



# The Berlin Process in a Nutshell 2014–2019

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# What is the Berlin Process?

The Berlin process was set up in 2014 as a platform for high-level cooperation between high official representatives of the Western Balkan Six (WB6) and their peers in Berlin Process host countries. The Process also involves the EU institutions, international financial institutions and the region's civil society, youth and businesses.

## Why was it initiated?

At the time when the European Union (EU) was facing multiple challenges and its enlargement was put on hold, the Berlin Process was launched to maintain the stability of the Western Balkans (WB), support the ongoing reforms, and to move the regional cooperation forward.

## The Goals

The 2014 Declaration of the German Chair set out to make concrete progress in:

- 1. Resolution of outstanding bilateral and internal issues**
- 2. Achieving reconciliation within and between the societies in the region**
- 3. Enhancing regional economic cooperation**
- 4. Laying the foundations for sustainable growth.**

## The Berlin Process and the EU's policy towards the WB

The Berlin Process is not a part of the Stabilisation and Accession Process (SAP) but supplements it by focusing on the region as a whole.

## The participants

- EU member states' governments – Germany, Austria, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Slovenia, Croatia, Greece, Poland and Bulgaria – with perspective of other EU members joining in the future
- The WB6: high official representatives, civil society and businesses
- The EU institutions – The European Commission (EC), European External Action Service (EEAS) and the member state holding the Presidency of the Council
- International financial institutions – European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), European Investment Bank (EIB) and other investment institutions grouped in the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF) and the Connectivity Europe Facility (CEF)
- Regional initiatives – Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), South East European Transport Observatory (SEETO), Energy Community (EnC), Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA), Regional Anti- Corruption Initiative (RAI).

## How does it work?

The Process has a flexible structure, with no central coordination mechanism. From 2014 to 2019 the annual summits were hosted by the EU member states. Together with the WB6 they set the agendas and followed up on the last year's summit. Starting from 2020, the responsibility of the WB6 for the Berlin process will increase, as North Macedonia will co-host the 2020 summit with Bulgaria.

The process proceeds through a series of meetings:

- Annual meetings of the WB6 and the Berlin Process host countries at the level of Prime Ministers and Ministers, with high-level representatives of the EU and member states, international financial institutions and regional organisations involved in the Process – the Western Balkans Summits
- Annual meetings of the region's civil society, youth, and businesses – adjacent to the Summits
- Preparatory and follow-up meetings at the level of Prime Ministers, ministers and their representatives
- Preparatory meetings of the civil society, youth and businesses.

## The results

The Process has thus far yielded results in 3 areas of regional cooperation – economic, political and security and social.

Most projects, programmes and initiatives within the Berlin Process have been designed to enhance regional economic cooperation: the “connectivity agenda”, the initiatives in support of cooperation and growth of the Western Balkan businesses and to joint projects of the regional scientists.

## Regional economic cooperation – the “connectivity agenda”

Compared with the EU average, the WB has low railway and motorway densities, low capacities for power generation and scarce broadband internet connections. This “infrastructure gap” negatively affects the region’s prospects for growth, mutual linking and integration in the European Economic Area.

To overcome the gap, the Berlin Process has been putting forward the “connectivity agenda” – the projects, programmes, and initiatives to link the Western Balkans to Trans European Transport Network (TEN-T), implement the electricity Projects of Energy Community Interest (PECI) and contribute to creating conditions for sustainable growth.

In the area of transport, the 39 “connectivity” projects include construction and rehabilitation of roads, railways, tunnels, viaducts, ports, and border crossings and will extend the 3 core network corridors of the TEN-T (Mediterranean, East/Med and Rhine/Danube) to the WB. In the area of energy, the 7 projects include the construction of 560 km of electricity network and over 170 km of gas infrastructure, contributing to energy security, while the energy efficiency and renewables programmes – the Regional Energy Efficiency Programme (REEP) and Green for Growth Fund (GGF) – will provide investments fostering the region’s sustainable growth.

Since the EU investments in connectivity should take place in an optimal policy framework for construction and operation, the funding decisions are linked to the progress on reforms related to energy, transport and sustainability in line with the *acquis*. These “soft connectivity measures” are meant to open the transport market and establish reliable rail systems, develop the regional energy market and contribute to sustainability of the energy sector.

The investment projects are proposed for funding by potential beneficiaries to the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF), in line with regional and national strategies. Funding decisions are based on maturity and regional impact of investment projects, but the key criterion for selection is the progress in legal and regulatory reforms.

The digital aspect of connectivity has been addressed by the Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans, launched in 2018. The Agenda aims to increase cybersecurity, trust and the digitalisation of industry in the Western Balkans, deploy eGovernment, eProcurement, and eHealth tools, help increase digital skills among citizens and boost research and innovation. 30 million euros were pledged for broadband infrastructure by the WB EDIF (Western Balkan Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility). The Digital Agenda is complementary with the REA MAP and its implementation, coordinated by the RCC, requires close collaboration between the WB6 and the EC.



# Regional economic cooperation – support to cooperation and development of businesses

## Western Balkans 6 Chamber Investment Forum (WB6 CIF)

The WB6 Chamber Investment Forum was established in 2017 by the chambers of commerce and industry of the WB6. Representing 350,000 companies from the Western Balkans, the WB6 CIF aims to foster their export capacities, cooperation and internationalisation of their operations, and to promote the region as one investment destination. Together with Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) and the regional network of vocational education centres (SEE VET Net), the WB6 CIF coordinates a regional platform to promote work-based learning and regional operational standards – *Western Balkans Alliance for Work-based Learning* (WBA 4 WBL). In order to provide a one-stop shop for investors looking to invest in the WB, the Forum maintains the Online Investment Platform. It also promotes inter-chamber dialogue in support to normalisation of Belgrade-Pristina relations.

## Regional Economic Area (REA)

The idea of the REA is to create a space where goods, services, investments and skilled workers will move freely. The initiative will extend the market available to potential investors in the WB, by enabling access to almost 20 million consumers and make investing in the WB more attractive by offering opportunities to create value chains across borders, while taking advantage of trade relations with the EU. The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) prepared a multi-annual Action Plan (MAP) for the REA, which was endorsed in Trieste in 2017. The plan covers trade, investment, mobility and digital economy. Two years later, the REA resulted in furthering regional agreements on trade liberalisation and on mutual recognition of academic qualifications, in successful implementation of the Digital Agenda, including the agreement on substantial reduction of regional roaming charges, in launching of implementation of the Regional Investment Reform (RIRA) plan and in preparation of practical guidelines for capital markets development. The actions introduced in the MAP REA are expected to be implemented until 2020, with some extensions until 2023.

## Transport community (TC)

With the Treaty concluded between the EU and the WB6, the TC was established in 2017, in the field of road, rail, inland waterway and maritime transport as well as regarding the development of the transport network between the EU and the WB6. The TC should provide support to the realisation of common infrastructure projects and progressively integrate the transport market of the WB6 into the EU transport market on the basis of the relevant *acquis* in the areas of technical standards, interoperability, safety, security, traffic management, social policy, public procurement, and environment – for all modes of transport (excluding air transport).

### **Support to SMEs through Western Balkan Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (WB EDIF)**

In order to boost entrepreneurial capacity and provide new financing opportunities to the companies in the region, in 2017 the EC has committed to providing 48 million euros through the WB EDIF.

