

***REPORT ON THE
ACTIVITIES OF
THE WESTERN BALKANS 6
CHAMBER INVESTMENT
FORUM
IN 2021***

Contents

I.	SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMON REGIONAL MARKET (CRM) ACTION PLAN AND PROMOTION OF THE BENEFITS OF THE CRM AP TO BUSINESS COMMUNITY	4
II.	ACTIVITIES FOR INFORMING THE WB BUSINESS COMMUNITY ON THE BENEFITS OF THE CRM...	19
III.	TRAININGS FOR COMPANIES IN WB6 ECONOMIES	22
IV.	ADVOCATING THE INTERESTS OF WB6 COMPANIES	25
V.	TAILOR MADE SUPPORT FOR WB6 COMPANIES	33
VI.	ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE WB6 CIF.....	45

In 2021 WB6 CIF conducted different activities in the following areas:

- ✓ Supporting implementation of the Common Regional Market (CRM) and CRM Action Plan
- ✓ Promotion of the benefits of regional cooperation to business community
- ✓ Organization of free trainings for companies in WB6 economies
- ✓ Advocating the interests of WB6 companies
- ✓ Tailor-made support for WB6 companies
- ✓ Organizational activities of the WB6 CIF

In 2021 more than 6500 Western Balkans companies participated in different events or initiatives launched by WB6 CIF - free online seminars, consultative meetings, promotional events, surveys, etc. As soon as the health situation allowed, direct contacts and meetings between companies were organized.

WB6 CIF has established cooperation with almost all relevant business supporting organizations and is recognized as the important partner in implementation of business-related activities with regional coverage. Regional Supplier Development Program is one of the few concrete deliverables achieved through the Implementation of the CRM AP.

I. SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMON REGIONAL MARKET (CRM) ACTION PLAN AND PROMOTION OF THE BENEFITS OF THE CRM AP TO BUSINESS COMMUNITY















1. Mapping of suppliers, as part of the activities in the Regional Supplier Development Programme

In 2021, more than 2100 Western Balkans companies-investors and potential suppliers, have been mapped and included in the Market Access Database <https://www.market-access.wb6cif.eu/> in order to foster creation of new regional supply chains and include them in the WB6 CIF activities related to the Regional Supplier Development Program.

The database contains the relevant data about potential suppliers in four sectors:

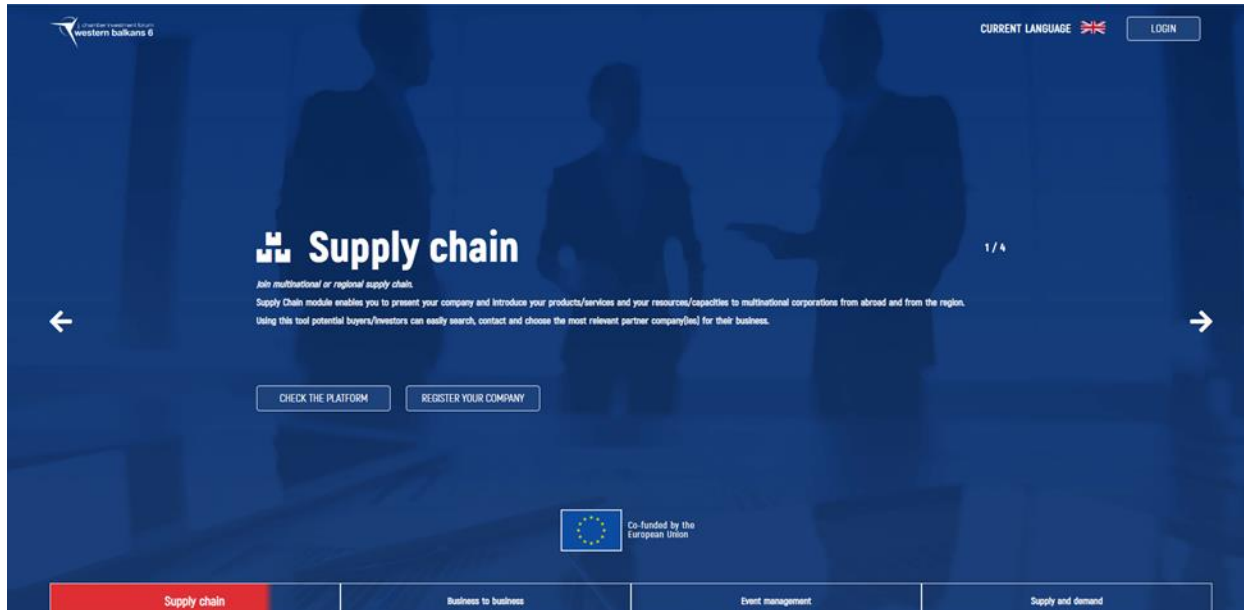
- light manufacturing (including electrical and electronic systems and elements of electronic and
- electrical systems) – in total 1140 companies
- automotive industry (including devices and components for the automotive industry-plastics,
- rubber, machinery/equipment) – in total 264 companies
- agro-food – in total 700 companies
- circular economy (as a horizontal topic);

Additionally, 38 clusters in the same sectors have been mapped.

CATEGORIES		Q		LOGIN		REGISTER	
LATEST COMPANIES							
COMPANY NAME	CONTACT PERSON	YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT					
 NOVARIC* SIA.	Jasmina LUMANAJ	2021					
 ZAPADNBALKAN	Miro Petrović	2008					
 SINGOUNG ONLINE	Marko Mandić	2008					
 MEDAUR WINERY	Rigori Suci	2003					
 HETI DOD	Stibodanka Dangubić	2021					
LATEST PRODUCTS							
PRODUCT NAME	PRODUCT INFORMATION						
 BABY ROMPER WITH BIBS AND TOPS WITH RE...	Category : SECTION... Company : Un d.s.à.						
 KALLMET BARRIQUE	Category : --- WIL... Company : Medaur Winery						
 NPK 10-5-5 + ME	Category : -- Other Company : Alkaloid AD Skopje						
 NPK 7-4-5 + ME	Category : -- Other Company : Alkaloid AD Skopje						
 NPK 7-3-7 + ME	Category : -- Other Company : Alkaloid AD Skopje						
LATEST SERVICES							
SERVICE NAME	SERVICE INFORMATION						
 CLEANING	Classification : Business and other managem... Company : NOVARIC* SIA.						
 PROGRAMMING	Classification : Computer programming activ... Company : Page						
 IMPORT	Classification : Development of building proje... Company : Zapadnbalkan						
 SELLING AND PROMOTING NUMISMATIC AND P...	Classification : Wholesale of other household...						

Data about WB6 companies that have been collected are: basic company data, data on production capacities (key products, key applied technologies, applied certificates, position in the supply chain, countries in which they export, etc.), financial data, product capacity (for each HS code), specific product details, etc.

Use of the database is free of charge for all registered users/companies and the number of users, products and services is updated daily. Representatives of the national chambers of commerce from WB6 are in charge for data verification.



Supply chain

Join multinational or regional supply chain.

Supply Chain module enables you to present your company and introduce your products/services and your resources/capacities to multinational corporations from abroad and from the region. Using this tool potential buyers/investors can easily search, contact and choose the most relevant partner company(ies) for their business.

[CHECK THE PLATFORM](#) [REGISTER YOUR COMPANY](#)

Co-funded by the European Union

Supply chain | Business to business | Event management | Supply and demand

2. Market Access Database

All data collected within the activity “Mapping of suppliers from WB6” have been included in the Market Access database <https://www.market-access.wb6cif.eu/>.

The platform represents a virtual market place where registered companies can identify products, services or partners that they demand, or are able to supply, making it easier to source regional goods and services.

It is also a unique location for preliminary business discussions to take place. It consists of the following modules:

- *Supply Chain Module*

Supply Chain Module aims to connect the WB6 companies which are interested in participating in global and regional supply chains with multinational corporations (MNC) looking for new suppliers from the Western Balkans region.

This online module provides initial business-to-business support by enabling supply chain interactions of WB6 companies with potential multinational corporations and other strategic partners, allowing them to showcase their products and/or services.

- *Business to Business (B2B)*

B2B module is used as a place where WB6 companies can find potential partners, promote their goods and/or services and find appropriate partner(s) from the region.

- *Event management*

Event management module provides possibility to companies to participate in relevant events organized by WB6 chambers of economy and to prepare for active participation, acquire knowledge, etc.

Within this module companies have opportunity to organize meeting with potential partners and establish cooperation. In order to make it easier to navigate and organize, a mobile application is also available.

