

# Feedback from **POLICY ANSWERS activities**

**“Partnering for the Future”  
Green ERA Hub (GEH) project /  
BIOEAST Initiative workshop  
7 October 2024**

# Project basics

<b>Project title</b>	<b>POLICY ANSWERS: “R&amp;I POLICY making, implementation ANd Support in the WEsteRn BalkanS”</b>
Project funding	<b>Coordination and Support Action under Horizon Europe <u>WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-06-01 Support for R&amp;I policy making in the Western Balkans;</u></b> Grant Agreement 10105887
Project duration	48 months: March 2022 - February 2026
Project partnership	14 partners + wide stakeholder network
Project officer	Bernhard Fabianek, DG Research & Innovation
Project coordinator	Elke Dall, Centre for Social Innovation
Project contact	<a href="mailto:policy-answers@westernbalkans-infohub.eu">policy-answers@westernbalkans-infohub.eu</a>
Project website	<a href="http://www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu">www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu</a>
Project social media	@WBInfoHub



*Project start on 1 March 2023  
Elke Dall, Bernhard Fabianek, Nikelina Naska*

# The POLICY ANSWERS consortium

Coordinator: Centre for Social Innovation from Austria

Other beneficiaries from:

Albania

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Kosovo\*

Montenegro

North Macedonia

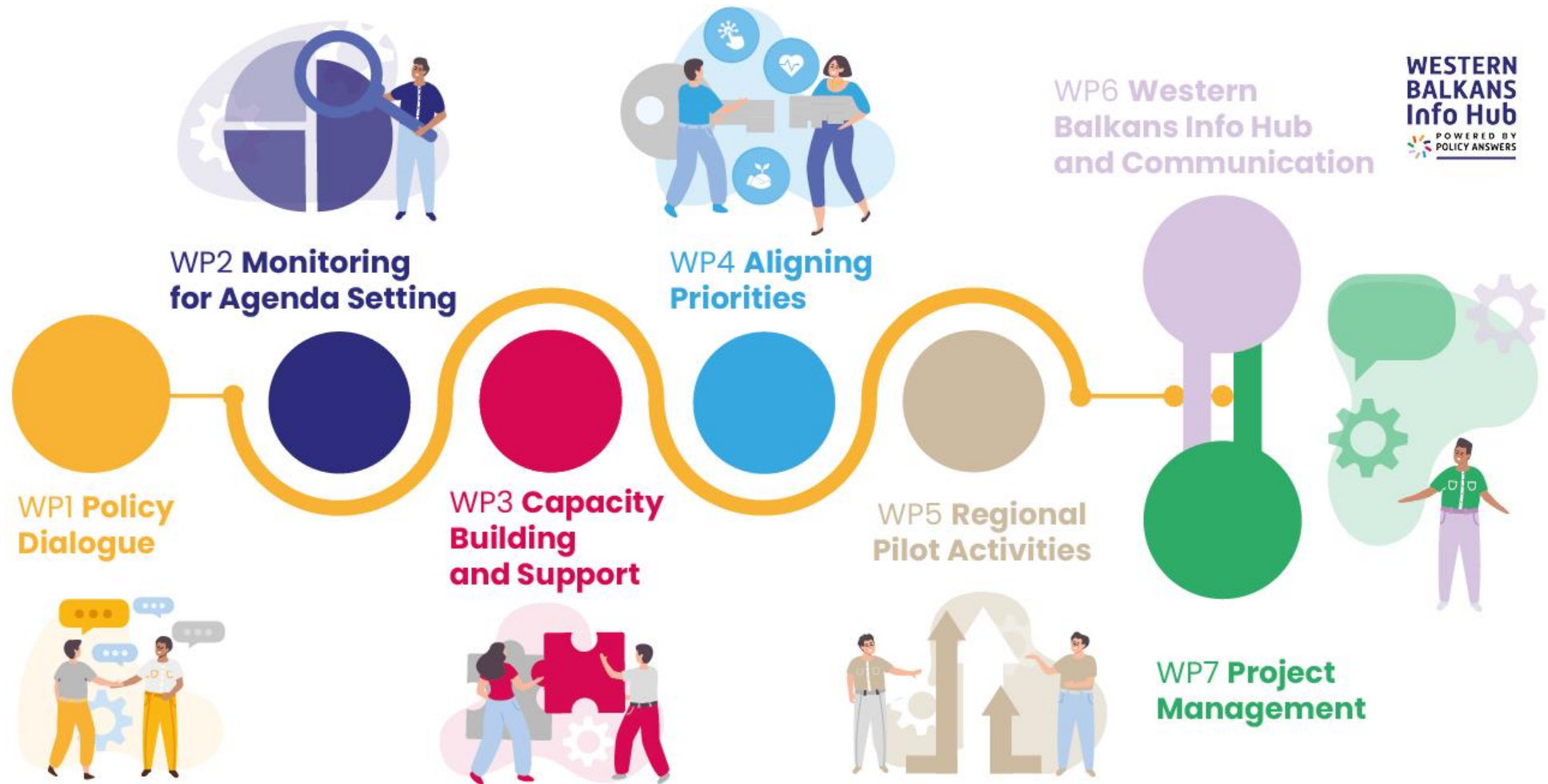
Serbia

Austria, Croatia, Germany and Italy



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

# Project overview



# BIOEAST mentioned during policy dialogue events

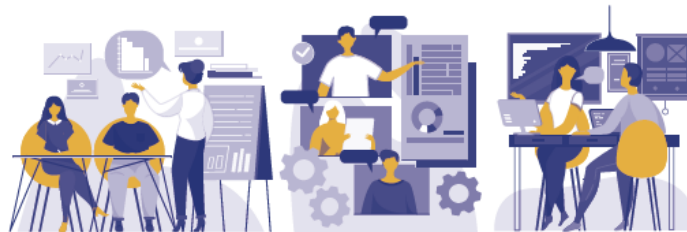
**POLICY ANSWERS supports dialogue as Secretariate of the Steering Platforms**

**BIOEAST has been mentioned at several opportunities:**

- **Steering Platform meeting on 4 September 2024**
- **Ministerial meeting in Skopje on 30 September 2024**