## **Regional economic cooperation – support to scientific cooperation**

### **Western Balkans Research Foundation (WBRF)**

At the 2017 summit in Trieste the participants decided to start the process of establishing the WBRF. The Foundation will be a self-governing international institution implementing mobility programmes and providing financial support to teams of junior scientists from the WB. Following recommendations from the 2019 5th Joint Science Conference, the WBRF will also commit to tackling the brain drain from the WB6 and to establishing mechanisms for providing scientific advice to the design of public policies and decision-making at the national level.

### **South East European International Institute for Sustainable Technologies (SEEIIST)**

SEEIIST is a regional initiative of WB6, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece and Slovenia to facilitate and further knowledge transfer and collaboration of scientists, with the purpose to help the region develop sustainable economy and social cohesion. The cooperation within SEEIIST takes place through joint research projects, trainings, information-exchange and meetings.

## **Regional political and security cooperation**

### **Young Civil Servants Pilot Scheme (YCSPS)**

The YCSPS is an executive programme agreed upon in 2016, designed to develop the professional capacities of public administrators and policy makers in the WB6. Through this programme they will acquire a global perspective on public administration and jointly participate in a programme tailor-made for the region. The scheme involves participation in the Regional Exchange Programme.

## **Declaration on Bilateral Issues**

The Declaration on Bilateral Issues was adopted by the WB6 Foreign Affairs ministers in Vienna in 2015. The signatories committed to resolution of all open questions in the spirit of good neighbourliness and commitment to European integration. The declaration is an obligation for the signatories to resolve their bilateral disputes in a manner which will not block or encourage others to block their neighbours' EU integration process. As the first encouraging steps in that endeavour, two border agreements were signed on the margins of the Vienna summit.

## **Joint Declaration on Regional Cooperation and Good Neighbourly Relations, Joint Declaration on Missing Persons, and Joint Declaration on War Crimes**

The Joint Declaration from 2018 reiterates the commitments made regarding the resolution of outstanding bilateral issues in 2015, commending the initiative for biannual stocktaking and pointing to the contribution that the civil society can make in improving regional cooperation. It stresses the need to resolve the cases of the missing persons in post-Yugoslav conflicts without politicisation and welcomes the pledge of the WB6 to investigations. In relation to war crimes, it emphasises the need to end impunity and overcome the legacy of the past and indicates the crucial importance of the independence of judiciary, but also of recognition of verdicts, of the need to reject hate speech and glorification of war criminals, to strengthen the prosecutors' office and courts and their regional cooperation, as well as the cooperation with the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (MICT).

## **Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024**

The Roadmap is an elaborate action plan, a guiding and consensual document developed and owned by the WB6 authorities and embedded in the Berlin Process, which complements existing European Union activity to counter those threats. It builds on a vision of a safer, more secure region, where comprehensive and sustainable mechanisms, fully harmonized with the European Union and other international standards are in place to identify, prevent, prosecute, and control the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of firearms, ammunition and explosives. The Roadmap is also a practical progress measuring tool, with defined, goals, targets and performance indicators.

## **Joint Declaration: Principles of Cooperation in the Field of Information-Exchange for Law Enforcement**

The WB6 agreed to share strategic assessments and operational and tactical intelligence on serious and organised crime and terrorism. The principles of

cooperation were established: the exchanges will be in line with national legal requirements, including in relation to personal data protection and classified information security, timely, proactively, using secured channels, with as many details as possible and in an efficient and effective manner.

### **The Berlin Process Security Commitments Steering Group**

As a part of the London Summit in 2018, the WB6 committed to strengthening connectivity and cooperation within the region in the fields of serious and organised crime, terrorism and other security threats, established the Steering Group to identify priorities, monitor and assess the delivery of these commitments, address obstacles and identify future security threats and areas for cooperation.

### **Anti-corruption commitments**

In the framework of the London Summit, the leaders of the WB6 made stipulations committing to step up their anti-corruption efforts, namely in the areas of exposing corruption, of prosecuting the corrupt and of driving out the culture of corruption.

## **Regional social cooperation**

### **Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO)**

RYCO is a regionally-owned and financed organisation, based in Tirana. It was modelled after Franco-German Youth Office and is the first major step taken in the course of the Berlin Process towards accelerating reconciliation among the post-conflict societies of the post-Yugoslav space. Its mission includes providing support to youth exchanges in the region, stepping up regional youth cooperation, cooperating with institutions working with youth, implementing joint projects as well as coordinating cooperation among youth in the WB. RYCO was established in 2016.

### **Western Balkans Fund (WBF)**

The WBF is a regionally-owned and financed organisation modelled after the Višegrad Fund, established in 2015. By financing projects, which must include participants from the WB6, the WBF boosts cooperation between the societies of the WB6, strengthens relations and regional cohesion and advances integration into the EU.

## Overview: 3 areas of cooperation forwarded via the Berlin Process

### ECONOMIC COOPERATION

- The “connectivity agenda”
  - 32 transport connectivity investment projects
  - 2 technical assistance projects (transport)
  - 5 energy connectivity investment projects
  - 2 sustainability programmes (efficiency, renewables)
  - Broadband infrastructure investment (digital)
  - Soft measures – energy
  - Soft measures – transport
  - Soft measures – sustainability
- Transport Community
- Regional Economic Area
- WB6 Chamber Investment Forum
- SMEs support via WB EDIF
- WB Research Foundation
- SEE International Institute for Sustainable Technologies

### POLITICAL COOPERATION AND SECURITY

- Young Civil Servants Pilot Scheme
- Declaration on Bilateral Issues
- Declaration on Regional Cooperation and Good Neighbourly Relations
- Declaration on Missing Persons
- Declaration on War Crimes
- Roadmap for a Solution to SALW and their Ammunition
- Security Commitments Steering Group
- Anti-corruption Commitments

## SOCIAL COOPERATION

- Regional Youth Cooperation Office
- Western Balkans Fund

### The course of the Process

Aside from the annual Summits, the Process goes on through the meetings following up to the past summits' commitments, and through the meetings held in order to prepare for the next summit. The topics of the Berlin Process are also tackled in gatherings not directly linked to the Process, which is why the review of its course also takes these events into account.