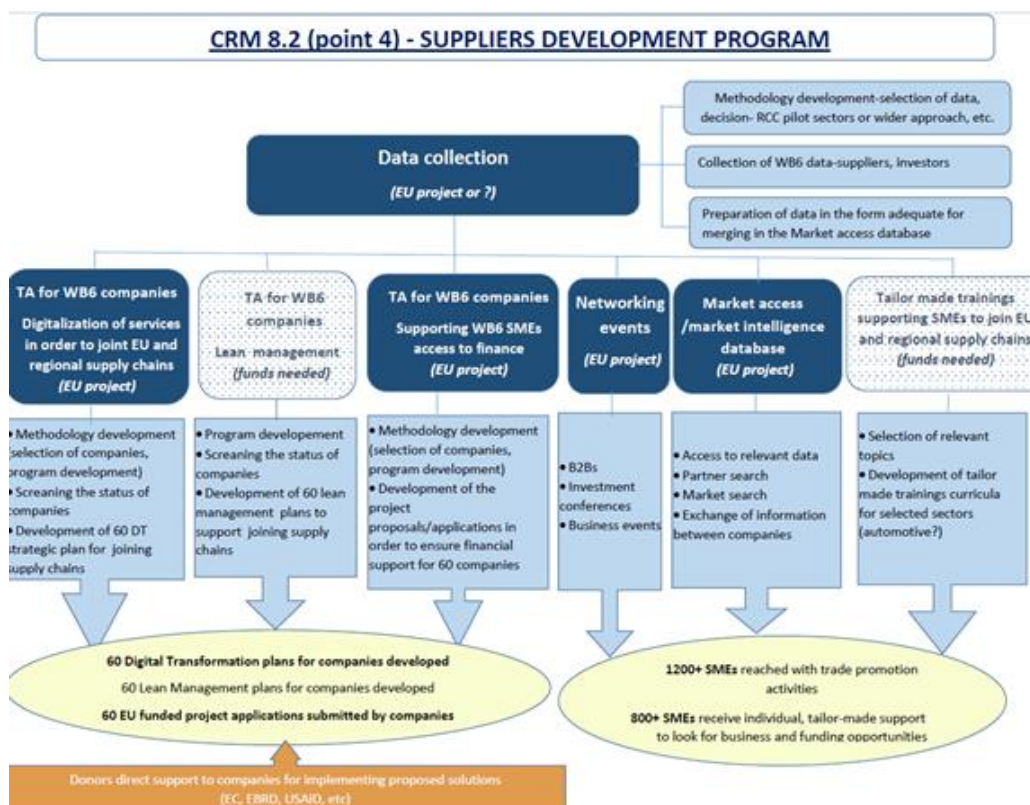
- *Supply and demand*

Supply and Demand module allows to companies to promote and offer their products and/or services and find distributors in WB countries.

According to their needs, companies have the opportunity to find a supplier partner and procure the necessary products and/or services from partners from the WB region.

This database will be used for further development and implementation of services for companies/potential suppliers (within Regional Supplier Development Program), that are planned for the year 2022, such as:

- Technical assistance - Digitalization of services to enable selected WB6 companies to join EU and regional supply chains. 60 digital transformation strategies will be developed for companies and national authorities (development agencies and business support organizations are invited to support implementation of the solutions stated in the strategies);
- Technical assistance - Supporting WB6 SMEs access to finance for 60 selected WB6 companies;
- Participation in different networking events or trainings organized by WB6 CIF and WB6 chambers of commerce;



3. Market Intelligence Database

Market intelligence Database <http://market-info.wb6cif.eu/> is a set of relevant information for the market, economy of the country, or several countries, their companies, information about trends, competition, monitoring of clients/customers (existing, targeted, former), which are collected and analyzed specifically

for accurate and reliable decision making and determining strategies in areas such as market opportunities, market penetration strategies, and market development.

The main objective of such database is to help companies conduct market research when assessing the feasibility of entering new markets or expanding existing ones. Additionally, it offers information for all interested economic entities, institutions and individuals. The structure and contents of the product/market reports can include data such as production and import trends, demand and consumption

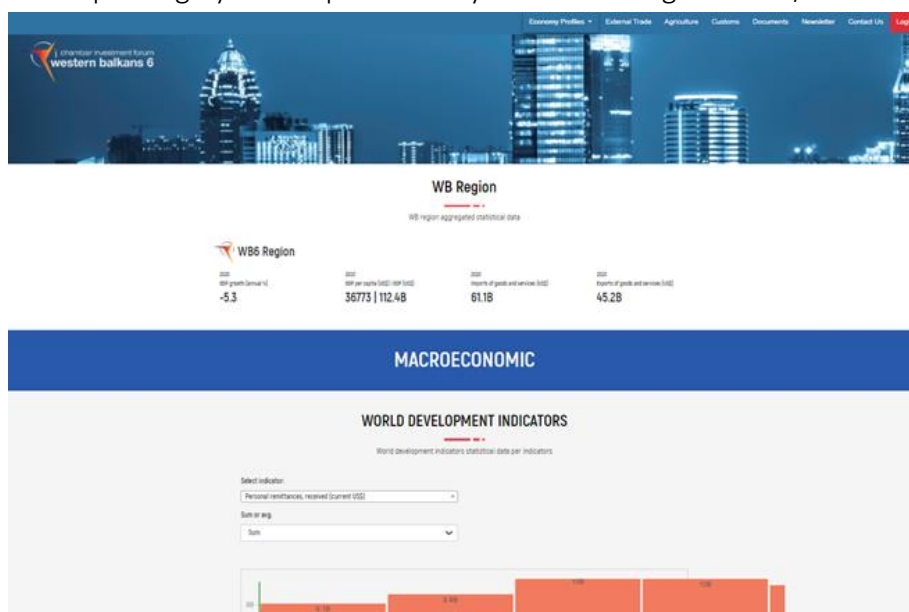
trends, market standards, typical distribution channels, prices, sources of business information, key events, etc.

Database integrates data from:

- external sources (Trade Map, FAO.org – FAOSTAT, WTO – World Trade Organization, National Bureau of Statistics of the WB6 economies, Central Banks of the WB6 economies, Trade agreements of the WB6 economies, National Customs of the WB6 economies, Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries, World bank, United nations)
- internal sources – WB6 CIF members (chambers of commerce)

to enable search and report-generation functions by country, product/service, by year and other indicators.

Data will be semi-automatically updated on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual basis, depending on the updating dynamics practiced by the source organization/institution.



Data are presented in tables, charts and maps, and allow queries on exports or imports by product/service

or group of products (2 digits, 4 digits, 6 digits, 8 digit) and by country or group of countries.

The Market Intelligence Database enables companies to:

- Analyze current export performance: examine the performance and dynamics of a country's export markets for any product/service; identify the number and size of export markets and the concentration of exports; highlight countries where market share has increased; identify promising export markets (view the world's major importing countries for a specific product, with indicators illustrating the concentration and growth rate of imports in each market).
- Evaluate the level of competition in the global market: competing countries, exporting the same product, are ranked in terms of value of exports, and availability of additional indicators on quantities, growth and market share.
- Assess the level of competition in a specific export market: view a country's competitors in any target market, with information on the export performance of each competitor, the number of supplying countries and their performance in the market.
- Identify new supplying markets: countries exporting a product both to the world and to a specific market are ranked against one another thus allowing direct comparisons of current and potential national suppliers.
- Review opportunities for diversification in a specific market by comparing the demand for a set of similar or related products/services in the market under review.
- Assess national trade performance: make an overall evaluation of national trade performance and identify sectors and products/services in terms of their potential for investment and trade promotion.
- Identify existing and potential bilateral trade with any partner country or region: bilateral trade opportunities can be identified by comparing the actual bilateral trade, the partner countries' demand of a specific product/service in terms of imports and the global export capacity of the home country.

4. Monitoring of the implementation of the Common Regional Market Action Plan

4.1. Preparation of the Report – “Economic analysis and key performance indicators - first interim report on the monitoring of the Common Regional Market Action Plan (2021-2024)”

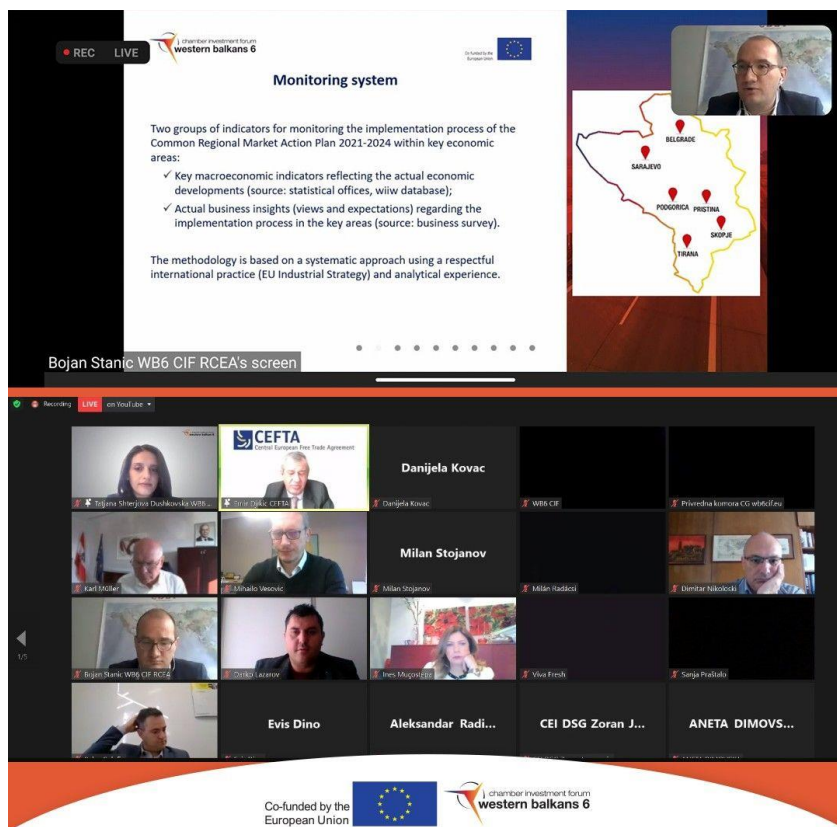
In order to contribute to the successful realization of the Action Plan 2021-2024 for the Common Regional Market (CRM AP), WB6 CIF and its Business Council commit to monitoring and documenting the tangible progress as felt by the business community of the region through annual progress reports. The reports present an analysis of the state of implementation of the CRM AP and look at the way the common market functions in practice, in particular in key areas and for key market actors, from the viewpoint of the business community. This will help all stakeholders and policy makers – at regional and national level – to assess the effects of policy actions already undertaken, and to identify the right priorities and better respond to the needs of businesses.

