibilities for financing projects within the cross-border and territorial cooperation programme.

The brochure presents all ten cross-border and territorial cooperation programmes implemented on the territory of Montenegro. These are trilateral programmes (Interreg IPA South Adriatic and Interreg VI-A IPA Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro), bilateral programmes (Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Montenegro – Kosovo, Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Montenegro – Republic of Albania, IPA Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Serbia – Montenegro and Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro) and transnational programmes (Interreg VI-B IPA ADRION, Danube Region Programme, Interreg Euro-MED and URBACT IV).

31. V 2023.

OPENING OF A NEW MARICULTURE LABORATORY IN KOTOR

At the opening ceremony, acting Director General of the Directorate for European Funds in the Ministry of European Affairs of Montenegro, Bojan Vujović, said that the Food4Health project represents another valuable contribution to strengthening cross-border cooperation between the three countries.

"I am convinced that this multifunctional laboratory, as well as the equipment acquired

A new mariculture laboratory was officially opened at the Institute of Marine Biology of the University of Montenegro in Kotor. The construction of the laboratory and its complete equipping were realized as part of the Food4Health project, which is supported and financed under the Interreg IPA cross-border cooperation program Italy - Albania - Montenegro 2014-2020.

The multi-functional laboratory worth about 455,000 euros will contribute to the development of the mariculture sector in Montenegro and strengthening of small and medium-sized enterprises from the fisheries and mariculture sector.

as part of this project, will be a strong incentive for the development of fisheries and mariculture in Montenegro. Here, above all, I mean the contribution to the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises engaged in the production of sea food, but also to the strengthening of scientific and research work in this area," said Vujović.

The first hatchery for oysters (Ostrea edulis) in Montenegro was established in the new laboratory that allows the production of young oysters in laboratory conditions. After reaching the desired size, oysters will be transferred to further growth and development in their natural environment.

06. VI 2023.

THE FIRST CALL FOR THE CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - MONTENEGRO 2021-2027

The Delegation of the European Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina has announced a call for project proposals for the Cross-Border Cooperation Program Bosnia and Herzegovina - Montenegro 2021-2027 which is financed from pre-accession support funds for this programme.

07. VI 2023.

STATE SECRETARY ŽIŽIĆ PARTICIPATED AT THE FINAL CONFERENCE OF THE IPA II CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - MONTENEGRO 2014 - 2020 IN SARAJEVO

"Successful cross-border cooperation of

the quality and diversity of the tourist offer based on natural and cultural heritage, as well as social cohesion and connecting people and institutions in the border area," said the State Secretary in the Ministry of European Affairs and National IPA Coordinator, Milena Žižić.

The conference was also attended by assistant director in the Directorate for European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina Zara institutions and project users from Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, within IPA I and IPA II, significantly contributed to the improvement of employment promotion, labour force mobility, social and cultural inclusion, environmental protection, risk prevention and management, mitigating and adapting to climate change, as well as improving

Halilović and Stefano Elero, Head of Cooperation at the Delegation of the European Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They talked about the Programme and the experiences and importance of cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro during the programme period, as well as about expectations for the future period.

07. VI 2023.

STATE SECRETARY ŽIŽIĆ VISITING THE DIRECTORATE FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

State Secretary in the Ministry of European Affairs of Montenegro Milena Žižić paid an official visit to the Directorate for European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina. One of the topics of the conversation with director Edin Dilberović was the continuation of cooperation between the two countries under the cross-border cooperation programme between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro for the period 2021-2027, the total value of which is 8.4 million euros.

The results of the previous cycle of this cross-border cooperation programme, under which 20 projects involving partners from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro were implemented in the period 2014-2020, were also discussed.

15. VI 2023.

INFORMATION DAY OF THE CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - MONTENEGRO IN NIKŠIĆ

At the Info Day in Nikšić, the presenters announced the First Call for Project Proposals which was open until 25 July 2023.

EUR 2.16 million in grants from the European Union are available for projects in the field of tourism, natural and cultural heritage

16. VI 2023.

MEP REPRESENTATIVES IN BRUSSELS AT THE REGULAR SEMI-ANNUAL COORDINATION MEETING FOR THE PROGRAMMING OF THE INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION SUPPORT (IPA)

On 15-16 June 2023 the European Commission - General Directorate for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations organised the regular semi-annual coordination meeting for the programming of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Support (IPA) in Brussels. Besides the representatives of the European Commission, the meeting was attended by representatives of the governments of the countries of the Western Balkans and Turkey including the representatives of the Ministry of European Affairs of Montenegro, State Secretary and National IPA Coordinator Milena Žižić and her colleagues.