2014

## Meetings in the run up to the Berlin Summit / Highlights

### Feb 11, London

#### Western Balkans Investment Forum

- WB6 and Croatia Prime Ministers
- EBRD
- Promotion of the WB6 as an investment destination

### Jul 15, Dubrovnik

#### Brdo-Brijuni Process meeting

- WB6 Presidents and Prime Ministers
- Presidents of Croatia and Slovenia
- German Chancellor
- The summit in Berlin announced
- The Council of the EU invited to organise WB-EU Summit
- EU strategy of transport and infrastructure should include the WB

## August 28: The Western Balkans Summit in Berlin

### Participants:

- WB6: Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Economy
- EU: EC President and Vice-President, DG NEAR Commissioner
- Austria, Croatia, Germany, Slovenia: Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Economy
- France: Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs

### Topics:

- Regional cooperation
- Transport community
- Independence of judiciary, fight against corruption
- Vocational education

2014

### Commitments:

- Yearly Summits will provide a framework for a period of four years to achieve “additional, real” progress in economic cooperation, sustainable growth, reconciliation, bilateral issues
- Germany will foster media freedom in the WB
- The WB6 will work intensively on developing the Energy Community

### Follow up to the Berlin Summit and preparations for the Vienna Summit / Highlights

#### Oct 23, Belgrade

##### Informal meeting in Belgrade

- WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Economy/Finance
- DG NEAR Commissioner
- The EC will allocate 1 billion euros through IPA funds for transport and energy



## Follow up to the Berlin Summit and preparations for the Vienna Summit / Highlights

### Feb 24, Tirana

#### South East Cooperation Process meeting

- Ministers of Foreign Affairs of SEECP members
- Latvian EU Presidency
- RCC
- RCC invited to prepare a regional cooperation platform to fight terrorism

### Mar 20, Vienna

#### Conference “Tackling Jihadism Together – Shaping, Preventing, Reacting”

- Austria, Croatia, Italy, Slovenia, WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Interior
- EC, OSCE, RCC, Europol
- Ministers will enhance cooperation in fighting extremism and international terrorism

### Mar 25, Pristina

#### Conference “Improved Connectivity and a Strong Core Network”

- WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Infrastructure
- DG NEAR Commissioner
- Draft Core Network Agreement announced
- Technical standards must be met by 2030 to have the Core Network completed

### Apr 21, Brussels

#### Summit “Building Networks, Connecting People”

- WB6 Prime Ministers
- DG NEAR Commissioner DG MOVE Commissioner RCC
- Core transport network agreed upon
- National Investment Committees must establish Single Project Pipeline of priority investments

**Apr 23, Brdo pri Kranju**  
Brdo-Brijuni Process meeting

- Italy, France, Slovenia and WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs
- State Secretary of Federal Foreign Office of Germany

- DG NEAR Commissioner
- Programmes of the Positive Agenda for Youth to be made more effective

**May 6, Brussels**  
Regional cooperation day in Brussels

- WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs
- DG NEAR Commissioner

- RCC
- Furthering regional cooperation was deemed priority

**May 25-26, Belgrade**  
CSO preparatory meeting for the Vienna Summit

- Regional civil society organisations and think tanks

- Recommendations for the Vienna Summit prepared (regional cooperation, creation of jobs and prosperity, freedom of expression)

**Jun 12, Sarajevo**  
Regional BIRN conference

- Regional media professionals and experts

- Recommendations for the Vienna Summit prepared (regional cooperation, creation of jobs and prosperity, freedom of expression)

**Jun12, Sarajevo**  
Regional BIRN conference

- Regional media professionals and experts
- Recommendations for the Vienna Summit prepared (legal protection of journalists, state influence, rules on ownership and financing of outlets, hate speech)

**Jun 22, Riga**  
TEN-T Days 2015

- WB6 Ministers of Transport
- DG NEAR Commissioner
- Energy Security Community
- The Core network, the Corridors and the mandate of the Corridor coordinators to be extended into the WB

**Jul 8, Vienna**  
Conference “Connecting Systems, connecting Markets”

- WB6 Ministers of Energy
- DG NEAR Commissioner
- Director of Energy Security Community
- Shortlist of investment projects agreed upon, energy soft measures to be completed, regional power market initiative to be launched, NICs to be established

**Jul 15-17, Haale and Berlin**  
Joint Science Conference

- National Academies and Rector' Conferences of WB6, Austria, Germany, Italy and Slovenia
- 3% of GDP for higher education and science should be allocated, research foundation should be established

## August 27: The Western Balkans Summit in Vienna

### Participants:

- WB6: Presidents and Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Economy
- EU: EC President and Vice-President, DG NEAR Commissioner, HR of the EU Foreign Policy and Security Affairs
- Austria, Croatia, Germany, Slovenia: Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Economy
- France: Secretary of State for European Affairs, Special Envoy of Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Italy: Minister of Foreign Affairs, Director General of the Ministry of Economy International financial institutions

### Topics:

- Bilateral issues
- Migration and fight against terrorism Economic prosperity
- Connectivity agenda
- Youth
- Education and science

### Commitments:

- Declaration on Regional Cooperation and Solution of Bilateral Disputes signed Declaration on Establishment of RYCO signed
- Annual Economic Reform Programmes (ERPs) will be prepared
- 6 transport and 4 energy infrastructure investment projects agreed upon
- The list of “soft measures” to be implemented before the Paris Summit was agreed upon Establishment of a regional energy market agreed upon
- 1 billion euros for connectivity projects will be made available from IPA II
- Obstacles to the Transport Community Treaty to be overcome

2015

### August 27: The Civil Society Forum in Vienna

#### Highlight:

- Recommendations on enhancing regional cooperation, media freedom, job creation and solution of bilateral issues presented

### August 27: The Business Forum in Vienna

#### Highlight:

- Agreement on establishment of the WB6 Chamber Investment Forum signed

### Follow up to the Vienna Summit and preparations for the Paris Summit / Highlights

#### Sep 18, Split Conference “WISE”

- WB6 Ministers of Education and Science
- “WB Research and Innovation Centre” (WISE) was established
- Minister of Education of Croatia

#### Oct 8, Luxembourg Conference “Eastern Mediterranean –Western Balkans route”

- WB6, EU member states, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs
- Migrants must be returned to countries of origin
- WB6 assistance commended
- Key joint actions agreed upon

### Oct 21, Budva

#### Inauguration meeting of the WB6 CIF

- Members of the WB6 Chamber Investment Forum
- Working groups were established and rules of procedure adopted

### Oct 25, Brussels

#### Meeting on the WB Migration Route

- Presidents/ Prime Ministers: Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYROM, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia; President of the EC; Reps of the Luxembourg Presidency of EU Council, of the future Dutch Presidency, UNHCR, Frontex, European Asylum Support Office
- 17-point action plan agreed upon

### Nov 12-13, Prague

#### Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the V4 and the WB6

- Ministers of Foreign Affairs of WB6 and V4
- representatives of the EC, of Croatia, Slovenia, UK
- RCC Secretary General
- The Agreement on Establishment of the Western Balkans Fund signed

### Dec 7-8, Sarajevo

#### EU-WB Forum on Justice and Home Affairs

- Ministers for Justice and Home Affairs of WB6 and the EU member states
- DG HOME Commissioner
- EU-Western Balkans counter-terrorism initiative adopted

## Follow up to the Vienna Summit and preparations for the Paris Summit / Highlights

### Feb 22, London

#### Western Balkans Investment Summit

- Croatia and WB6 Prime Ministers, Ministers of Economy, Energy and/or Transport, UK Minister for Trade and Investment
- EBRD
- WB business representatives
- Development of transport links, renewable energy and the privatisation agenda elaborated upon
- EBRD-backed SEE Link launched

### Feb 25-26, Zagreb

#### WB6 Chamber Investment Forum Meeting

- Presidents of Chambers from SEE and of the EU member states
- EU representatives
- The Regional Platform for Strengthening SMEs established

### Mar 1, Brussels

#### Meeting of WB6 Ministers of Energy and Transport

- WB6 Ministers of Transport and Energy
- DG NEAR Commissioner
- The WB6 will work towards establishing a regional market for electricity
- The NICs will keep Single Project Pipelines (SPPs) of priority investments up to date and credible