As part of the preparatory actions, ahead of the different regulatory reform actions set out in the Common Regional Market Action Plan and in anticipation of progress in implementing the set deliverables, WB6 CIF has prepared the Report [“Economic analysis and key performance indicators - first interim report on the monitoring of the Common Regional Market Action Plan \(2021-2024\)”](#), which provides a short overview of the status of play in the Western Balkans 6 economies, in three aspects:

- I. Short analysis of the key economic indicators of WB6 economies, in the time frame 2014-2020, shedding light on the achieved progress/regress of the economic performances on the region during the implementation of the economic agenda set out in the framework of the Berlin Process;
- II. Baseline Indicators for the Overall Key Performance Indicators for the Regional Trade Area Segment of the Common Regional Market Action Plan;
- III. Results of the initial survey of the WB6 business community, offering main company insights in three KPI fields, related to the issues having the highest priority for the region’s business community in the implementation of the four freedoms initiative (progress in elimination of barriers to trade, progress in harmonization of rules (requirements and standards) that applies to products traded within the region and making it easier for individuals to move, stay and work throughout the region).

4.2. Preparation of the Report – “Monitoring the Implementation of the Common Regional Market Action Plan (2021-2024) – Key Business Insights on Priority Action Points”

In line with the commitment of the WB6 CIF and its Business Council to monitor the implementation of the Common Regional Market Action Plan, with the intention to provide continuous feedback to the policy makers, national authorities and all interested stakeholders on the reflections of the business community on the implementation of this key document of the regional economic agenda, in view of the direct and tangible improvements in the business climate in the region, easing doing intraregional business, the WB6 CIF has prepared the Report [“Monitoring the Implementation of the Common Regional Market Action Plan \(2021-2024\) – Key Business Insights on Priority Action Points”](#).



The Report confirms that the full implementation of the Common Regional Market remains an issue of utmost priority for the region’s business community, and despite the laggings in its implementation in the first year of the implementation of the Common Regional Market Action Plan, the results of the conducted survey confirm that the issues stated as action points in this document still remain valid requests of the regional business community and businesses across the region expect to see visible shifts related to the issues selected as Key Priority Areas. This report provides insights of business community to assess potentials of common market by drawing lessons

from actual stage of economic development and COVID-19 crisis as well as define and report on key performance indicators on Western Balkans Common Regional Market AP. It is the second of a planned series of yearly reports. Economic conditions of the past years have exposed Western

Balkans economies to contracting by 3.1%. Small and medium-sized enterprises were in particular affected by restrictions to free movement of people and goods, as well as supply chain disruptions.

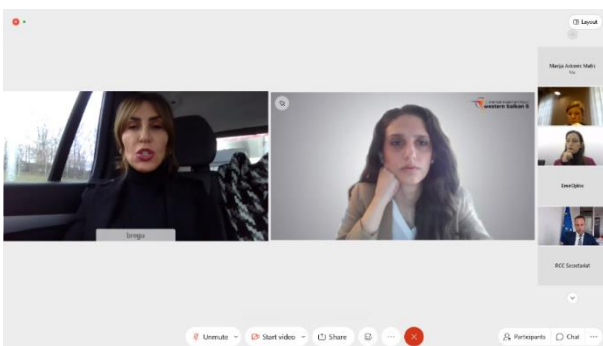
The report consists of three interconnected sections:

- A short overview of the WB6 key economic indicators 2020-2021;
- WB6CIF Key Performance Indicators in the key areas of the Common Regional Market;
- Business insights from the conducted Survey on the viewpoints of the region's business community on the circumstances on doing business in the Western Balkans and expectations.

The Report was presented on an event on December 14th 2021 organized during the CEFTA week in Skopje.

5. Participation in CRM related activities

5.1. Participation in the 3rd Meeting on Common Regional Market



On 13 April 2021, the 3rd Meeting on Common Regional Market was organized. WB6 CIF Secretary General Tatjana Sterjova Dushkovska presented progress in WB6 CIF lead activities, planned as deliverables for the Berlin Summit – activities related to Regional Supplier Development Programme and the preparation of Market Intelligence and Market Access

Database.

5.2. Preparation of the WB6 CIF inputs for the first Donor Coordination Meeting on the Common Regional Market (CRM) 2021-2024



The Donor Coordinating meeting on CRM 2021-2024 is convened with an objective to map and coordinate donor activities in WB6, as to facilitate the implementation of regional

actions under CRM policy areas. The Donor Coordination meeting that was held on 7 May 2021,

bringing together representatives of major donor organizations and international financial institutions, implementing agencies, regional initiatives, European Commission, beneficiaries and administrations from Western Balkans six economies.

The meeting was organized with an objective to map and coordinate donor activities in the Western Balkans, including current goals and objectives so as to facilitate the implementation of regional actions under CRM policy areas as well as to help achieve a better alignment of regional government's priorities and donors' sectoral interventions.

5.3. WB6 CIF participation in the Western Balkans Summit in Berlin

The Western Balkans Summit Meeting that was held in the framework of the Berlin Process that was held on 5 July 2021, gathered together the Heads of Government of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, as well as the Heads of State or Government of Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Poland, Slovenia and the United Kingdom, including representatives of the European Union (EU) and of international and regional bodies and organizations.



During the Business Forum on the margins of the WB6 Summit in Berlin on June 30th 2021 president of the WB6 CIF Managing Board, Marko Cadez presented the following materials prepared by the WB6 CIF team:

- [Key Points From The Impulse Statement Delivered By Marko Cadez;](#)
- [Position of the WB6 CIF On the Berlin Process Outcomes and Implementation of the CRM AP;](#)

- [Economic Analysis and Key Performance Indicators - First Interim Report on The Monitoring of the Common Regional Market Action Plan \(2021-2024\);](#)
- Two promotional videos of WB6 CIF's activities, available on the following links - [WB6 Chamber Investment Forum promo video - YouTube](#) and [WB6 CIF Market Access and Market Intelligence Databases - YouTube](#).

He presented the [deliverables](#) that WB6 CIF achieved for the **Berlin Summit**.

5.4. [Western Balkans Summit Chair's conclusions – Private sector and WB6 CIF as its representative recognized as important partner](#)

Seven years after the first Berlin Western Balkans Summit in 2014, the Summit Meeting on the Western Balkans in the framework of the Berlin Process that was held on 5 July 2021, recognized the importance of a private sector and WB6 CIF as its representative. This year's Summit gathered together the Heads of Government of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro,



**Western
Balkans
Summit
Berlin
2021**

North Macedonia, Serbia, as well as the Heads of State or Government of Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Poland, Slovenia and the United Kingdom, including representatives of the European Union (EU) and of international and regional bodies and organizations.

The Summit was closed by important conclusions, among which is:

“Participants welcomed the prominent role played by the private sector in the implementation of the CRM, to be developed further by means of close cooperation with the Western Balkans 6 Chamber Investment Forum (WB6 CIF) and by implementing specific measures across all six Western Balkan countries. In particular, they welcomed the establishment of a regional suppliers’ development programme by the WB6 CIF.”

5.5. WB6 CIF participation at the hybrid event “WOMEN’S ENTREPRENEURSHIP – Innovation and SME response to COVID-19”³



WB6 CIF Secretary General Tatjana Shterjova Dushkovska participated at the recently held hybrid event called “WOMEN’S ENTREPRENEURSHIP – Innovation and SME response to COVID-19” focusing on the promotion of women’s entrepreneurship and seeking answers from women entrepreneurs to

the globally difficult business conditions caused by the so-called “COVID-19 crisis”.

The event was organized, on 25 and 26 May 2021, at the Hills Hotel in Sarajevo by the Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the coordinator of the BITNET consortium and the EEN Sector Group of Women’s Entrepreneurship, together with the co-organizers and partners of the Network.

5.6. WB6 CIF participation at the 8th Western Balkans Civil Society Forum



WB6 CIF Secretary General Tatjana Shterjova Dushkovska participated at 8th Western Balkans Civil Society Forum held in Skopje on 30 September and 1 October 2021. Approximately 100 participants tackled the main topics on the agenda which were: how to enhance the accession process – a credible EU perspective for the Western Balkans (new accession

methodology, Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans and Common Regional Market, opportunities for citizens and CSOs from the Western Balkans to participate in the Conference for the Future of Europe, EU communication strategy towards the region); the contribution of CSOs to the Green Agenda and sustainable development of the Western Balkans as part of the EU accession process; the state of social dialogue, as well as enabling civic space in the Western Balkans.

5.7. Regional economic cooperation must continue with an accelerated pace – conclusions from the 5th Common regional market coordinators meeting



Western Balkans 6 Chamber Investment Forum Secretary General Tatjana Shterjova Dushkovska presented the key deliverables in the current year and the main milestones in the implementation of the Common Regional Market Action Plan, that the WB6 CIF has set for 2022, on the 5th Common regional market coordinators meeting, held in Tirana/hybrid on November 30th 2021.

Ms. Shterjova Dushkovska elaborated on the plans for continuing the implementation of the Regional Supplier Development programme, which will mark the completion of the mapping of existing and potential suppliers from the Western Balkans region, which are already available in the Supply chain module within the Market Access Database, the launching of the Market Intelligence Database, the plans for finalization of the Regional Supply Chain Protocol, which will aggregate the efforts of all stakeholders in the enhancing supplier linkages and opportunities for domestic suppliers between Western Balkans Six, and the plans for continuing the joint participation of WB6 SMEs in three fairs/business events and B2B events, organized to facilitate linkages within supply chain.

