Key milestones

DECEMBER 2009
Application for EU membership

MARCH 2011
EU-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade-Pristina started

MARCH 2012
EU Candidate country status granted

JUNE 2013
EU decides to open accession negotiations

SEPTEMBER 2013
Entry into force of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement

Trade & investment

- The EU is Serbia’s biggest trading partner
- The EU’s Foreign Direct Investment in Serbia reached €1848.2 million in 2021
- Volume of trade in goods with the EU was €32.3 billion in 2021

EU funding

- The EU is the largest provider of financial assistance to Serbia
- The EU has been supporting reforms in the enlargement region, including in Serbia, with financial and technical assistance through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) since 2007. For 2021-2027, IPA III funding for the whole enlargement region is €14.162 billion
- Over €6.3 billion provided in European Investment Bank loans since 1999
- €444 million provided since 2009 in Western Balkans Investment Framework grants, to leverage investments of estimated €7 billion
- In October 2020, the EU mobilised an up to €30 billion package through the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans. In 2022 the following projects were endorsed: Sustainable transport: Removal of WWII German sunken vessels from the Danube, Prahovo sector; Niš railroad bypass; Stalač – Dunis railway section. Clean Energy: Trans-Balkan electricity corridor; Advanced system for remote meter reading in Kraljevo, Čačak and Niš. Digital Future: Rural broadband rollout. Human Capital: University Children’s Hospital Tirišova 2 in Belgrade

Mobility & empowerment

- Visa-free travel to the EU since December 2009
- Around 12,400 participants from Serbia in higher education, vocational education and training, school education, adult learning and youth under ERASMUS+ (2014-2020) (Serbia is a programme country in Erasmus+ since 2019)
- €33 million in support to civil society (2014-2020)

Supporting transformation

- Strengthening democracy: rule of law, justice and fundamental rights
- Reforming public administration
- Fostering competitiveness and supporting business development
- Working towards a cleaner environment and safer food supply

Total IPA support for the whole enlargement region by sector for 2021-2027 period*

- Rule of Law, fundamental rights and democracy: 4%
- Competitiveness and inclusive growth: 15%
- Good governance and neighbourly relations: 17%
- Territorial and cross-border cooperation: 22%
- Green agenda and sustainable connectivity: 42%

COVID-19 response

In December 2020, the Commission adopted a €70 million package of grants to help fund the access of Western Balkans partners to COVID-19 vaccines. To date, the Western Balkans have received more than 8 million doses of vaccines via Team Europe and COVAX. The Commission also has a project of over €7 million jointly with WHO, which has helped to support readiness for vaccination efforts and resilient health systems in the Western Balkans.