### Mar 30-31, Durres

#### Meeting of WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Durres

- WB6 and Czech Ministers of Foreign Affairs
- Secretary of State of France
- Italian Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs
- DG NEAR Commissioner
- RCC Secretary General
- The EU will fund connectivity investment projects where soft measures have been addressed
- The WB6 proposed a cooperation agenda as regards to the refugee crisis and demanded the conclusion of the visa liberalisation process for all the WB citizens
- The EC will organise a youth forum, launch a pilot scheme for young civil servants and prepare a regional hydropower master plan

### Apr 25-26, Vienna

#### Conference “WB: Energizing Enlargement by Solving Bilateral Disputes”

- Representatives of WB6, Austria, Croatia, Germany, France, Italy and Slovenia, of the EU institutions, RCC, think-tanks
- The ways of resolving bilateral issues were deliberated

### Apr 27, Vienna

#### Meeting in EnC Secretariat

- Representatives of the WB6 Ministries of Energy
- WB6 Transmission system operators and national regulatory authorities
- MoU of the WB6 on Regional Electricity Market Development signed

### May 12-13, Belgrade and Novi Sad

#### Civil Society Forum

- Regional civil society organisations and think tanks
- Recommendations for the Paris Summit prepared (youth cooperation, migration crisis, environment and bilateral disputes)



### May 18, Vienna

#### Building a WB Alliance for Work-Based Learning Conference

- Representatives of companies from Austria, Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia and WB6; of the EC and IFIs
- The principles of cooperation in order to support vocational education and training were agreed upon

### May 22-24, Vienna

#### Joint Science Conference

- National Academies and Rector' Conferences of WB6, Austria, Germany, Italy and Slovenia; RCC
- Recommendations for the WB6 agreed upon (involvement of scientists in policy- making, application of international quality criteria, support to mobility measures, etc.)

### May 24, Paris

#### Brdo-Brijuni Process meeting

- Italy, France, Slovenia and WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs; German Minister of State for Europe; State Secretary of France
- DG NEAR Commissioner
- EEAS Secretary General
- Cooperation needs to be stepped up in the area of migrations

### May 25, Brussels

#### Economic and Financial Dialogue between the EU, the WB, and Turkey

- Representatives of WB6, EU member states, Turkey, EC; of European Central Bank and central banks of WB6 and Turkey
- The WB6 representatives presented their Economic Reform Plans (ERPs) for 2016

2016

**May 26, Ljubljana**

Conference “Strengthening Econ. Governance in SEE”

- WB6 Ministers of Economy
- Representatives of the EC and IMF
- Reform priorities identified under Economic Reform Programmes discussed

**July 4: The Western Balkans Summit in Paris**

#### Participants:

- WB6: Presidents and Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Economy
- EU: EC President and V.-President, DG NEAR Commissioner, HR of the EU Foreign Policy and Security Affairs
- Austria, Croatia, Germany, France, Italy, Slovenia: Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Economy
- International financial institutions

#### Topics:

- Rule of law and anti-corruption Youth
- Environment
- Migration and fighting terrorism Connectivity agenda

#### Commitments:

- 3 new railway projects agreed upon, and the programme for energy efficiency received additional funding
- Soft measures to be implemented
- A roadmap for setting up of a regional market for electricity agreed upon
- Proposals for increasing the access for the region's youth to the Erasmus agreed upon Western Balkan Sustainable Charter agreed upon
- Agreement on the Establishment of the RYCO signed Young Civil Servants Pilot Scheme launched

2016

#### July 4: The Civil Society Forum in Paris

##### Highlight:

- Recommendations on climate change and green growth, youth cooperation, bilateral disputes, migration and democratic governance presented

#### July 4: The Business Forum in Paris

##### Highlight:

- WB6 chambers to promote cooperation and increase competitiveness

#### July 4: The Youth conference in Paris

##### Highlight:

- Recommendations on education and mobility, employment and entrepreneurship, youth engagement and participation, and youth and the media presented

**Follow up to the Paris Summit and preparations  
for the Trieste Summit / Highlights**

**Sep 26-28, Ljubljana**

**Europe-Western Balkans Youth Meeting**

- WB6 and EU members states youth leaders
- Representatives of institutions of 15 Erasmus+ participants
- Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia
- Progress on implementation of the recommendations of the Paris Youth Conference discussed

**Nov 24-26, Skopje**

**Civil Society Forum**

- Regional civil society organisations and think tanks
- State of democracy and rule of law discussed

**Nov 29, Warsaw**

**Annual Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the V4 and WB6**

- Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the WB6 and V4
- High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
- Representatives of Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Slovenia and Italy
- V4 supported the WB6 EU integration and their effort in the fight against corruption and in managing the migrations

**Dec 6–12, Brussels**

**Annual Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the V4 and WB6**

- WB6 Ministers of Transport; DG NEAR and DG MOVE Commissioners
- Representatives of SEETO, RCC and IFIs
- Agreement regarding the text of the Transport Community Treaty reached

**Dec 16, Brdo**

**EU-WB Ministerial Forum on Justice and Home Affairs**

- WB6, Slovenia and Slovakia Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs
- Representatives of the EU, civil society, regional cooperation bodies
- The WB6 will be partners in the operational actions related to the fight against firearms trafficking

## Follow up to the Paris Summit and preparations for the Trieste Summit / Highlights

### Feb 9, Skopje

#### WB6 Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Energy

- WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Energy
- Italian Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs
- DG NEAR Commissioner
- Representatives of IFIs
- RCC Secretary General
- 50 million euro to support energy efficiency and renewable energy were allocated
- Transport Community Treaty will be signed
- Roadmap on Regional Market on Electricity and Sustainability Charter to be implemented

### March 16, Sarajevo

#### WB6 Prime Ministers meeting

- WB6 Prime Ministers
- Representatives of Italy, the EC and the EEAS
- Further progress is needed to improve border crossing procedures and infrastructure facilities
- Proposal to further economic cooperation in the WB6 announced for the Trieste Summit

### Apr 26-28, Tirana

#### Civil Society Forum

- Regional civil society organisations and think tanks
- Recommendations for the Trieste Summit formulated (youth cooperation, rule of law / anti-corruption, business environment, bilateral issues)

**Jun 14-16, Paris**  
Joint Science Conference

- National Academies and Rector' Conferences and Universities of WB6, Austria, Germany, Italy and Slovenia; representatives of France, Italy and the EC; RCC; regional and EU scientists and experts
- Recommendations for the Trieste summit agreed upon (to establish the WB Research Foundation and to develop a WB Action Plan for Smart Growth)

**July 12: The Western Balkans Summit in Trieste**

**Participants:**

- WB6: Presidents and Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Economy
- EU: EC President and V.-President, DG NEAR and DG MOVE Commissioners, HR of the EU Foreign Policy and Security Affairs
- Austria, Croatia, Germany, France, Italy, Slovenia and the United Kingdom: Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Economy
- International financial institutions

**Topics:**

- Connectivity agenda
- Transport Community
- Rule of law and fight against corruption
- Regional economic integration
- SMEs development
- Education and science

**Commitments:**

- Treaty Establishing Transport Community signed
- Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area adopted
- Joint Declaration Against Corruption agreed upon
- 7 additional connectivity investment projects agreed upon