At the meeting, drafts of actions proposed for the support under the regional 2024 IPA programme with a total value of 133.4 million euros. The proposal includes 15 actions, which in the coming period will be the subject of additional harmonization and definition and whose adoption is expected by the end of 2023. The focus of support will be on further improvement of the rule of law and gender equality, youth empowerment and digital transition, as well as further strengthening of health, social policies and strengthening of competitiveness and common market. Under the Western Balkans Investment Framework, the programme allocation for the period 2024-2027 amounts to over one billion euros to support infrastructure projects in the Western Balkans region and Turkey.

23. VI 2023.

MONTENEGRIN MUNICIPALITIES INCLUDED IN FOUR PROJECTS OF THE URBACT PROGRAMME

The municipalities of Berane, Bijelo Polje and Budva will be involved in 4 projects establishing networks for planning activities as part of the first call of the interregional cooperation program URBACT IV. They will work in cooperation with partner cities from different areas of Europe to solve common challenges of importance for local urban development.

Within the first call of the URBACT IV programme, a total of 252 partners from 28 European countries were supported. The projects are co-financed by the European Union, and for the first time cities from candidate countries had the opportunity to participate in the URBACT programme, which has

Starting from June 2023 until December 2025, partners within their network will have the opportunity to learn from each other, strengthen capacities and develop integrated action plans to respond to local challenges and encourage been implemented for more than 20 years.

sustainable urban development.

23. VI 2023.

MEA REPRESENTATIVES AT THE MEETING OF THE EURO-MED PROGRAMME MONITORING COMMITTEE IN MADRID

Representatives of the Ministry of European Affairs and the Ministry of Finance of Montenegro participated in the meeting of the Committee for Monitoring the Euro-MED Programme in Madrid.

At the meeting, it was decided that organizations and institutions from Montenegro were to participate as partners in 32 projects out of 122 projects that entered the final evaluation phase of the Second Call of the Euro-MED 2021-2027 programme.

Further evaluation of the selected projects will follow, and the final results are expected in November.

29. VI 2023.

STATE SECRETARY ŽIŽIĆ AT THE MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE WESTERN BALKAN INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK PROJECTS IN OSLO

The Western Balkan Investment Framework (WBI) plays an important role in the development and economic progress of Montenegro, and includes investments in transport, energy, water supply,

financial resources and expertise provided by ZIO help improve the infrastructure of Montenegro, connectivity, sustainability and overall economic growth, which was the message from the meeting of the Strategic and Operational Committee of the Western Balkan Investment Framework projects held in Oslo.

State Secretary and National IPA Coordinator Milena Žižić said that by investing in sectors such as transport, industry and innovation, WBI helps stimulate the development of the private sector, job creation and income generation, and added that these efforts contributed to Montenegrin economic waste management and other vital sectors. The diversification and long-term sustainability.

30. VI 2023.

STATE SECRETARY ŽIŽIĆ IN OSLO AT THE MEETING OF THE OPERATIONAL COMMITTEE

The European Union allocated additional 5.4 million euros to Montenegro for the preparation of infrastructure projects under the 29th call for submission of projects of the Western Balkans Investment Framework (BIF), it was officially confirmed at the meeting of the Operational Committee held in Oslo.

At the meeting, where Montenegro was represented by the state secretary and national IPA coordinator Dr Milena Žižić and her colleagues, the European Union confirmed its readiness to continue financial support for infrastructure projects in Montenegro, all with the aim of increasing the amount of investments in infrastructure and improving the connectivity of the region in accordance with the goals of the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans.

On this occasion, Montenegro was granted funds for the preparation of project documentation for three projects related to the energy and transport sector, namely:

- Preparation of the main project, environmental protection studies and other tender documentation for the railway corridor R2 Montenegro-Albania, for the section from Podgorica to the border with Albania in the amount of 2.6 million euros;
- Preparation of the main project, environmental protection studies and other tender documents for the rehabilitation of the Sozina tunnel on the R2 railway corridor, Bar-Vrbnica section in the amount of EUR 0.9 million;
- Creation of a feasibility study and an environmental protection study for the 400 kV interconnection Brezna–Crkvičko Polje–Sarajevo 20 (to the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina) with the construction of a new 400/220 kV substation Crkvičko Polje and the connection with the Piva hydroelectric power plant in the amount of 1.9 million euros.