Regional economic cooperation must continue with an accelerated pace, despite the delays during 2021, was the joint position reached at the meeting, amongst the Regional cooperation council, the CEFTA Secretariat, the Common regional market coordinators from the WB national economies, the European Commission, the Transport Community and the WB6 CIF.

5.8. WB6 CIF Secretary General at the ETF Regional Conference



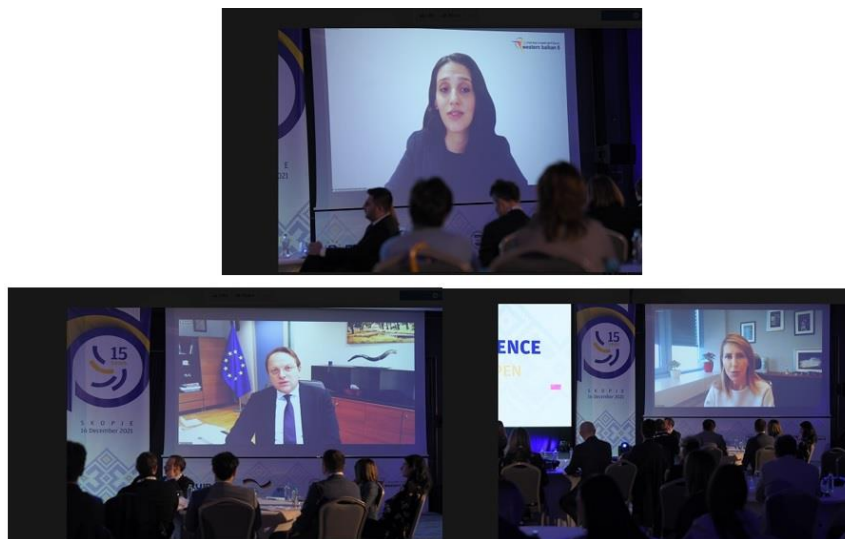
WB6 CIF Secretary General participated at the ETF Regional Conference “Use it or lose it: how labor markets, human capital and migration interact in the Western Balkans” – The role of the private sector is crucial in overcoming the skills mismatch”.

Labor movement should be also seen as opportunity, as much as it may pose risks, and whilst the situation with the labor markets in the region, the underutilization of human capital stock and extensive skills mismatches are some of the factors that impact migration in the

Western Balkans, region, the business community of the Western Balkans stands firmly on the position that the four freedoms on which the EU single market is based upon, should also be transposed adequately in the Western Balkans, which also relates to the free movement of people, was stated by the Secretary General of the Western Balkans 6 Chamber Investment Forum Tatjana Shterjova Dushkovska, in the ETF Regional Conference “Use it or lose it: how labor markets, human capital and migration interact in the Western Balkans”, organized online on 01.12.2021.

The WB6 CIF, as well as all the 6 national chambers of commerce from the Western Balkans region, have been actively committed to the tasks of increasing the quality of the education system, especially in providing relevant and market-oriented vocational education.

5.9. WB6 CIF at the CEFTA Week 2021 Conference “15 YEARS MAKING TRADE HAPPEN”



The Secretary General of the Western Balkans 6 Chamber Investment Forum Tatjana Shterjova Dushkovska participated in the CEFTA Week 2021 Conference “15 Years making trade happen”, organized in hybrid format in Skopje, on 16 December 2021.

Ms. Shterjova Dushkovska stated that the CIF, being the representative of the WB6 business community, has defined as a primary task to actively contribute to ensuring free movement of goods, services, people and capital throughout the region, in order to cut costs and make goods and services from the region more competitive on the global markets, but also to promote the Western Balkans as a single investment destination within this process.

– Earlier this week we have presented the Report summarizing key business insights on priority action points and the implementation of the CRM AP. We sincerely hope that for our next report

we will have decisions and at least a few multilateral agreements whose implementation we will be able to measure and quantify, stated Shterjova Dushkovska.

5.10. Participation in the working meetings related to the Common Regional Market Action Plan

WB6 CIF Secretary General, Tatjana Shterjova Dushkovska, and delegated chambers' representatives participated in different CRM AP meetings and working groups. WB6 CIF took active role related to Regional Industrial and Innovation Area and Investments and presented current status of the deliverables within Regional Suppliers Development Program.

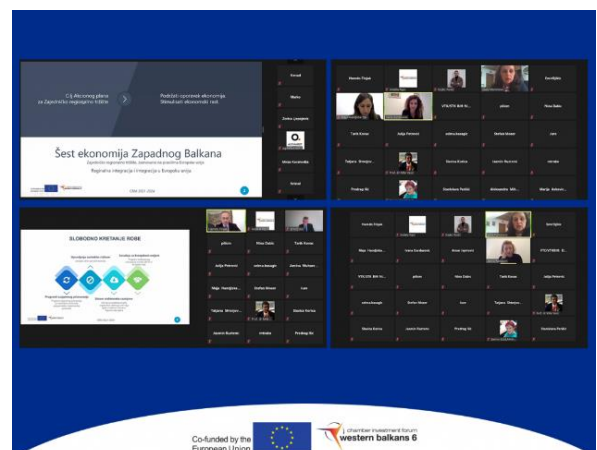
II. ACTIVITIES FOR INFORMING THE WB BUSINESS COMMUNITY ON THE BENEFITS OF THE CRM

1. Preparation of promotional Brochure on Common Regional Market Action Plan (CRM AP)

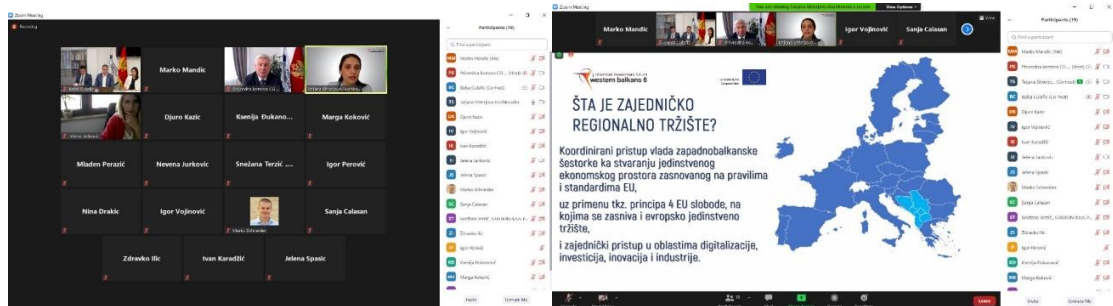
Promotional [Brochure on Common Regional Market Action Plan \(CRM AP\)](#) for WB6 business community has been prepared, translated in all WB languages and published on WB6 CIF and chambers' web sites.

2. Organization of Info days focusing on the Implementation of the CRM AP and the benefits and challenges it brings to the businesses from the WB

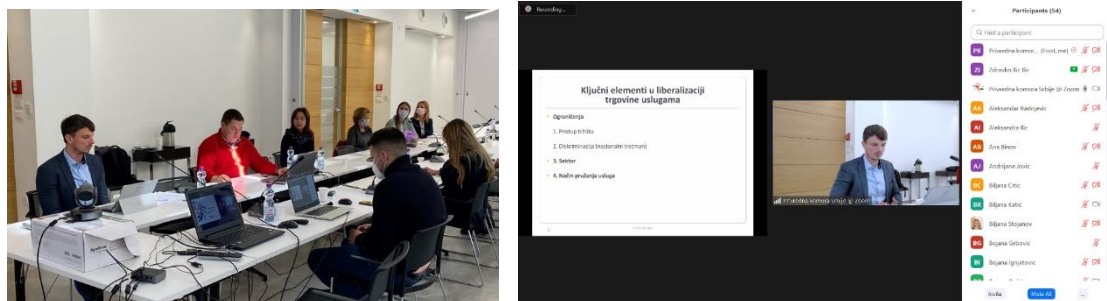
- **March 22nd 2021** - Info day on the topic **“Implementation of the Common Regional Market Action Plan (CRM AP) – Benefits and challenges for the business in Bosnia and Herzegovina”**, has been organized by Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The event was attended by about 60 participants, representatives of companies, institutions and other organizations. Speakers presented the expected changes in legislation and its impact on the operations of companies in B&H, the measures that will be proposed to reduce trade costs, as well as methodology for following Key Performance Indicators by the business community. Member of the WB6 CIF Business Council (Sarajevski Kiseljak) presented the expectations of the business sector.
- **May 12th 2021** – Info day on the topic **“WESTERN BALKANS AND SERBIA: Implementation of the Common Regional Market Action Plan: Benefits and Challenges”** will be organized by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia. The event will include representatives of the relevant regional organizations (RCC, CEFTA), national government officials and members of the WB6 Business Council (Eliksir Group and Nelt Group)



- **June 3rd 2021** - Info day on the topic **“Western Balkans and Montenegro: Implementation of the Common Regional Market Action Plan: Benefits and Challenges”**, has been organized by Chamber of Economy of Montenegro. The event was attended by about 25 participants, representatives of companies, institutions and other organizations. Benefits of the CRM AP were presented by WB6 CIF and CEFTA representatives, as well as by representatives of the Fund for investments and development Montenegro, Ministry of economic development, and representative of the Pivara Trebjesa, member of the WB6 CIF Business Council.