## 2017

- A grant for co-financing and the balance loans from the EIB and the EBRD provided
- Connectivity Europe Facility (CEF) mobilized for the first time
- Digital Summit to be held
- 48 million euro will be provided for SMEs through WB EDIF
- Western Balkans Research Foundation to be established

### July 11-12: The Civil Society Forum in Trieste

#### Highlight:

- Recommendations on regional cooperation and bilateral relations, rule of law / anti- corruption, youth cooperation, business climate, environment, and more efficient communications of the Berlin Process were presented

### July 12: The Business Forum in Trieste

#### Highlight:

- The Secretariat of the WB6 CIF inaugurated

### July 12: The Youth Conference in Trieste

#### Highlight:

- The work of RYCO, the Young Civil Servants Scheme, Erasmus + programme discussed



**Follow up to the Trieste Summit and preparations  
for the London Summit / Highlights**

**August 26, Durres**

**WB6 Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Energy Informal meeting  
of WB6 Prime Ministers**

- WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs
- DG NEAR Commissioner
- 115-point plan - a road map to deepen regional economic cooperation agreed upon

**Sep 20, New York**

**Meeting of the WB Ministers of Foreign Affairs in New York**

- WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs
- DG NEAR Commissioner
- RCC Secretary General
- MAP for the REA was discussed

**Oct 26, Sofia**

**EU – Western Balkans Justice and Home Affairs ministerial forum in Sofia**

- Ministers for Justice and Home Affairs of WB6, Estonia, Bulgaria and Austria
- DG HOME and DG JUST Commissioners
- Ensuring effective border management and fighting migrant smuggling are top priorities
- It is necessary to strengthen operational partnership to efficiently and effectively address counter-terrorism and radicalisation, and transnational organised crime

### Oct 31, Brussels

#### Meeting of MAP coordinators for the REA

- WB6 MAP coordinators
- Representatives of the EU institutions, RCC, CEFTA and WB6 CIF, the World Bank and the EBRD
- Full implementation of the Action plan and the formation of the regional economic area would begin in 2023
- RCC to work on mutual recognition of professional and academic qualifications, on single roaming space, on regional investment reform agenda; and to co-organise the Digital Summit

### Dec 18, Brussels

#### Meeting of the Berlin Process Sherpas

- WB6 official representatives
- Representatives of the DG NEAR
- RCC Secretary General
- Monitoring reports on MAP for the REA and Connectivity agenda implementation plans presented
- The WB6 presented plans for the coming months for implementation of the Connectivity agenda, for MAP for the REA and for the related reforms

## Follow up to the Trieste Summit and preparations for the London Summit / Highlights

### Jan 24 – 26, Kolasin Regional Meeting on Security

- Representatives of WB6 Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Ministries of Interior/ Security and Ministries of Finance
- UK Summit team, Home Office
- EU Delegation to Montenegro, RCC, MARRI
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- Coordination among the WB6 Ministries of Interior and with other relevant structures involved in strengthening security in the Western Balkans region, in the field of combating transnational organized crime, money laundering and terrorism
- Exchange of views regarding the inclusion of the topic of the WB region security in the London Summit agenda

### Feb 16-18, Skopje Digital Summit Preparatory Meeting and Exchange on REA Structures

- Representatives of WB6 Ministries of Foreign Affairs and institutions in charge of digital agenda
- GIZ ORF EUI Integration
- The meeting kickstarted cooperation of the representatives from institutions in charge of digital agenda and produced a platform for exchange of ideas

### Feb 26, London WB Investment Summit

- Prime ministers of the WB6 and Bulgaria
- Representatives of the EC, EBRD and other IFIs, RCC and WB6 CIF
- Establishment of the REA is understood to be the key element of the “soft connectivity”

### Mar 16, Sarajevo

#### Meeting (informal) of the WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs

- WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs
- UK Minister for Europe, UK Summit coordinator
- DG NEAR Director General
- Representative of the Bulgarian Presidency
- RCC and GIZ ORF EU Integration
- Progress on the Trieste commitments was assessed
- Rule of law, bilateral issues and reconciliation were emphasized as critical to the region's EU integration, in light of the upcoming London Summit

### Mar 16, Sarajevo

#### Conference of the WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs

- WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs
- The list of projects selected for funding by the Western Balkans Fund was approved

### Mar 19-20, Sarajevo

#### Preparatory meeting for the London Summit

- Representatives of WB6 Ministries of Foreign Affairs
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- Information exchange on progress regarding Transport Community and REA
- The EU Strategy for the WB, priorities and program of the EU – WB Summit in Sofia, and expectations and deliverables of the WB Summit in London were discussed

### Apr 18-19, Skopje Western Balkans Digital Summit

- Prime ministers of the WB6
- Ministers of the WB6
- Representative of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy
- DG NEAR and DG CONNECT Commissioners
- Representatives of RCC and EIB
- The Digital Agenda Flagship initiative was welcomed
- Readiness expressed to set up a regional framework for recognition of certificates of electronic signature and facilitation of cross-border trusted services
- The importance of extending the scope of the Regional Roaming Agreement and of establishing cooperation with the European Union Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) was

### Apr 26, Vienna Preparatory meeting for the London Summit

- UK Summit coordinator and his team
- Civil Society Forum of the WB
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- The Civil Society Forum policy briefs, prepared in accordance with the topics of the London Summit were presented to the UK Summit team and discussed

### Apr 27, Skopje Preparatory meeting for the London Summit

- WB6 Head of States
- Presidents of Croatia and Slovenia
- Prime Minister of Bulgaria
- European Council President
- Responsibility of the WB6 to strengthen the rule of law, fundamental human rights, efficient judiciary, good governance, the fight against corruption and organized crime was underlined
- The importance of refraining from polarising populist and nationalist rhetoric or activity that may increase tension in bilateral and regional relations was stressed

**May 28-29, Tirana**

Preparatory meeting for the London Summit

- Representatives of WB6 Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Interior Ministers
- UK Summit team
- Ambassadors of Germany and the UK
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- Update on preparations for the London Summit and working sessions on the expected outcomes of the Summit

**May 30 – Jun 1, Rome**

Joint Science Conference

- National Academies and Rectors' Conferences of WB6 and member-states participating in the Process
- Recommendations prepared for the London Summit on smart growth, convergence and cohesion, and cooperation

**Jun 14, Brussels**

Joint Working Group on Recognition of Ac. Qualifications

- Representatives of the Ministries of Education of the WB6
- Agreements on principles and steps towards mutual recognition of academic qualifications

**Jun 25-26, Sofia**

Digital Assembly

- Representative of the subject WB6 ministries
- DG CONNECT Commissioner
- RCC Secretary General
- The Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans was launched
- Under the WBIF, 30 million euros in EU grants will be made available to deploy broadband infrastructure in the region

### Jun 26, Brussels

#### Ministerial meeting of the WB platforms on Education and Training & Research and Innovation

- WB6 Ministers of Education and Science
- Representatives of the EC, RCC, OECD, RYCO, ETF and WBAA
- A set of key principles on automatic recognition of academic qualifications in the Western Balkans was endorsed

