The EU acknowledged the European perspective for all Western Balkan partners at the Thessaloniki European Council summit in June 2003. Bosnia and Herzegovina applied for EU membership in February 2016. The Commission adopted its Opinion on the membership application in May 2019. On the basis of the October 2022 recommendation by the Commission, the European Council granted Bosnia and Herzegovina the candidate status in December 2022.

The EU is the largest provider of financial assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The EU is supporting the socioeconomic development and fundamental reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina 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 €256 million for Bosnia and Herzegovina. This includes the dedicated €70 million from the 2023 Energy Support Package immediate measures, the 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 €3.2 billion in loans to Bosnia and Herzegovina through the European Investment Bank.

Total EU Foreign Direct Investment in Bosnia and Herzegovina has amounted to €5.3 billion in 2022.

Total volume of trade in goods with the EU was almost €15.1 billion in 2022.
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.

15,300+ participants took part in exchanges between the EU and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the areas of education, training, youth, and sport under ERASMUS+ (2014-2020).

The EU has provided €45 million in support to civil society (2014-2023).

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 Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EU has already mobilised €3 billion in investments, out of which €934 million in grants.

The EIP flagship projects in public sector for Bosnia and Herzegovina, endorsed between 2020 and 2023, support sustainable transport, renewable energy, and environment and climate.

For instance, the investments help:

- construct motorway sections and subsections of Corridor Vc
- rehabilitate and modernise Čapljina pump storage hydropower plant
- rehabilitate and modernise Sarajevo water distribution system

Expected results up to 2030

- 152 km of motorways built
- 1 inland port and 40 km of waterways rehabilitated
- 182 MW renewable energy generation capacity installed
- Improved water and sanitation services for 770,000 people