## Policy Dialogue

POLICY ANSWERS organises policy dialogue events with the main stakeholders of the WB, providing a platform for networking, exchange and learning.



**+ 300**

**Policymakers  
and stakeholders  
engaged**

**2**

**Ministerial Meetings  
in Tirana (2022)  
and Skopje (2024)**

**9**

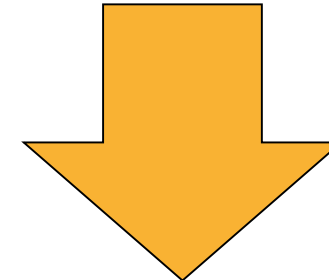
**Steering Platform  
meetings:  
7 virtual and 2 in person**



# Conclusions of the Ministerial Meeting



<https://www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu/news/results-from-the-ministerial-meeting-of-the-steering-platforms-on-research-innovation-education-training-and-culture>



- Welcome the efforts of the Hungarian presidency of the Council of the EU to strengthen the research and innovation cooperation with Western Balkans partners in agriculture and other bioeconomy sectors in the framework of the BIOEAST initiative.

<https://www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu/events/ministerial-meeting-of-the-steering-platforms-on-research-innovation-education-training-and-culture/>

## Green Agenda is one of our priorities ...

### Policy Dialogue Conference 2023

#WBvision2030

### Policy Brief on Green Transition (2024) highlights opportunities and good practices

Policy Dialogue on  
Aligning Priorities  
in the Western Balkans

Digital / Green / Health Pathways

Vision 2030

Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina  
13 September 2023



<https://eu-wb-policy-dialogue-stakeholder.b2match.io/page-4531>

<https://www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu/documents/policy-answers-policy-report-and-brief-green-transition-in-the-western-balkans/>

# Recommendations in line with supporting BIOEAST

- Leverage opportunities from participation in European Partnerships
- Address lack of financial instruments