### Jun 29 – Jul 1, Novi Sad

#### Regional Youth Forum

- WB6 youth representatives
- Prime Minister of Serbia
- RYCO Secretary General
- Mayors of Novi Sad and Tirana
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- Models of future regional cooperation based on reconciliation and mutual understanding were discussed

### Jul 4, Vienna

#### Economy Ministers meeting

- WB6 Economy and Finance Ministers
- Representatives of Berlin Process governments (EU member states), EC, the IFIs, regional and international organisations
- Participants welcomed progress towards setup of the WBRF, in implementation of MAP REA, the new guarantee instrument by the EC under WBIF
- Addressing skill gaps in the context of digitalisation within the Berlin Process was discussed

### Jul 2 – Jul 4, Berlin

#### Regional conference “New Dynamics of TVET in the WB”

- WB6 Education/Labour Ministers and other relevant participants from the WB
- German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
- The necessary adjustments of the regional technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in the light of globalisation and digitalisation were discussed
- A joint Communiqué was prepared

### July 9–10: The Western Balkans Summit in London

#### Participants:

- WB6: Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior (and Security) and Economy
- Prime Ministers of Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Poland, Slovenia and the United Kingdom and representatives of the French President and the Italian Prime Minister
- Ministers (and/or representatives) of Foreign Affairs, Interior (and Security) and Economy of Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Greece, France, Italy, Poland, Slovenia and the United Kingdom
- EU: HR of the EU Foreign Policy and Security Affairs, DG NEAR Commissioner and other representatives of EU institutions
- International financial institutions

#### Topics:

- Security issues
- Regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations, missing persons and war crimes
- Fight against corruption
- Digitalisation – youth education

#### Commitments:

- Principles of regional cooperation in information-exchange for law enforcement agreed upon (Declaration)
- Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition in the WB by 2024 agreed upon
- Declarations on regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations, on missing persons, and on war crimes were signed and stocktaking of progress in resolution of bilateral issues agreed upon
- Anti-corruption commitments were made
- The Berlin Process Security Commitments Steering Group was set up
- Funds were pledged for digitalisation of schools and for strengthening of democracy in the WB



2018

## July 9: The Civil Society and Youth Forum in London

### Highlights

- The participants discussed youth issues and the future of the Berlin Process
- The Civil Society Forum of the Western Balkans presented recommendations for the continuation of the Berlin Process to the Forum and at the Meeting of the Berlin Process Foreign Ministers – increased focus on the rule of law, migrations and green topics, structured monitoring of implementation of commitments and increased regional ownership

## Follow up to the London Summit and preparations for the Poznan Summit / Highlights

### Apr 27, Skopje Brdo-Brijuni Process Meeting

- WB6 Presidents and Prime Ministers
- Presidents of Croatia and Slovenia
- EC President
- Synergy of the Process with the Berlin Process, as well as the responsibility of the WB6 for the rule of law, protection of human rights and the importance of refraining from nationalistic rhetoric were stressed

### Sep 27, New York

- WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs
- HR of the EU Foreign Policy and Security Affairs
- DG NEAR Commissioner
- Continuation of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue was supported

### Oct 9, Pristina

#### Regional meeting of WB6 MFAs' and Prime Ministers' offices representatives

- Representatives of WB6 Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Prime Ministers' Offices
- UK Summit Team
- Poland Summit Team, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland
- Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- Discussion on the 2019 Summit outcomes and on expectations from the 2020 Summit
- Preparations for the first stocktaking seminar on bilateral issues within the Process

### Nov 7, Tirana

#### Reflection Forum

- Albanian and EU civil society organisations and think tanks
- EU and EU member states' official representatives in Albania
- Official representatives of Albania
- RYCO
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- Discussion on Albania's EU accession process, WB6 cooperation and the results and prospects of the Berlin Process

### Nov 16, Vienna

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Stocktaking seminar on bilateral issues

- Representatives of WB6 Ministries of Foreign Affairs
- Representatives of EU member states participating in the Berlin Process
- Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria
- Regional and EU think tanks
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- Reporting procedures, templates and establishment of a system of focal points agreed upon

**Nov 20, London**

**The 1<sup>st</sup> Berlin Process Security Commitments Steering Group meeting**

- WB6 Security and Interior Ministers
- UK Summit team and Home office representatives
- Stocktaking of the commitments' implementation
- Discussion on steps to counter illegal SWLA illegal flow, violent extremism and organised crime

**Nov 28, Belgrade**

**Reflection Forum**

- Serbian and EU civil society organisations and think tanks
- EU and EU member states' official representatives in Serbia
- Official representatives of Serbia
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- Discussion on Serbia's EU accession process, WB6 cooperation and the results and prospects of the Berlin Process

## Follow up to the London Summit and preparations for the Poznan Summit / Highlights

### Jan 24, Belgrade

#### Civil Society Forum of the Western Balkans conference

- Serbian civil society organisations and think tanks
- EU and EU member states' official representatives in Serbia
- Official representatives of Serbia
- Representatives of the Poland Summit Team and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland
- Discussion on the priorities of the Poznan Summit

### Feb 15, Warsaw

#### WB6 Ministers of the European Affairs and EC meeting

- Ministers and representatives of WB6 Ministries of European integrations
- DG NEAR representatives
- Representatives of the Poland Summit Team and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland
- Enlargement perspective, European security and construction of trans-European connections were discussed

### Feb 21, Tirana

#### WB6 Ministries' of Foreign Affairs exchange with RYCO

- Representatives of WB6 Ministries of Foreign Affairs
- Representatives of RYCO
- Representatives of RCC and ReSPA
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- Exchange of information RYCO's activities and plans
- Discussion on ways of improving cooperation of RYCO with institutional bodies and other regional organizations

### Feb 25, Skopje Reflection Forum

- North Macedonian and EU civil society organisations and think tanks
- EU and EU member states' official representatives in North Macedonia
- Official representatives of North Macedonia
- GIZ ORF EU Integration

- Discussion on North Macedonia's EU accession process, WB6 cooperation and the results and prospects of the Berlin Process

### Feb 25, Tirana Roundtable with civil society

- Albanian civil society organisations and think tanks
- Representatives of the Poland Summit Team and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland

- Discussion on the priorities of the Poznan Summit

### Feb 26, Podgorica Roundtable with civil society

- Montenegrin civil society organisations and think tanks
- Representatives of the Poland Summit Team and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland

- Discussion on the priorities of the Poznan Summit

### Feb 28, Sarajevo Roundtable with civil society

- Bosnia and Herzegovina civil society organisations and think tanks
- Representatives of the Poland Summit Team and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland

- Discussion on the priorities of the Poznan Summit

### Mar 26-27, Sarajevo

#### Western Balkans Research and Innovation Meetings

- WB6 and EU experts
- DG NEAR, DG RTD and DG COMM representatives
- RCC representatives
- State of research and innovation policy in WB6 was discussed
- The next Steering Platform and Ministerial Meetings were prepared

### Mar 28, Skopje

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Stocktaking seminar on bilateral issues (in the framework of the Berlin Process)

- Representatives of WB6 Ministries of Foreign Affairs
- Representatives of Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria and of MFAs of Bulgaria and Greece
- Representatives other of EU member states participating in the Berlin Process
- Regional and EU think tanks
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- Exchange of experiences in preparing reports and ideas and proposals regarding the “Poznan report” prepared for the WB Summit in Poznan