- **October 14th 2021** - Info day/presentation of the [CEFTA Additional Protocol 6 on Trade in Services](#) has been organized in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia, in cooperation with WB6 CIF and the CEFTA Secretariat. More than 50 participants have



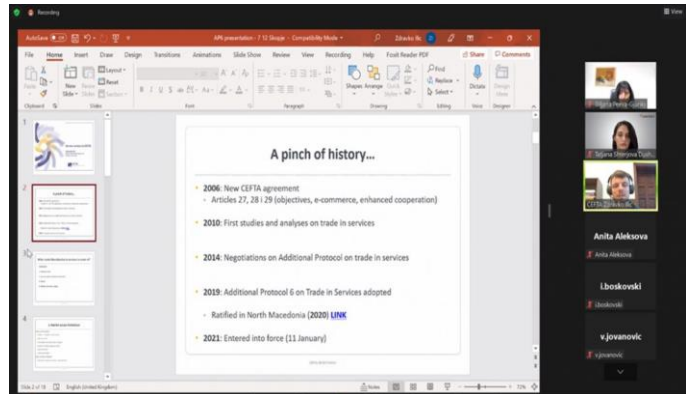
joined the Workshop that was organized with the aim to disseminate information about the progress in liberalization of services markets in CEFTA region. It is implemented as part of WB6 CIF efforts to reach out to businesses, SMEs in particular, with information that can help them either engage in cross-border business or improve their existing business experience while doing business in WB6.

- **October 25th 2021** - Info day/presentation of the [CEFTA Additional Protocol 6 on Trade in Services](#) has been organized in the Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in cooperation with WB6 CIF and CEFTA Secretariat. More than 60

representatives of the business community from Bosnia and Herzegovina joined this hybrid event and had a chance to raise questions and clarify open issues related to the implementation of the Protocol.

- **December 7th 2021** – The Economic Chamber of North Macedonia, in cooperation with the WB6 Chamber Investment Forum and the CEFTA Secretariat, organized a workshop on CEFTA Additional Protocol 6 for trade in services, focusing on the benefits of the

protocol for the Macedonian economy and the region and how it can contribute to the more successful creation of a Common Regional Market in the Western Balkans.



III. TRAININGS FOR COMPANIES IN WB6 ECONOMIES

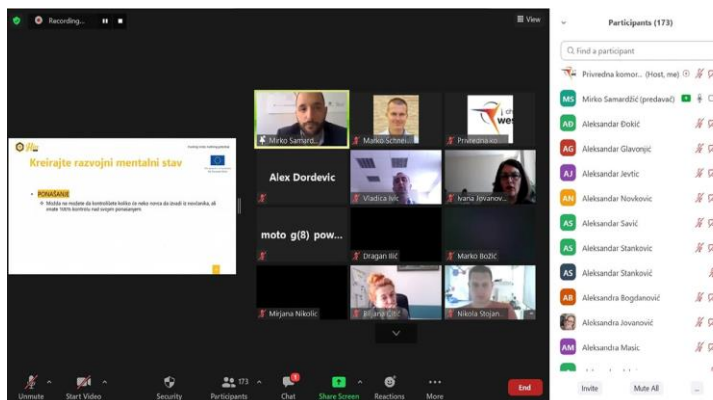
1. Organization of trainings for companies

Five webinars/trainings for Western Balkans companies (mainly SMEs) have been held in order to support business community in yielding the benefits of the regional economic integration.

- **January 13th and 14th 2021** - The Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Albania has successfully organized an online training on **“Access to Finance”**. Trainers presented: role of banks and financial institutions in overcoming COVID-19 crisis and supporting businesses with innovative products and services, new, support programs and mechanisms for SMEs in Albania, using electronic payment platforms to increase access to finance of companies, etc. More than 90 companies participated in the training.

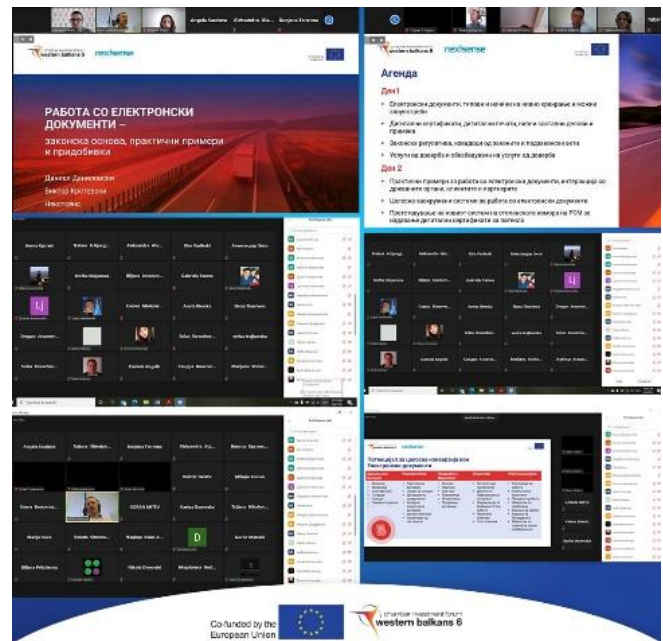


- **April 26th and 27th 2021** – Companies showed big interest in the online seminar **“Conducting successful B2B business communication”** that has been organized by Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia. More than 170 companies joined this two-day event. During the workshop, participants learned strategies and techniques that will help them to:
 - be able to recognize the interlocutor’s communication style and how to adapt to it;



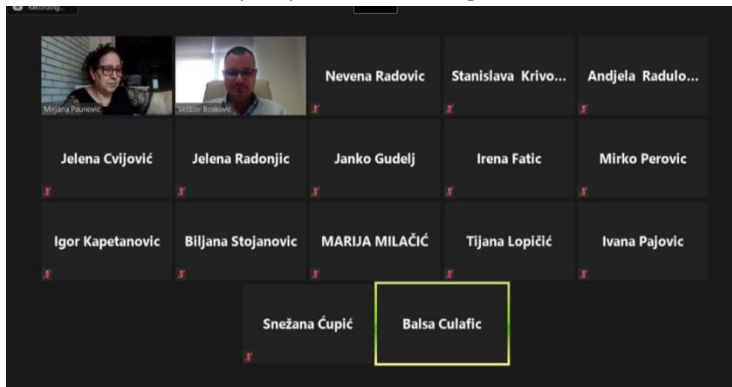
- learn how to prepare for an interview with a potential client and understand his needs;
- learn the elements of a successful business presentation
- understand what a developmental mental attitude is and how it is created;
- learn advanced communication techniques that will raise their credibility and create trust with the interlocutor;
- get useful tips for preparing and conducting B2B meetings in a virtual environment;

- o **May 6th and 7th 2021** - The Economic Chamber of North Macedonia organized an online two-day seminar dedicated to the process of developing comprehensive digitalization – **“Working with electronic documents”**. Trainers presented complete electronic and paper-free operations by explaining the basic terms of electronic document, signature and seal, as well as time stamp, keeping and using electronic documents, and verification of the issued electronic documents. The training addressed the most important aspects of the latest regulations related to trust services, electronic documents, and electronic identifications.



The second day of the training was dedicated to the practical application of electronic documents in the everyday operation of the companies, including presentation of tools and technical solutions for creating and for signing electronic documents, as well as for electronic collaboration with partners or with state institutions. More than 70 companies actively participated in the seminar.

- **June 9th and 10th 2021** – Chamber of Economy of Montenegro organized free training “Access to Finance for Small and Medium Companies and Start-Ups” for approximately 30 interested companies. The problem with lack of information for access to finance was additionally expressed during the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, so



it is extremely important to use all segments of support from the state in order to overcome the problem companies face with during the crisis. This training is delivered to Montenegrin companies in order to identify all financing opportunities available in the domestic and international market that have not

been adequately used by domestic SMEs or start-ups. Topics that have been presented are: Sources of funding with special emphasis on credit sector, banks and investment and development fond of Montenegro, Models for support of overcoming the COVID-19 crisis, Potential sources of funding within new innovative legislation, Financial management and decision of investment activities and Growth of SMEs and startups with potential for funding it.

- **August 25th and 26th 2021** – Kosovo Chamber of Commerce organized free training „Export Procedures“ for more than 20 small and medium enterprises, self-employed and other persons who are in the process of implementation of creative ideas at the international market. Main discussion topics entitled for this training were related to Export potentials and importance for national economy, Main actors during customs procedures; Organization of export procedures, steps in export procedures, Documentation needed for export, Actors to be engaged for export, etc.



IV. ADVOCATING THE INTERESTS OF WB6 COMPANIES

1. Meeting with representatives of Montenegrin Government

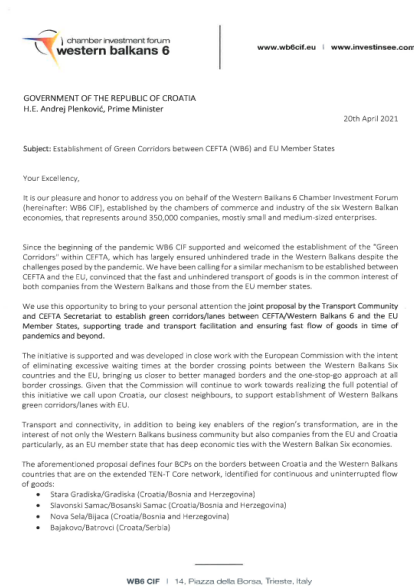
After the MB session held in Podgorica, on March 19th 2021, CIF representatives held a meeting with the Montenegrin Government Minister of Finance and Social Welfare, Mr. Miloško Spajić and Minister of Economic Development, Mr. Jacob Milatović.

“The Government of Montenegro is committed to improve cooperation with the private sector, in the part related to the creation of trade policy, identification of economic priorities and understanding of its commercial interests in the process of formulating and implementing reforms. It is very important that we, as representatives of the Government, understand how Montenegro and the Montenegrin market are perceived by businessmen from the region.”, said Minister Spajić.