## Focus on EU Partnerships and Missions ...

- Report (2022) confirmed low integration in EU Partnerships
- Event (2023) demonstrated interest

**140** Participants from **19** European economies

EU-Western Balkans Policy Dialogue Stakeholder Platform was launched

**9** European Partnerships

**17** Representatives from Western Balkans economies

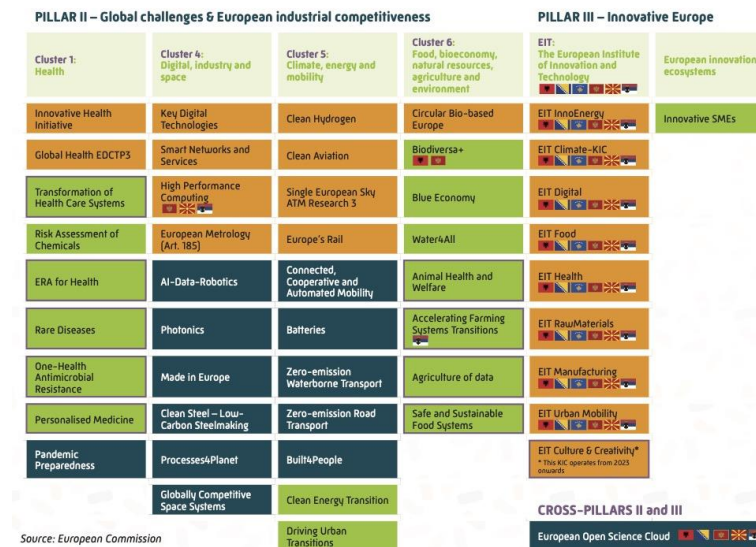
**38** Bilateral Meetings

<https://www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu/news/bilateral-meetings-with-european-partnerships-representatives-parallel-session-1-policy-answers-conf-2023-saraievo/>

### Association to the Framework Programmes



### 49 European Partnerships in the first Horizon Europe Strategic Plan 37 Partnerships Biennial Monitoring Report









### 5 EU Missions



Adaptation by POLICY ANSWERS based on the Performance of European Partnerships, Biennial Monitoring Report (BMR) 2022 on partnerships in Horizon Europe, page 5 <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/1a6cbe152-d19e-11ec-a95f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-search> and various sources on participation of WB.

## A webinar on BIOEAST coming up ...

### Monthly webinars

Webinar 1	Webinar 2	Webinar 3	Webinar 4	Webinar 5	Webinar 6
 <p><b>Bojana Bajic</b> Digital Transformation of Public Administration Specialist, Regional School of Public Affairs (ReSPA), Montenegro</p>	 <p><b>Marija Jevtic</b> Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Novi Sad, Serbia</p>	 <p><b>Djordje Djatkov</b> Professor, Faculty of Technical Science, University of Novi Sad, Serbia</p>	 <p><b>Michael Ploder</b> Head of research group for Technology, Innovation and Policy Consulting (TIP) Joanneum Research</p>	 <p>Speaker to be announced</p>	 <p><b>Elena Simion</b> International Projects Expert, UEFSCDI, Romania</p>
Overview of the Western Balkans on their Pathway to implement the Digital Agenda - Challenges, Best Practices and Recommendations	Overview of the Western Balkans on their Pathway towards Modern Health Policy - Challenges, Best Practices and Recommendations	Overview of the Western Balkans on their Pathway to implement the Green Agenda - Challenges, Best Practices and Recommendations	Mission-oriented innovation: status and future opportunities for the Western Balkans	Innovating the Food System: status and future opportunities of European Partnerships for the Western Balkans	Enabling Sustainable and Clean Transitions: status and future opportunities of European Partnerships for the Western Balkans
Bojana Bajic, Digital Transformation of Public Administration Specialist, Regional School of Public Affairs (ReSPA) Montenegro	Marija Jevtic, Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Novi Sad, Serbia	Djordje Djatkov, Professor, Faculty of Technical Science, University of Novi Sad, Serbia	Michael Ploder, Head of research group TIP, Joanneum, Austria (Coordinator of TRAMI)	EIT Food, speaker to be confirmed	Elena Simion, International Project Expert, UEFSCDI
22 February 2024 <a href="#">Watch the video!</a> <a href="#">Download presentation</a>	28 March 2024 15:00 - 15:40 <a href="#">Download presentation!</a>	25 April 2024 15:00 - 15:40 <a href="#">Register now!</a>	27 May 2024 15:00 - 15:40 <a href="#">Registration will open soon</a>	26 June 2024 15:00 - 15:40 <a href="#">Registration will open soon</a>	18 July 2024 15:00 - 15:40 <a href="#">Registration will open soon</a>