CONFERENCES, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

28. IV 2023.

MEP REPRESENTATIVES AT THE OECD MEETING IN PARIS

Representatives of the Ministry of European Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism and MONSTAT participated on behalf of Montenegro at the meeting of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) held in Paris, dedicated to the assessment of the outlook for competitiveness in SE Europe for 2024.

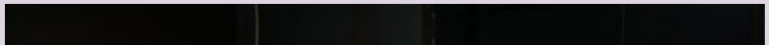
The Montenegrin delegation presented the achieved economic results, current and planned activities in the accession negotiations with the EU, as well as the situation regarding the use of EU funds.

OECD representatives presented an updated methodology for assessing competitiveness and the main aspects of the assessment process, which, as pointed out, will serve to monitor the ambitious, inclusive and sustainable reform programme in the Western Balkans, but also as a basis for the region's recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The meeting was attended by national IPA coordinators and representatives of the ministries of economy and statistics institutes from the countries of the Western Balkans, as well as representatives of the European Commission, CEFTA and the Council for Regional Cooperation.

25. V 2023.

MEP REPRESENTATIVE IN SARAJEVO AT THE 8TH EU STRATEGY FORUM FOR THE ADRIATIC-IONIAN REGION (EUSAIR)



head of the Directorate for Horizontal Affairs at the

To achieve commitment in the implementation of macro-regional strategies, three segments are key: management, financing and ownership, said the Ministry of European Affairs, Tatjana Bošković, at the 8th EU Strategy Forum for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR), which was held in Sarajevo from 23 to 25 May.

Speaking at the panel "The role of EU strategies for the Adriatic-Ionian and Danube region in the process of joining the European Union", she pointed out that in the financing of candidate countries for joining the EU, equal status should be applied in accessing funds in relation to EU Member States, and that the Berlin Process, the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans, inter-regional programmes and the national IPA are a reliable but insufficient source of financing, especially for the implementation of strategic projects.

05. VI 2023.

MEETING OF DELEGATIONS OF THE MINISTRIES OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS OF THE COUNTRIES PARTICIPATING IN THE SOUTH-EAST EUROPEAN COOPERATION PROCESS (SEECP) IN BUDVA

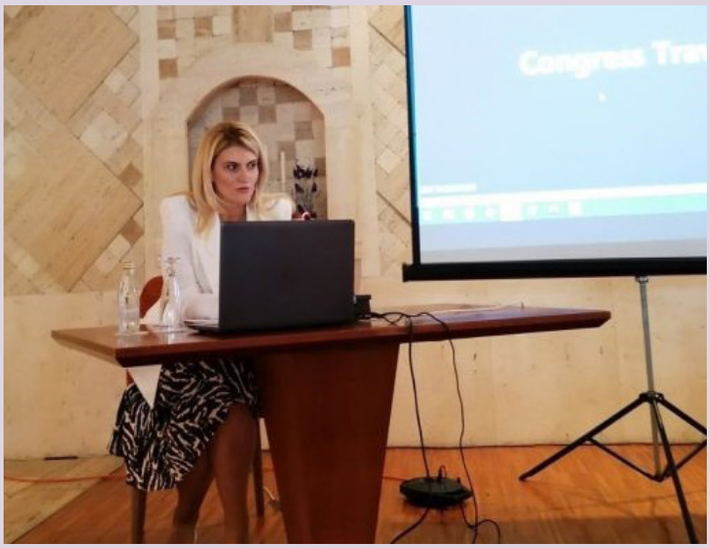
"Today is the sixth anniversary of Montenegro's membership in NATO, and the next big goal is membership in the European Union. There are internal challenges, but we have shown that we have the capacity to reach a political consensus when it comes to important political issues, and I expect that consensus will be even easier to reach after the parliamentary elections," said Prime Minister Dritan Abazović.

He hosted delegations from the Ministries of European Affairs of the countries participating in (SEECP), as part of the completion of Montenegro's presidency of this initiative. The ministerial meeting was an opportunity to exchange opinions regarding the challenges that the wider region is facing on the way to the EU, as well as opportunities for improving cooperation and partnership, with the support of colleagues and partners from the European Union.