2. Support for the establishment of Green Corridors between CEFTA (WB6) and EU Member States

In April 2021, WB6 CIF addressed to the Prime Ministers of neighboring countries including Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Greece and Romania bringing to their personal attention the joint proposal by the Transport Community and CEFTA Secretariat to establish green corridors/lanes between CEFTA/Western Balkans 6 and the EU Member States, supporting trade and transport facilitation and ensuring fast flow of goods in time of pandemics and beyond.



WB6 CIF also addressed to the Western Balkans Prime Ministers and expressed the joint view of six chambers of commerce concerning the strengthening of the legal and institutional framework in order to make the implementation of the common market more efficient and effective. Being the representative of the regional business community, WB6 CIF is actively advocating for the establishment of four freedoms in the Western Balkans including free movement of people, goods, services and capital.

3. Consultative meeting on Steel Safeguard measures



On April 19th 2021, WB6 CIF organized an online consultative meeting between representatives of the European Commission and more than 30 representatives of the main steel companies from the region. Companies had a chance to directly approach European Commission and present the consequences that proposed regulation will bring to the WB6 and EU companies. Based on the inputs received from companies, main conclusions and recommendations have been shared with

decision makers in the European Commission in order to support WB6 companies endeavors to be exempted from the safeguard measures, in case they are extended after 30 June 2021. Based on the inputs from the companies during the meeting, WB6 CIF has prepared and sent a letter to the high representatives of the European Commission, with the aim to highlight the consequences that extension of the steel safeguards measures will bring to the steel industry in the Western Balkan region.

4. Study on obstacles and opportunities for doing business in the region

WB6 CIF has published Study – [“Movement of posted workers without work permits”](#). Besides desk research and statistical data for the region, Study included examinations of some leading WB6 companies that they had while sending workers from one country in the region to another. In the Study, an overview of the EU chapter 2 – Freedom of movement for workers is given, as well as an overview of the legislation dealing with this topic; available statistical data on the movement of workers for 2017 and 2018 are presented. In addition to the above, an overview of the transposition of the PW Directive in the WB countries; overviews by WB country, when it comes to posting worker; and at the end, an overview of the recommendations for improving worker mobility, from several angles is shown, both for the countries of the WB and for the EU. Recommendations have been prepared and shared with decision makers.



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western balkans 6

5. CIF participation on the Kopaonik Business Forum

The panel within the Kopaonik Forum “The world after Covid 19 – new sources of growth in changed business conditions”, held on May 24th to 27th 2021, was dedicated to regional cooperation. It was attended by the presidents of the WB6 CIF member chambers, Mr. Branko Azeski and Mr. Vlastimir Golubovic, that discussed whether the external crisis could nurture regional cooperation in the Western Balkans.



It was attended by the presidents of the WB6 CIF member chambers, Mr. Branko Azeski and Mr. Vlastimir Golubovic, that discussed whether the external crisis could nurture regional cooperation in the Western Balkans. The panel ended with conclusions among which are following: strong solidarity between chambers during COVID-19 crisis, important roles of WB6 CIF and all member chambers in overcoming consequences of the pandemic on business community in WB6 region, green lanes extended to WB6 following the initiative of WB6 CIF, most activities within national economies have regional components, as well, companies need to go beyond their “comfort

zones. The panel discussion was moderated by Mr. Zvezdan Jovanovic, President of the Kopaonik Business Forum. The panel was held in the Kopaonik Business Forum, which is a leading business event in the region.

(local) zones”, the main resources of all economies should be used to best use the potentials of the region as a whole and necessary to link local companies and go beyond the borders of the region.

6. Meeting within the EU-WB6 CIF business platform

European Commission and the WB6 CIF launched the ‘WB6-EU Business Platform’ on a joint event held on **16 June 2021**, as a forum that brings together representatives of the Western Balkans’ business community and the European Commission to discuss challenges and opportunities for the region’s private sector. Such dialogue will help the business community to better understand the European Union, its laws and policies and help them prepare for the integration in the Single Market.

On the behalf of EC, Mr. Olivér Várhelyi, Commissioner for Neighborhood and Enlargement, stressed the importance of the initiative in order to enhance strategic cooperation and engagement with the business community of the Western Balkans. Members of the WB6 CIF Managing Board and Business Council raised several important issues related to the untapped opportunities for businesses in the region and called the EU to:

- Facilitate transport in order to ensure a fast flow of goods, eliminating excessive waiting times at the border crossing points between the Western Balkans and the EU, bringing the region closer to better managed borders and a ‘one-stop-go’ approach at border crossings;
- Support companies in implementing the Western Balkan Green Agenda and support their efforts towards greening their operations, for instance by introducing energy-efficiency improvements and extended use of hydrogen and biomass;
- Enhance support for the transfer of knowledge and know-how from the EU to the region. For instance, by creating more opportunities for partnerships, supporting the innovation and development efforts of local companies and contributing to stop the brain drain from the region;
- The Western Balkans business community underlines the importance of including the region into the implementation of the EU industrial strategy, as well as, the EU SME strategy to deepen integration with EU value chains.

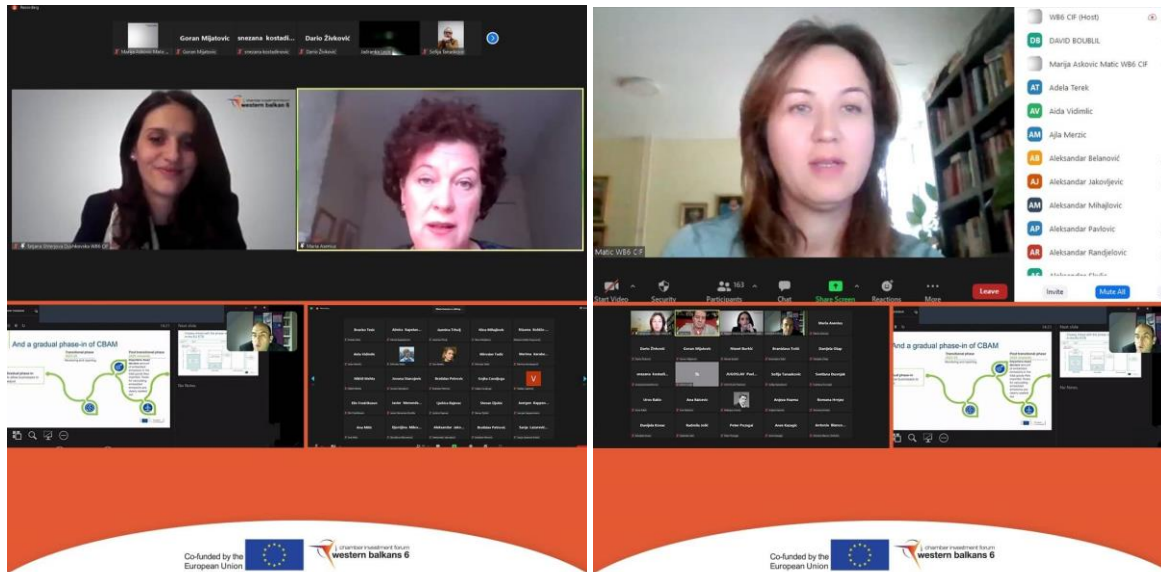


7. Study on obstacles and opportunities for doing business in the region

Third study – [Electronic invoicing](#) has been prepared. The Study includes screening of the WB6 and EU legislative related to the E-invoicing, analysis of the feedback from the WB6 business community and conclusions/recommendations that will be shared with the decision makers.

8. WB6 CIF – EU WORKING MEETING –The specificities of the proposed Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism presented before Western Balkans private sector

The Western Balkan Six Chamber Investment Forum (WB6 CIF) in cooperation with the European Commission (Directorate-General for Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) and Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union (DG TAXUD)), successfully organized a working meeting on which the proposed outlines of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism and its potential effects on the operations of WB private sector were discussed, with participation of more than 170 participants-representatives from WB companies.



Tatjana Shterjova Dushkovska, Secretary General of WB6 CIF, who pointed out that this working meeting, is held at the initiative of private sector to discuss about Proposal of carbon border adjustment mechanism with representatives of EU. She underlined that this meeting was held under the wider framework of the WB6-EU Business Platform, which has been officially launched and established on June this year, with a single purpose on working forward towards enhancing communication and cooperation between WB6 private sector on one hand and EU institutions on other hand. The topic of the meeting is connected to the European Green Deal, under which the EU has set itself a binding target of achieving climate neutrality by 2050, and the Western Balkans Green Agenda, supported by WB policy makers, and further developed with the Action plan for introducing the Green Agenda, which has been adopted in October on the Summit in Brdo. This goal requires current greenhouse gas emission levels to drop substantially in the next decades.

The presentation of Mr. David Boubilil from DG TAXUD, was followed by a constructive discussion, moderated by Mrs. Marija Askovic Matic (WB6 CIF), during which representatives from the private sector had an opportunity to ask clarifications about the proposed CBAM mechanism, and their obligations in order to comply with this mechanism.

9. WB6 CIF and Visegrad Group signed Joint Declaration establishing co-operation



In the premises of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce, on November 2nd 2021, representatives of the Western Balkans 6 Chamber Investment Forum and the Visegrad Group signed a Joint Declaration defining further steps for future cooperation. During the meeting, which was attended by representatives of the Chambers of Commerce of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia on the one side and Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia on the other side, discussed about current economic indicators of each of the countries, the effects of the pandemics and the activities undertaken by the chambers in order to support businessmen and economic recovery.

The President of the Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina Ahmet Egrić on behalf of the WB6 CIF expressed gratitude and satisfaction because this association is gaining new partners that it will contribute to further development and greater recognition of WB6 CIF in international circles. The signed Joint Declaration is certainly a good basis and WB6 CIF will work diligently on its implementation in the coming period. The President especially thanked for the support that the Visegrad Group provides to the integration of the region into the European Union.