## Stakeholder Platform on b2match Including a Marketplace to be established

<https://eu-wb-policy-dialogue-stakeholder.b2match.io>



# Recommendations in line with supporting BIOEAST

## Partnerships as an instrument continued in “FP10” / Fund for Competitiveness

### 6. Inclusion in the ERA

- Foster regional integration, reciprocity, and equality, acknowledging the mutual benefits of cooperation with the WB
- Explain better and more regularly ERA policies to a broad group of stakeholders
- Promote WB participation in ERA governance and dedicated groups (ERA Forum, Partnerships, Missions, etc.) and support early access to new groups, e.g. European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) Water or new Partnerships
- Support ERA implementation through FP10 and proactively involve the WB
- Support well-structured ‘Horizon Offices’ in the region
- Enhance focus on adequate R&D statistics and expenditure measurement
- Emphasise anticipatory science advice, evidence-based policymaking, foresight and professionalisation of research management
- Foster EU integration by aligning research standards
- Promote the proactive use of the Policy Support Facility in the WB
- Continue cooperation with the Joint Research Centre (JRC), providing independent scientific advice and assistance with the development and implementation of Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3)



## Policy Brief The Western Balkans on the Road to FP10

September 2024



### 8. Partnerships

- Address low participation and lack of knowledge and understanding in relation to Partnerships
- Improve communication and interaction with enlargement candidates
- Minimise administrative burdens for participation
- Ensure alignment and focus; avoid duplication of efforts; reduce the number of partnerships

[https://www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Policy\\_Brief\\_FP10\\_web.pdf](https://www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Policy_Brief_FP10_web.pdf)

## Monitoring related to Green Agenda / environment




Agenda  
Priority

Promoting the implementation of the WB Green Agenda by focusing on research, innovation & new technologies











### Regional Indicators

<https://www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu/news/implementing-the-western-balkans-agenda-monitoring-cards-published-by-policy-answers-july-2024/>

Thematic soil pollution database for the Western Balkans 	Including the region in pan-European depollution-related networks 	Implementing a regional agreement on the prevention of plastic pollution 
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### Western Balkans Economy Indicators

	Western Balkans Green Agenda implemented		Counteracting climate change & environmental degradation	
	Transition to sustainable transport 	Transition in the energy sector 	Disaster Risk Management 	EU Mission: 100 climate-neutral and smart cities 
Albania	Only one public initiative in place, no new initiatives 	No new projects/initiatives in the field 	Disaster Risk Management Centre (DRMC) not in place yet 	Participating in the Mission 

## WP3 CAPACITY BUILDING & SUPPORT

# Capacity building including relevant priorities

### BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

1. Support for preparation of Horizon Europe partnerships and proposals.
2. Capacity building in research management and administration.
3. Capacity building in monitoring and evaluation.
4. Multisectoral approach to digitalisation, green agenda and healthy societies.
5. Building and strengthening the academia-industry linkages.
6. Assistance in (co)creating policy documents.
7. Support to Open Science.
8. Support to the development of a Smart Specialisation Strategy.

### MONTENEGRO

1. Training for Preparation of Applications for Horizon Europe Projects.
2. Training for Implementing Horizon Europe Projects in Montenegro.
3. Training for implementation of the Circular Economy Principles in Montenegro.
4. Training to Support the Development of Sustainable Agriculture and the Food Value Chain in Montenegro.