Prime Minister Abazović said that Montenegro is fully aligned with the EU foreign and security policy and that it is recognized as a partner that is ready to show solidarity both with the countries of the Union the South East European Cooperation Process and with those that aspire to become members.

06. VI 2023.

STATE SECRETARY ŽIŽIĆ IN BUDVA OPENED THE CONFERENCE " SERVICES DIRECTIVE, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR MONTENEGRO"



At the conference organized by the Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism on 5-6 June in Budva, three panels discussed the economic benefits and challenges in the implementation of the Services Directive in Montenegro.

"Given that we are living in an era of accelerated technological development and digital transformation of the society, it is very important that we provide our citizens, that is, the economy, with administrative simplifications, and at the same time show the capacity to implement the rules that apply on the EU market, which is in line with Montenegro's obligations under the Stabilization and Association Agreement," said State Secretary of the Ministry of European Affairs, Milena Žižić.

Žižić said that under the negotiation Chapter 3 - The right of establishment and freedom to provide services, harmonisation of our legislative framework with the provisions of the Services Directive is particularly important because it gives impetus to the further development of our economy.

"Services are the generators and drivers of economic development, and through the harmonization of legislation with the Services Directive, Montenegro is improving its business environment in a way that reduces business barriers, which leads to the liberalization of services, and therefore increases the competitiveness potential of companies on the EU market. Also, through harmonization with the Services Directive, we encourage the inflow of foreign direct investments, the establishment of new companies and the creation of new jobs, which represents concrete benefits for our economy, i.e. citizens, and we are here precisely to improve business conditions through the adoption and application of European standards and create an environment favourable for the growth and development of the economy," said Žižić.

COOPERATION WITH THE CIVIL SECTOR

25. IV 2023.

PUBLIC CALL FOR NGOS TO NOMINATE TWO REPRESENTATIVES FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE IPA SECTORAL SUPERVISORY BOARD

In accordance with Article 53 of the Law on the Confirmation of the Framework Agreement on Partnership between the European Commission and Montenegro, represented by the Government of Montenegro, on models for the implementation of EU financial support in Montenegro within the framework of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Support (IPA III) (Official Gazette of Montenegro - International Agreements 006/22 of 21 October 2022) and Article 3 of the Decree on the Election of Representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations to the Working Bodies of State Administration Bodies and the Conduct of Public Debates in the Preparation of Laws and Strategies (Official Gazette of Montenegro 41/18), the Ministry of European Affairs issued a public call to non-governmental organizations to nominate two representatives for membership in the Sectoral Supervisory Board of the Pre-accession Support Instrument

The sectoral supervisory board of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Support (IPA) is responsible for monitoring annual and multi-annual programmes that are implemented in indirect management, and are financed in accordance with the IPA Regulation, the IPA II Regulation, and the IPA III Regulation, within a specific sector or programme. The Sector Monitoring Committees are obliged to carry out the following obligations, with the help of the reports that the Governing Body submits before the meetings.

03. V 2023.

STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF ECONOMICS BEGAN THEIR INTERNSHIP AT THE MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

The Ministry of European Affairs opened its doors to students of the Faculty of Economics who, during May, attended professional training in this

very Ministry and thus contribute to the progress of the country towards full membership in the European Union," said State Secretary Milena Žižić, institution. On this occasion, the students were received by State Secretary Milena Žižić and acting Director General for European Funds Bojan Vujović.

"Officers of the Ministry will be happy to share with students practical knowledge in the field of coordination of pre-accession funds of the European Union, and I believe that this will help our young colleagues in their further studies, and possibly encourage them to start their careers one day in this who welcomed the students and conveyed the expectation that they will dedicate their knowledge and energy to the work of the Ministry.

Student professional practice is realized based on the cooperation agreement between the Ministry of European Affairs and the Faculty of Economics, as an integral part of the sixth semester of basic academic studies in the study program of Economics.

22. VI 2023.

PUBLICATION OF THE PUBLIC CALL FOR NGOS TO NOMINATE CANDIDATES FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (JCC)

Based on the Decision on the establishment of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) between Montenegro and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), adopted at the Council on Stabilization and Association between Montenegro and the EU on 20 June 2011, and based on Article 124 of the Stabilization and Association Agreement, the Ministry of European Affairs issued a public call for non-governmental organizations to propose candidates for membership in the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) between Montenegro and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC).