Among other things, the Joint Declaration states that Visegrad Group and the WB6 CIF strongly support the need for establishing an effective legal framework agreement with the aim to integrate the rules governing the free movement of goods, services, persons, and capital, especially the need to secure fast flow of goods between the two region. Highest priority should be given to the issues of shortening border lines, reducing waiting times and technical


formalities at the border crossing points connecting the V4 and the WB6. For these reasons, the parties give priority to the issue of expanding the Green Lines to the Border crossing points between Hungary and Serbia, as stated in the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans and the Common Regional Market Action Plan.

V. TAILOR MADE SUPPORT FOR WB6 COMPANIES

1. 1st call in the Regional Challenge Fund (RCF)

The first call for the Expressions of Interest within the RCF was launched on February 1st 2021 and was opened until April 30, 2021. In order to promote the First Call for the Expressions of Interest, the Fund Management Unit in cooperation with the WB6 CIF has organized 30 events simultaneously in the six Western Balkan economies and more than 3500 participants, potential applicants participated in these events. Applications were open to consortia of one vocational training institute and at least two enterprises. The consortia need to agree to cooperate to implement cooperative VET courses that result in nationally recognized certificates. These consortia may operate in any of the WB6 economies.

A total of 206 applications from the 6 WB countries were submitted in the first call, requesting support amounting to over 80 million EUR.



	National Launch Event	Info Session 1	Info Session 2	Tutorial 1	Tutorial 2	Total
Serbia						
Date	18/02/2021	25/02/2021	11/03/2021	25/03/2021	01/04/2021	
Attendees	269	232	220	49	32	802
Bosnia and Herzegovina						
Date	11/02/2021	24/02/2021	16/03/2021	30/03/2021	12/04/2021	
Attendees	137	165	158	51	21	532
Montenegro						
Date	17/02/2021	03/03/2021	17/03/2021	31/03/2021	09/04/2021	
Attendees	210	224	143	44	26	647
Albania						
Date	02/03/2021	12/03/2021	26/03/2021	08/04/2021	16/04/2021	
Attendees	171	127	69	37	22	426
Kosovo						
Date	25/02/2021	10/03/2021	24/03/2021	07/04/2021	15/04/2021	
Attendees	220	122	121	44	38	545
North Macedonia						
Date	23/02/2021	09/03/2021	23/03/2021	06/04/2021	14/04/2021	
Attendees	239	142	84	41	43	549
Total	1,246	1,012	795	266	182	3,501

RCF Eol First Call

Country	No	Euro (million)
Albania	38	14.2
Bosnia	43	16
Kosovo	26	13.7
Montenegro	29	10.4
N Macedonia	30	13.2
Serbia	40	15.1
no data		
	206	82.6

2. Nearshoring study preparation

The study **“Getting stronger after COVID-19: Nearshoring potentials in the Western Balkans”** is in the final stages of preparation. This study aims to analyze whether and how the Western Balkan economies could benefit from these trends after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The study begins by discussing recent trends in global supply chains, international trade and foreign investment. It then presents an econometric analysis of determinants of foreign direct investment in the Western Balkans, trying to provide more detailed insights on the reasons for investing in the Western Balkan economies. This is followed by a set of surveys, interviews and case studies, of different actors involved in global supply chains and investment, including foreign companies that have invested in the Western Balkans, foreign companies that are considering investing in the Western Balkans, local companies from the Western Balkans, and investment promotion agencies from these countries. On the grounds of all this, conclusions and recommendations for the involved stakeholders are provided in the end.

3. Online B2B event “Linking for the future: Western Balkans and Germany”

February 25th and 26th 2021 - Online b2b event “Linking for the future: Western Balkans and Germany” has been organized for companies from the Western Balkans and Germany. The aim of the event was to connect German buyers and supply chain managers with the qualified producers



in the automotive and metal industry from the Western Balkans in order to find reliable suppliers of metal processing products and the ones that come from complementary industries. More than 170 companies from Western Balkans participated in the event with potential foreign partners and more than 174 cooperation opportunities (products, services, partnerships and project cooperation) were submitted in the virtual

marketplace.

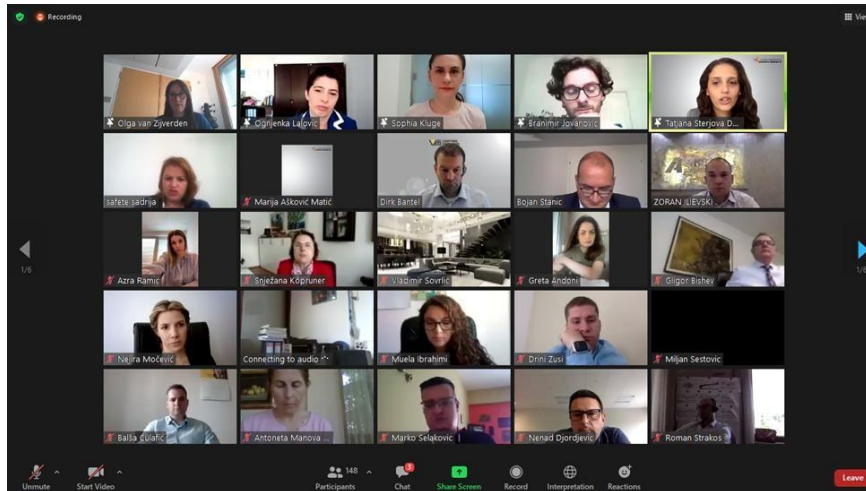
4. Support for WB companies related to COVID-19

- **Vaccination** – more than 10 000 businessmen from Western Balkans has been vaccinated following the initiative from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia and Government of Serbia, with esteemed efforts of WB6 chambers that supported companies in this activity. In a very short time, the members of the WB6 CIF managed to organize a large number of businessmen who responded with gratitude to the invitation.



- WB6 CIF Managing Board followed the situation related to COVID-19 outbreak and **proposed concrete measures to governments** in order to avoid additional delays or burden on companies (for example - The measure introduced by Germany, which applies to all persons entering this country which introduces the obligation to register and submit a negative COVID-19 test (in some cases referral to quarantine) starting from February 14, 2021, in practice has led to extremely complicated situations and great delays in the transport of goods and this question has been raised by the Managing Board in an open letter.)
- Latest information regarding the **current situation at border crossings** is published on WB6 CIF web site twice a day in cooperation with Milsped company.

5. Infrastructure and education development – key for new investments in the Western Balkans region – promotion of the Nearshoring study in the region



The economies of the Western Balkans could benefit greatly from the trend of returning the production of multinational companies from Asia to Europe, according to the study “Getting stronger after COVID-19: Nearshoring Potential in the Western Balkans”, conducted by the Western

Balkans 6 Chamber Investment Forum (WB6 CIF) in cooperation with the Vienna Institute of Economics and with the support of the Chamber Partnership Project for the Western Balkans.

In order to seize this opportunity, investments are needed in the education of qualified professional staff, the development of infrastructure and a stimulating economic environment that will make the Western Balkans region more competitive. An event discussing the main conclusions of the study was held online on May 27th, gathering more than 150 participants.

Additionally, a video summarizing the main conclusions from the study has been prepared ahead of the Berlin Summit (available on the following link - <https://youtu.be/AThHkzf5yOE>)

6. Conference and B2B event on construction industry in WB6 (including green and circular economy)

The Conference and B2B meetings “Construction and Infrastructure in the Western Balkan 6” has been organized by the WB6 CIF and Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina in cooperation with chambers in the region and Enterprise Europe Network, in hybrid form in Sarajevo, on September 15th and 16th 2021. The event was organized with the aim to bring together companies in order to improve conditions for increasing business opportunities in the WB6 region. Moreover, this activity gathered together all relevant stakeholders in this field and emphasized the

importance of the circular economy. More than 80 participants joined this event.



Panellists/experts in these fields of industry commented on challenges that local companies face, including their experience in posting workers, trade in construction materials and recognition of the certificates. They presented opportunities, benefits and implemented elements of circular economy in their business, sharing/presenting their positive examples and

benefits. Separate panel has been dedicated to presentation of the current and upcoming Investment and Infrastructure projects in the WB6 Region (Road and Railway projects, Renewable energy projects, Industrial zones etc.). Panelists were eminent experts and managers from R&T Group, Albania, GRANIT AD, North Macedonia, ADING AD Skopje, North Macedonia, Euro-asfalt, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Set (System Engineering Team) Serbia, C&M Albania, Civil Engineering Institute North Macedonia, InfraTrans Project Albania, Bosman Bosnia and Herzegovina, Public Enterprise Roads of Serbia, as well as representatives of the relevant Ministries from WB6 economies and chambers of commerce.



7. WB6 CIF activities during Digital Summit in Podgorica - Regional Cooperation Program for IT Start-ups and small companies

WB6 CIF published an open call and selected 30 small companies (start-ups) from WB6 region that participated in tailor made Regional Cooperation program. Program has been organized as a side event during the 4th Western Balkans Digital Summit 2021 in Podgorica, Montenegro, October 11th - October 13th 2021.

Panel discussion “Financing opportunities – main pillar for building successful start-up ecosystem” gathered eminent speakers that presented funding possibilities from venture capital firms, loans, angel investors, grants and accelerator programs to 3Fs (friends, family and fools).

During the second panel “Smart Business Tools and Solutions for WB companies”, WB6 CIF presented potentials for IT companies related to the usage of Market access database, while chambers presented achievements in terms of available digital solutions.