### SERBIA

1. Strengthening the capacity of the business sector for digital skills.
2. Green Transformation: New skills required to master the green transition.
3. Improving project proposal writing skills.
4. Training sessions on Programme evaluation: Evaluation practices in policies and programmes.

### ALBANIA

1. Training programme at universities to prepare and implement GEPs.
2. Support participation in Horizon Europe.
3. Support to promote EU funding for companies.
4. Supporting WB Agenda requirements on S3 implementation.
5. Promotion of innovation opportunities related to the blue economy.

### KOSOVO\*

1. Training of researchers for preparation of applications and implementing projects in Horizon Europe.
2. Technical Assistance for the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation & the National Research Council through providing inputs for New National Research Programme and increasing funding sources for R&I.
3. Support in advancing curricula with thematic priority areas at university level.
4. Support of increasing cooperation between the private sector and institutions in the field of research and innovation.
5. Organisation of workshop and provision of methodology guideline for project identification and preparation in light of the EU Economic Recovery Investment Plan for the Western Balkans.
6. Creation of a Coordination Forum of Quadruple Helix to create synergy amongst key actors.
7. Technical Assistance on the Implementation of the WB Green Agenda.
8. Monitoring of the implementation of the Digital Agenda.
9. Technical Assistance for the Ministry of Health.

### NORTH MACEDONIA

1. Policy Design, Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation (Research, Development and Innovation (RDI), education and culture specific).
  - a. Setting the stage: policy design.
  - b. Institutions in practice: coordination & collaboration.
  - c. Performance management: monitoring & evaluation.
2. Organisational management.
3. Fundraising for public institutions.



## Suggested Western Balkans Info Hub newsletter focus

- News, events and calls announcements are published by the project team on a daily base. We are happy to receive inputs from the community via [info@westernbalkans-infohub.eu](mailto:info@westernbalkans-infohub.eu)
- Archive with information on more than 7.000 news, 2.000 documents, 1.000 calls, 2.000 events, etc.
- Each month on average approximately monthly 12.000 visitors, more than 20.000 visits and almost 100.000 visited pages and more than 11.400 subscribers to our newsletter.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Western Balkans Info Hub. At the top left is the logo 'WESTERN BALKANS Info Hub'. The navigation menu includes 'Glossary', 'Archive', 'Submit', and 'Contact us'. Below this is a secondary menu with 'About', 'Themes', 'News', 'Opportunities', 'Resources', 'Steering platforms', and 'Ecosystem of engagement'. A 'Subscribe' button and a search bar are also visible. The main content area features the text 'Powered by POLICY ANSWERS' and a large heading 'Welcome to the Western Balkans Info Hub!'. Below the heading is a paragraph: 'We're here to provide you with valuable information on research, technology, innovation, education, culture, youth, and sports in the Western Balkans region.' At the bottom of the main content area are two buttons: 'Subscribe' and 'About us'.



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-  <https://www.linkedin.com/company/wbinfohub/>

[www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu](http://www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu)



## Next steps from POLICY ANSWERS

- Promote the BIOEAST webinar to inform a wider stakeholder audience
- Prepare a newsletter on bioeconomy issues with BIOEAST focus (promoting the webinar, share news, event reports, publish interviews highlighting benefits, etc.)
- Offer stakeholder platform on b2match for further networking



Contact us at any time:  
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[policy-answers@westernbalkans-infohub.eu](mailto:policy-answers@westernbalkans-infohub.eu)



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**THANK  
YOU!**

# WB Innovation Vouchers supporting green and digital transition in a pilot initiative

The main objective of the Western Balkans Innovation Vouchers is to encourage the collaboration of SMEs with knowledge provider/s resulting in an innovative solution.

The maximum budget available for the Innovation Vouchers is EUR 240,000 (EUR 8,000 per voucher).

**More information:**

<https://www.westernbalkans-infohub.eu/calls/western-balkans-innovation-voucher-scheme>

**Questions and answers:**

[innovationvouchers@fitr.mk](mailto:innovationvouchers@fitr.mk)

**New** deadline: 20 November 2024