OTHER

06. IV 2023.

SELECTED BEST STORIES IN THE COMPETITION FOR TELEVISION AND PRINT MEDIA AND PORTAL JOURNALISTS

Montenegrin media in that process, and in order

The tenders were announced by the Department for Public Informing on the EU and the EU Accession Process of the General Secretariat of the Government, recognizing the importance of the to draw attention of the media to reporting on the process impact on the lives of Montenegrin citizens, application of European standards, the adoption of European values and EU support through available funds and project implementation.

Journalists from Vijesti Television and Public Service, Bojana Bojović Golijanin and Biljana Rovčanin, as well as journalist from RTV Nikšić, Vladimir Utješinović, were the winners of this year's competition in the category for the best television story about the process of Montenegro's accession to the European Union.

The winners in the category for the best newspaper article on the EU accession process of Montenegro are Feral.bar Portal journalist Radomir Petrić, Pobjeda journalist Jovana Đurišić and ND Vijesti journalist Željka Vučinić.

07. IV 2023.

THE SIXTH FORUM "ASK THE MINISTER" WAS HELD IN PODGORICA.

On the occasion of celebrating 4 April, Student Day, the General Secretariat of the Government, in cooperation with the Ministry of European Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism, the Ministry of Science and Technological Development and the Ministry of Health, organized the sixth "Ask the Minister" Forum.

The event was opened by Prime Minister Dritan Abazović, and the following officials participated in an informal conversation with the students: Ana Novaković Đurović, Minister of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism and Head of the Ministry environment in the country, the Law on Citizenship and Foreign Students in Montenegro, the issues of the Law on Higher Education and the conditions in which students live and study, as well as state investments in science and education.

The Minister of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism and Head of the Ministry of European Affairs, Ana Novaković Đurović said that students are the most important resource of this society and that the Government has the desire and ambition to strengthen cooperation with students by creating a strategic and legal form of cooperation.

of European Affairs; Goran Đurović, Minister of Economic Development and Tourism; Biljana Šćepanović, Minister of Science and Technological Development and Dragoslav Šćekić, Minister of Health.

"The doors of the European Union were opened after the war in Ukraine and the enlargement process receives more attention. In order for an organization to remain attractive, it needs to constantly attract others to join. Undoubtedly, this is also in the interest of the EU", said the Prime Minister of Montenegro Dr Dritan Abazović.

During the forum, Prime Minister Abazović answered students' questions from a number of areas such as the European integration of Montenegro, the economic situation and favourable business

She pointed out that the negotiation process is not just bureaucracy and invited students to use all the opportunities offered to them, both through negotiation chapters 25 and 26, as well as through various forms of cooperation with EU countries, programmes such as Erasmus, the Office for Regional Youth Cooperation etc.

"Your generation and those after you will be the ones who will change the attitude towards environmental protection. The development of infrastructure, economy, and tourism is in vain if they are not accompanied by the development of culture and awareness of the preservation of our waters, forests, and air. A healthy environment requires a responsible attitude of every Montenegrin resident towards it," said Novaković Đurović.

26. IV 2023.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS OF MONTENEGRIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS "IMAGIN THE FUTURE"

The General Secretariat of the Government - Sector for public informing about the European Union and the process of accession to the European Union announced a competition for students of Montenegrin primary schools on the occasion of celebration of the Europe Day.

In this way, interested primary school students were given the opportunity to creatively, through art work, video or photography, show how they see the future of Montenegro and its citizens in the EU and win valuable prizes - bicycles.

The contest was open from 26 April to 12 May 2023.

06. V 2023.

STATE SECRETARY ŽIŽIĆ PARTICIPATED IN THE EUROPE DAY CELEBRATION

Representatives of the Ministry of European Affairs, headed by State Secretary Milena Žižić, participated in the celebration of Europe Day in Bar, which was organized by the Delegation of the European Union in Montenegro and the Municipality of Bar.

"Europe Day is a date on which we celebrate peace, unity and solidarity in Europe. Today, together with our partners, we had the opportunity to bring the European Union and the values of the community that Montenegro wants to join to the citizens and visitors of Bar in an interactive way," said Žižić.

She added that it was pleasure to familiarize citizens, officials and diplomatic representatives with the work of the Ministry of European Affairs, including EU-funded programmes.