### Apr 4-5, Belgrade

#### Digital Summit

- Ministers of information society and Digital Agenda of the WB6
- EC Digital Economy and Society Commissioner
- RCC and EIB
- Regional and EU experts and businesses
- Digital skills, networks and connectivity, trust and security and digital economy and society were discussed
- Regional Roaming Agreement was signed

### Apr 11-12, Warsaw

#### Berlin Process Ministers of Foreign Affairs meeting

- WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs
- Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland
- Representatives of RYCO
- Employment, education, culture, entrepreneurship and young people's role in building good neighbourly relations in the region were discussed

### Apr 16-17

#### Civil Society Forum Tirana

- WB6 civil society organisations and think tanks
- ESC President
- EEAS Director
- Representative of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Albania
- Representatives of the Poland Summit Team and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland
- RCC representatives
- The need for the civil society to have a prominent role in promoting EU integration, regional cooperation and social dialogue in the WB6 was stressed

### Apr 24, Sarajevo

#### Regional meeting of WB6 MFAs' and Prime Ministers' offices representatives

- Representatives of WB6 Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Prime Ministers' Offices
- Representatives of the Poland Summit Team and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland
- DG NEAR, RCC and MARRI representatives
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- Stocktaking of implementation of the Berlin Process commitments
- Planning for the Poznan Summit

### Apr 24-25

#### Roundtable with civil society Pristina

- Kosovo civil society organisations and think tanks
- Representatives of the Poland Summit Team and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland
- Discussion on the priorities of the Poznan Summit

### May 8-9, Tirana

#### Brdo-Brijuni Process Meeting

- WB6 Presidents and Prime Ministers
- Presidents of Croatia and Slovenia
- President of Poland
- A possibility of a new, unique regional approach to the WB6 EU accession was discussed
- The importance of truth- and trust-based reconciliation and solution of lingering issues was stressed

### May 10, Belgrade

#### Regional Meeting of the WB6 Ministries Foreign Affairs and the Civil Society Forum of the Western Balkans

- Representatives of WB6 Ministries of Foreign Affairs
- Civil Society Forum of the WB
- Representatives of the Poland Summit Team and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- The Civil Society Forum of the WB policy briefs, prepared on accordance with the topics of the Poznan Summit were presented to the regional MFAs and the Poznan Summit team and discussed

### May 13-14

#### Think tank Forum, Skopje

- WB6 and Polish think tanks
- Representatives of the Poland Summit Team and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland
- DG NEAR representatives
- The WB prospects for EU accession, regional integration, bilateral relations and democratization in the region were discussed



### **May 15-16, Belgrade**

#### **Meeting of foreign ministers of the Visegrad Group (V4) and the Western Balkans 2019**

- WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs
- V4 countries Ministers of Foreign Affairs
- Representative of EEAS, EC and of the Romanian Presidency of EU Council
- Western Balkans' EU integration prospects and common European future were discussed

### **May 18, Warsaw**

#### **Preparatory meeting for the Western Balkans Summit in Poznan**

- Representatives of WB6 Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Prime Ministers' Offices
- Representatives of the Poland Summit Team and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland
- DG NEAR, RCC and OECD
- GIZ ORF EU Integration
- Agreements about the structure and the content of the Summit and side events
- Discussions about potential deliverables of the Summit

### **May 28-30, London**

#### **Joint Science Conference**

- National Academies' and Rectors' Conferences of WB6 and member-states participating in the Process
- Recommendations prepared for the Poznan Summit on responsibility of science in shaping social changes in the WB and SEE and better communication of scientific content in digital era

### May 29, Warsaw

#### International conference: Western Balkans: infrastructure and energy from a geopolitical perspective

- Representatives of WB6 and EU governments
- Civil society organisations and think tanks from the WB6 and the EU
- Representatives of the Poland Summit Team and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland
- Expert debate on EU integration of the WB6 focusing on infrastructure and energy

### Jun 3-4, Belgrade

#### Ministerial Meeting of the Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training

- Ministers of education of WB6
- DG EAC Commissioner
- State of WB6 educational systems and the latest EU initiatives were reviewed, reform priorities were identified and follow-up actions to deepen regional cooperation were agreed

### Jun 4-6, Rzeszov

#### Forum of cities and regions investing in WB – Investing in Europe

- Representatives of WB6, DG NEAR, DG ENER, RCC
- Official representatives of Poland
- Networks of associations of local authorities of WB6 (NALAS) and of Poland and international experts
- Support for the Western Balkans in the process of European integration and economic transformation was discussed
- The Polish participants shared their experiences in IPA projects
- Territorial cooperation programmes 2020+ were discussed

2019

**Jun 12, Skopje**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Berlin Process Security Commitments Steering Group Meeting**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ WB6 Security and Interior Ministers</li><li>■ UK Summit team and Home office representatives</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Stocktaking of the commitments' implementation</li><li>■ Discussion on security sectors' reforms</li></ul> |
|--|--|

**July 5: The Western Balkans Summit in Poznan**

**Participants:**

- WB6 Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior (and Security) and Economy
- Prime Ministers (and/or representatives) of Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Slovenia and United Kingdom
- Ministers (and/or representatives) of Foreign Affairs, Interior (and Security) and Economy of WB 6 and EU member states involved in the Berlin Process
- EU: HR of the EU Foreign Policy and Security Affairs, DG NEAR and DG MOVE Commissioners and other representatives of EU institutions
- International financial institutions

**Topics:**

- Economy
- Connectivity
- Security cooperation
- Corruption
- Environment and climate

### Commitments:

- A new Connectivity package was put forward
- Letters of Intent were signed with international financial institutions to reinforce the WB EDIF by additional financial resources in support of the WB SMEs
- Action Plan for the implementation of the Regional Rail Strategy was put forward
- The EC announced new grants to support the development of national broadband networks and improve digital connectivity in WB6
- The EC launched a Guarantee Instrument under WBIF to leverage investments in sustainable development and regional integration
- Roma Integration Declaration was endorsed
- A joint Statement on “Clean Energy Transition in the Western Balkans” was endorsed
- The EC pledged to support the region’s efforts to develop a Green Agenda for the Western Balkans
- Memorandum on Cooperation Framework on the SEE International Institute for Sustainable Technologies was signed

### July 3-4: Think tank Forum & Civil Society Forum

### Highlights

- The issues of regional cooperation, social-economic issues, the rule of law and the EU enlargement policy were discussed at the Think Tank Forum
- Fight against corruption, local democratisation initiatives, environment, hybrid threats, cultural cooperation and reconciliation were discussed at the Civil Society Forum
- The Civil Society Forum representatives presented recommendations for improving the state of democracy in the region, rule of law, bilateral issues, EU enlargement, media freedom and the future of the Berlin Process at the Meeting of the Berlin Process Foreign Ministers

2019

#### July 4: Business Forum

##### Highlights

- REA MAP, workplace skills for the future, digital society in the WB, social entrepreneurship and energy market were discussed

#### Follow up to the Poznan Summit and preparations for the 2020 Summit / Highlights

##### | Sep 29, New York

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ WB6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs</li><li>■ HR of the EU Foreign Policy and Security Affairs</li><li>■ DG NEAR Commissioner</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Continuation of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue was supported</li></ul> |
|--|--|

## The achievements and the future of the Berlin Process

The Berlin Process annual summits and the numerous meetings held related to them intensified the interaction between the EU and the WB high-level politicians and succeeded in retaining the focus of the EU on the WB.