Two trainings have been organized “Start-up Life Cycle – from idea to maturity” and “Start-up Life without filters” have been organized in order to present Example of successful IT start-up as well as Common mistakes, bad decisions, wrong partnerships.

As a follow up of the event IT solutions from companies have been gathered and included in the digital catalogue <https://ecatalogue.wb6cif.eu/> that will be further promoted.

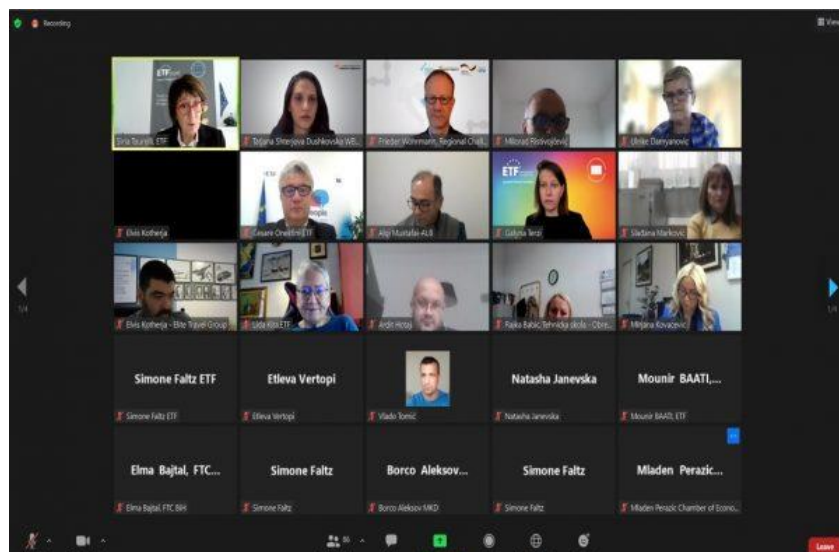
8. New Investments in the Western Balkans through better education, institutions and infrastructure – presentation of the Nearshoring study in Serbia, Bosnia and Hercegovina and Albania

Changes have to be made in the policy of attracting foreign investments in the Western Balkans, because low salaries and taxes do not play anymore the main role when making decision on investments, but operational institutions, qualified labor force and good infrastructure are the crucial one. These are the conclusions of the study “Getting Stronger after COVID-19: Nearshoring Potential in the Western Balkans”.



At the panel discussions, organized by the WB6 Chamber Investment Forum and the national chambers of commerce, the study authors and representatives of the domestic and regional economy have indicated that in the following period it is necessary to increase state investments in education, with greater focus on technological sciences, more practical vocational education, and the improvement of transport infrastructure.

9. Joint conference with the European Training Federation - Public Private Partnerships evolving to provide a range of flexible solutions to skills training demands in South Eastern Europe and Turkey



The way in which Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) can function as part of the implementation of policies to improve skills delivery and labor market-relevance was under the spotlight on 14 October, 2021, at the online conference: “How Public Private Partnerships Support Skills Development in South Eastern Europe and Turkey?”,

hosted by the European Training Foundation and the Western Balkans 6 Chamber Investment Forum (WB6 CIF).

The event, which brought together experts from public and private sector organizations in the Western Balkans economies and Turkey, took as its starting point the findings of a new ETF study PPPs for Skills Development, an in-depth survey of 23 cases studies of PPPs located in 14 countries. Tatjana Shterjova Dushkovska, Secretary General of the WB6 CIF, reflected on the need to have the synergies of all related stakeholders, in order to have successful models for skills development, and representatives from the national chambers of commerce from Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro and North Macedonia, who reflected on the positive practices of PPPs in this area in their national economies.

10. Regional Challenge Fund annual conference - 14,5 million euros allocated for 37 most successful projects in cooperative training



The Regional Challenge Fund (the RCF) organized its First Annual Regional conference in order to share the results and experience from the regional call that supported investments in cooperative training. In 2021, from February to April, the RCF opened the call and received 205 applications from consortia of vocational training institutes and enterprises from all Western Balkan economies. 66 consortia were shortlisted and invited to prepare the full project proposals. In addition, the Selection Committee's decision about the funds available for the first call resulted in 37 most successful projects being proposed for finance, allocating approximately 14,5 million Euros to the region.

The Regional Challenge Fund (RCF) is a financing facility designed to increase youth employability. It boosts the competitiveness of enterprises in Western Balkan economies by funding investments

in equipment and infrastructure for selected dual or cooperative training projects implemented through partnerships between vocational training institutes and enterprises. The grants are allocated through a competitive regional challenge.

The RCF also recognizes three additional aspects that cut across economic sectors and boundaries and their potential for building labor-market relevant skills in line with the current policy initiatives: green transition, regional integration, and digit(al)ization. The First annual conference brought together officials and experts from EU, public institutions and organizations active in the field of vocational educations and training, Chambers of commerce, international and regional organizations, enterprises and CSO.

11. WB6 CIF participation at the Tirana International Fair “One Balkan-Stronger Balkans”



In organization of the Western Balkans Six Chamber Investment Forum, on 1-4 December 2021 in Tirana Albania, 30 SMEs food processing companies and 6 large retail chains/distributors from the Western Balkans were part of the Tirana International Fair 2021, which is the most important fair event in Albania and one of the most important events of this kind in the region.

Representatives of SMEs engaged in the food production process held two sessions B2B meetings and two sessions of presentations and networking with the large retail chains from the region. The possibilities for cooperation were presented by ESSI Group, Eco

Market, Domaca Trgovina, DIS, Royal Food and Dauti Komerc during the Tirana International Fair 2021. This event opens the door to new business arrangements, and strengthening the economies of the WB6 countries. There was a significant interest between food production SMEs and distributors and large retail chains for further business cooperation and seizing the opportunities.



Companies had more than 150 meetings among themselves and with other participants in the Fair. They have exchanged contacts and information about their products, while distribution chains and retailers presented the possibilities for further cooperation. All participants were included in the electronic catalogue of companies <https://ecatalogue.wb6cif.eu/agri-food-companies/> that is used for further promotion.

12. Regional center for economic analysis

The Regional center for economic analysis (RCEA) started functioning as interactive platform for the employees from WB6 CIF founding chambers from the analytical departments, providing the establishment of database for the preparation of automated market reports for the needs of chambers in the region and WB6 CIF.

Results of the RCEA in the previous period are the following:

- ✓ Joint WB6 CIF database with relevant data that are available for all chambers
- ✓ WB6 CIF Survey platform for data gathering and regional surveys
- ✓ Joint RCEA Internal Exchange Folder within the WB6 CIF IEP platform
- ✓ Training for all chambers' analytical staff on how to use available data

All chambers now have direct access to the:

- WIIW database of economic indicators (The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies)
- Dun&Bradstreet Hoovers package, Boniteti International and Portfolio Intelligence – Linkages module (including data about the economic activities of all companies)

All these databases, tools and platforms are used in order to prepare sectorial reports, tailor-made national reports, foreign investors, etc.

13.Signal

- “Signal” section on the WB6 CIF web site is regularly updated with the new information. It includes the latest regulations published by European Commission that are relevant for WB6 companies ([signal - WB6 CIF](#)).

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE WB6 CIF

1. Organization of WB6 CIF Managing Board meetings in Belgrade and Podgorica



15th session of the WB6 CIF Managing Board meeting was held in Belgrade on February 3rd 2021 and 16th session of the WB6 CIF Managing Board meeting was held in Podgorica on March 19th 2021. Strategic and operational issues have been discussed.

2. 17th Managing Board Meeting of the WB6 CIF held in Belgrade - WB's economy taking action to attract investments



The 17th meeting of the Managing Board of the WB6 CIF was held in Belgrade on 14 May 2021. In the open part of the meeting, it was attended by **Mr. Fatmir Bytyqi**, Deputy Prime Minister in the Charge of Economic Affairs in Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, who emphasized that the Western Balkans should work together to make economies competitive in the global market because all economies face problems caused by the pandemic. One of the conclusions of the meeting was that the private sector of the Western Balkans, led by the WB6 CIF is preparing the largest action to attract investment in order to make the best use of the region's six economies in the post-covid period. The six Chambers of Commerce of the Western Balkans are working hard to prepare the most intensive action so far to attract investment to our region, to promote the region as an investment destination and to promote the export of our products to important world markets.

3. Organization of a workshop for CIF Development plan, aimed at strengthening CIF as a self-sufficient and stable organization

On the 28th and 29th of September, the national coordinators for the Western Balkans Six



Chamber Investment Forum (WB6 CIF) and national staff working on regional cooperation projects gathered in Budva, Montenegro, to work on a strategy for the future to strengthen CIF as an organization. One of the focus questions was: How can CIF operate independently as an umbrella organization and become a stable partner for the chambers, international organizations and the business sector? The discussed issues included the successes CIF has already achieved, what obstacles still stand in the way of the organization's

development and how it can overcome them. The workshop concluded that CIF is a unique and vital organization for the local business sector that operates independently of political conflicts in the Western Balkans and, thus, has an integrating effect. Therefore, CIF has set goals and steps to strengthen this role in the region.

4. The 18th Session of the WB6 CIF Managing Board – Appeal for visa liberalization for the citizens of Kosovo



The Management Board of the WB6 CIF held its 18th session in Budapest, on 02.11.2021, which was chaired by the President of the Board and the President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia Marko Cadez.

During the session it was discussed about realized WB6 CIF activities and also activities that need to be realized in the next period. The meeting ended with the request of the six chambers of commerce of the region to the European Union to enable visa

liberalization for the citizens of Kosovo, because, as President Cadez pointed out, there is no economic growth and development of small and medium enterprises while people cannot travel and negotiate jobs.