09. V 2023.

THE TWENTY-THIRD ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN OF THE MINISTRY OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS WAS PUBLISHED

The twenty-third issue of the Bulletin on European Integration presented the most important events and activities in the EU accession process during the fourth quarter of 2022.

19. V 2023.

SELECTION OF WINNERS OF THE CONTEST "IMAGINE THE FUTURE"

On the occasion of the Europe Day, the General Secretariat of the Government announced a competition for students of Montenegrin primary schools "Imagine the future". 159 students applied for the contest, which was open from 26 April to 12 May 2023, and sent their works in the form of artwork, video and photography.

The winners of the Competition, according to the jury's assessment, are: Isra Mollabeqiri, sixth-grade student at the "Boško Strugar" Elementary School from Ulcinj, Đina Preradović, student at the "Milorad Musa Burzan" Elementary School from Podgorica, and Ksenija Knežević, fifth-grade student at the "Boško Strugar" Elementary School. They sent works of art that presented their vision of the future of Montenegro as a member of the European Union. The authors of three best works of art were awarded with valuable prizes - bicycles, which were

NAGRADE ĆE BITI URUČENE U SKLOPU OBILJEŽAVANJA MJESECA EVROPE

presented to them as part of the celebration of the Month of Europe.

30. V 2023.

MINISTER NOVAKOVIĆ ĐUROVIĆ WITH PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS AT THE EVENT "MENTAL ECOLOGY"

As members of the younger generation, you are lucky to live in such a beautiful country, but we need your help to preserve and improve it for the next generations, said the Minister of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism Ana Novaković Đurović at the event "Mental Ecology".

Minister Novaković Đurović together with visual artist Milena Živković, literature professor Nada Martinović and art theoretician Teodora Trivunža, talked to elementary school students from Podgorica about the importance of environmental protection.

The event was organized by the General Secretariat of the Government, with the support of the Ministry of Education, as part of the celebration of Europe Month. The students of "Sutjeska", "Savo Pejanović" and "Milorad Musa Burzan" elementary schools took part in the event.

The Minister expressed the expectation that these "generations will realize their dream of living in a clean, preserved and green Montenegro".

31. V 2023.

MINISTER NOVAKOVIĆ ĐUROVIĆ WITH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS AND ATHLETES AT THE EVENT "A HEALTHY MIND IN A HEALTHY BODY"

"It is a great pleasure to be in company of our top sportsmen and sportswomen who have made us professionally, will be your choice," said Minister Ana Novaković Đurović at the event " A healthy mind in a healthy body ".

Minister Novaković Đurović, together with the State Secretary of the Ministry of Sports and Youth, Ned Ojdanić, and the General Director for Sports, Zoran Jojić, spoke to elementary school students in Podgorica about the importance of environmental protection. Famous Montenegrin sportsmen and women participated in the conversation with the students: handball player Milena Raičević, volleyball player Nikoleta Perović, handball player Vuk Latković, water polo player Stefan Vidović and boxer Viktor Mihailović.

happy and proud so many times. Without a doubt, they remain our best ambassadors who, better than all politicians and decisions, repaired and built an exceptional image of our country in the world. That's why I believe that they will be your role models in growing up and that playing sports, recreationally or

The event was organized by the General Secretariat of the Government, with the support of the Ministry of Education, as part of the celebration of the Europe Month. The students of "Sutjeska", "Savo Pejanović" and "Milorad Musa Burzan" elementary schools took part in the event.

21. VI 2023.

PRIZES AWARDED TO THE WINNERS OF THE "IMAGINE THE FUTURE" CONTEST

"The elementary school students showed with their works that they are interested in the EU, as well as that they see their future in the family of European states and nations. That is why our motive is stronger and our obligation is greater to fulfil all the conditions that will enable our young generations to be citizens of the EU in the future and enjoy all the rights that the membership brings", said Secretary General of the Government, Boris Marić and State Secretary in the Ministry of European Affairs, Milena Žižić.

The winners of the contest - Isra Mollabeqiri, a sixth-grade student at the "Boško Strugar" Elementary School from Ulcinj, Đina Preradović, a student at the "Milorad Musa Burzan" Elementary School from Podgorica, and Ksenija Knežević, a fifth-grade student at the "Boško Strugar" Elementary School - were awarded valuable prizes - bicycles.