



THE EU AND MONTENEGRO

Membership status: candidate country

#WesternBalkans
#EUEnlargement



November 2023

The EU acknowledged the European perspective for all Western Balkan partners at the Thessaloniki European Council in June 2003. Montenegro applied for EU membership in December 2008. In December 2010, it was granted candidate status by the European Council. The accession negotiations started in June 2012. By June 2020 all 33 screened chapters have been opened for negotiations, of which 3 are provisionally closed.



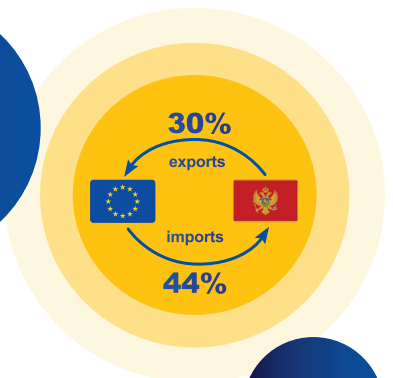
EU FUNDING

The EU is the largest provider of financial assistance to Montenegro. The EU is supporting the socioeconomic development and fundamental reforms in Montenegro with financial and technical assistance through the **Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)**.

For **2021-2023**, the IPA III funding for national programmes amounts to over **€135 million for Montenegro**. This includes the dedicated **€30 million** from the 2023 **Energy Support Package** immediate measures, 90% of which have already been disbursed to support vulnerable families and SMEs facing the rising energy prices. The actions are also aimed at supporting policy measures to accelerate the energy transition.

Since 1999, the EU has provided **€1 billion** in loans for Montenegro through the European Investment Bank.

The EU is Montenegro's biggest trading partner



in 2022

Source: Eurostat



TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Total EU Foreign Direct Investment in Montenegro amounted to €500 million in 2021.

Total volume of trade in goods with the EU was €1.78 billion in 2022.

KEY MILESTONES

DECEMBER 2008
Application for EU membership

MAY 2010
Stabilisation and Association Agreement enters into force

DECEMBER 2010
European Council grants candidate status

JUNE 2012
European Council decides to open accession negotiations

DECEMBER 2013
Chapters 23 and 24 ('Rule of Law') opened for negotiations

JUNE 2020
All 33 screened chapters opened, three of which provisionally closed

JUNE & DECEMBER 2021
Political Intergovernmental Conferences under the revised enlargement methodology



HUMAN CAPITAL

The EU pays special attention to youth, education, and innovation. It helps the Western Balkans in implementing Youth Guarantee schemes to support youth employment.

4,500+ participants took part in exchanges between the EU and Montenegro in the areas of education, training, youth, and sport under ERASMUS+ (2014-2020).

The EU has provided €26 million in support to civil society (2014-2023).

Reforms of the social welfare and child-care systems were implemented with the EU support.



ECONOMIC AND INVESTMENT PLAN

Launched in 2020, the Economic and Investment Plan (EIP) for the Western Balkans aims to mobilise up to €30 billion in cooperation with international financial institutions until 2027. Under the EIP for Montenegro, the EU has already mobilised **€824 million** in investments, out of which €178 million in grants.

The EIP flagship projects in public sector for Montenegro, endorsed between 2020 and 2023, support **sustainable transport, environment and climate**, and **education infrastructure**.

For instance, the investments help:

- rehabilitate steel bridges and tunnels along the Bar-Vrbnica railway section
- construct new wastewater treatment plants in various municipalities, including in Podgorica
- build, renovate and equip schools and kindergartens across Montenegro

Expected results up to 2030



183 km of railway lines rehabilitated



230 km of electricity transmission lines upgraded



Improved water and sanitation services for **400,000 people**



71,900 people with broadband access in rural areas

ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement
facebook.com/EUnear | x.com/eu_near
instagram.com/eu_near