Through conditioning the infrastructure investments with implementation of the “soft measures”, the Process encouraged the WB6 to rev up the legal and regulatory reforms in line with the acquis. In this sense, it contributed to their rapprochement to the EU and maintained the transformative influence of the Union in the region.

The Berlin Process has also galvanized regional cooperation in resolving the problems of regional relevance – such as the infrastructure gap, region-wide youth unemployment, low competitiveness of economies and distant prospects of economic convergence with the EU, slow progress in institutional and social reconciliation, alongside a number of lingering bilateral issues, and, as of lately, security issues – by using a regional approach.

Finally, the Process succeeded in inspiring the WB6 leaders to cooperate and initiate new forms of interlinking. Such is the example of the joint work on prioritising the connectivity agenda projects for financing, or the initiatives to set up new, common institutions furthering the interweaving of businesses, youth and civil societies; or the shared enthusiasm for the prospect of the Transport Community, Regional Economic Area, and for other institutions in the making. This initiative of the WB leaders to champion various cooperation initiatives led the region to begin taking over ownership of the Process.

The Berlin Process was initially projected to last for four years, but it has continued beyond the London Summit. The number of EU member states taking part in the Process has been growing by year – Poland hosted the 2019 Summit and Bulgaria joined as co-host of the 2020 Summit. The responsibility of the WB6 for the Berlin Process will increase as North Macedonia will be the other co-host in 2020. Following the agreement of regional leaders in Poznan, the WB6 Parliaments will be welcomed as active actors of the Process. Regional and EU experts suggest that the Process should in the future also include the topics of the rule of law, media freedom, migrations and green topics; that the actors involved in implementation of the Process’ projects and initiatives report more transparently, and that civil society and businesses participation be integrated in the formal part of the summits.

# Milestones

## 2014

- Brdo-Brijuni Process meeting in Dubrovnik – Chancellor Merkel announced the Summit in Berlin
- **August 28: The Western Balkans Summit in Berlin**

## 2015

- **August 27: The Western Balkans Summit in Vienna**
- August 27: The Civil Society Forum in Vienna
- August 27: The Business Forum in Vienna
- Agreement to set up Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) is signed
- WB6 Chamber Investment Forum (WB6 CIF) established
- Energy soft measures agreed upon
- Roadmap for regional electricity market for the WB6 agreed upon
- Declaration on Bilateral Issues signed
- Agreement to set up Western Balkans Fund (WBF) signed
- 4 energy investment projects and 6 transport investment projects agreed upon

## 2016

- **July 4: The Western Balkans Summit in Paris**
- July 4: The Civil Society Forum in Paris
- July 4: The Business Forum in Paris
- July 4: The Youth Forum in Paris
- WB Sustainable Charter agreed upon
- Young Civil Servants Pilot Scheme (YCSPS) initiated
- 3 transport investment projects agreed upon
- Green for Growth Fund: hydropower and other renewable energy schemes for the WB agreed upon
- Regional Energy Efficiency Programme (REEP) for the WB/REEP Plus agreed upon
- WB Sustainable Charter agreed upon

## 2017

- March 16: WB6 Prime Ministers meeting in Sarajevo – the 1st meeting of the WB PMs in the region
- July 11: The Civil Society Forum in Trieste
- July 11: The Youth Forum in Trieste
- July 11: The Business Forum in Trieste
- **July 12: The Western Balkans Summit in Trieste**
- One energy investment project 6 transport investment projects agreed upon
- Western Balkan Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (WB EDIF) launched
- Green for Growth Fund: hydropower and other renewable energy schemes for the WB agreed upon
- Joint Declaration Against Corruption signed
- Consolidated Multi-Annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area (REA) in the WB6 presented
- Establishment of Western Balkans Research Foundation (WBRF) agreed upon
- WB6 CIF Secretariat inaugurated
- WB Core Transport Network Soft Measures agreed upon
- First meeting of coordinators for the Western Balkans Regional Economic Area
- RYCO and WBF launch 1st calls for proposals

## 2018

- Digital Agenda agreed upon, 30 million euros allocated for broadband deployment in the WB
- The Civil Society Forum of the WB contributed to preparation of the Summit and to design of its outputs
- 9 transport connectivity and 2 technical assistance projects agreed upon (within the EU-WB Sofia Summit)
- The responsibility of the WB6 for the rule of law, protection of human rights and good governance and the importance of refraining from populist and nationalist rhetoric were stressed (Brdo- Brijuni Summit)
- July 9: The Civil Society and Youth Forum in London
- **July 9-10: The Western Balkans Summit in London**
- Progress in monitoring of the Berlin Process results: 1st meeting of Security Commitments Steering Group and 1st Stocktaking Seminar on Bilateral Issues



## 2019

- Participation of civil society in the Berlin Process intensified
- Regional Roaming Agreement signed
- Roma Integration Declaration endorsed
- July 3-4: Think Tank Forum and Civil Society Forum in Poznan
- July 4: Business Forum in Poznan
- **July 3-4: The Western Balkans Summit in Poznan**
- 6 transport and 2 energy projects agreed upon
- Memorandum on Cooperation Framework on the SEE International Institute for Sustainable Technologies signed

# Facts and Figures

## The participants

### ■ 4 sides in the process

- The WB6
- EU member states (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, United Kingdom)
- EU institutions (EC, EEAS)
- International financial institutions

### ■ 4 types of Western Balkans participants:

- High official representatives of the WB6
- Civil society – think tanks and activist organisations
- Youth organisations
- Businesses and their associations

## Reasons

### ■ 4 goals of the process:

- Resolution of outstanding bilateral and internal issues
- Achieving reconciliation within and between the societies in the region
- Enhancing regional economic cooperation
- Laying the foundations for sustainable growth

## Operations

### ■ 6 Western Balkans Summits:

- Berlin (2014), Vienna (2015), Paris (2016), Trieste (2017), London (2018), Poznan (2019)

### ■ 100+ preparatory and follow up meetings, bringing together the Western Balkans actors

## Results

- **3 types of outputs – economic, political and security and social cooperation projects**
- **Economic cooperation projects:**
  - 32 transport projects
  - 7 energy projects
  - 2 sustainability programmes (energy, renewables)
  - Broadband infrastructure investment (digital)
  - Soft measures in energy and transport
  - WB6 Chamber Investment Forum
  - Regional Economic Area
  - Transport Community
  - SMEs support via WB EDIF
  - WB Research Foundation
  - SEE International Institute for Sustainable Technologies
- **Political and security cooperation projects**
  - Young civil servants pilot scheme, Declaration on Bilateral Issues, Joint Declarations on Regional Cooperation and Good Neighbourly Relations, Declaration on Missing Persons and on War Crimes, Roadmap to Solution to Illicit SALW, Anti-corruption Commitments, Security Commitments Steering Group
- **Social cooperation projects:**
  - Regional Youth Cooperation Office, Western Balkans Fund

## Achievements

- **Galvanised regional cooperation**
- **Brought the region closer to the EU**

