



Technical Assistance to Connectivity in the Western Balkans - 2 NEAR/2022/EA-RP/0081

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

Technical assistance for the preparation of due diligence of detailed design and cost estimate and gap analysis of the existing feasibility study, ESIA and design for Foča-Hum in BiH

The subject sub-project is still ongoing. The description that follows is for information purposes only and subject to the sub-project's completion.

Partners:

- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
- World Bank (WB)
- Public Enterprise "Putevi Republike Srpske"

Budget of Technical Assistance:

- Euro 625,000

EU contribution¹:

- As above (100%)

Technical Assistance provided by:

- CONNECTA 2 (Technical Assistance to Connectivity in the Western Balkans - 2)

Transport

The Foča - Hum Project represents a significant initiative to enhance connectivity and resilience along the Sarajevo - Podgorica route, part of the extended TEN-T Route 2b network in the Western Balkans. As a flagship project under the EU Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans 2021–2027, it plays a pivotal role in advancing the region's integration and economic growth.

Providing the shortest connection between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, the Foča - Hum is also the shortest route from Central Europe to Albania via Corridor Vc in Bosnia and Herzegovina and then through Montenegro. The road is currently in poor condition and poses numerous safety risks.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank are considering providing financing for rehabilitating and upgrading critical road sections between Brod na Drini (Foča) and Hum (Šćepan Polje).

The project prioritizes resilience and sustainability by integrating high safety specifications, addressing climate-related risks, and incorporating measures to prevent landslides and flooding in the hilly terrain. It includes slope protection, enhanced drainage systems and viaducts, ensuring the road withstands extreme weather events. Additionally, the improved road will facilitate better winter maintenance and boost local and cross-border transport efficiency.

Recognizing the proximity to internationally significant areas such as the Nature Park Tara and the UNESCO Biosphere, the project emphasizes environmental and social sustainability. It includes measures to mitigate potential impacts on sensitive ecosystems while fostering socio-economic benefits for the surrounding communities.



The **objectives of CONNECTA 2's technical assistance** are to:

- Identify gaps in the design, technical assessments, and environmental and social considerations of the Foča - Hum Project that need to be addressed to meet the standards of the EBRD, World Bank, and EU legislation;
- Analyse the project's resilience to climate risks, including landslides, flooding and extreme weather events, and propose additional measures to ensure alignment with the Paris Agreement and best climate adaptation practices;
- Evaluate the economic, social, and environmental impacts of the project, ensuring the integration of road safety, gender considerations and stakeholder engagement to support sustainable regional connectivity and integration.

Results to be achieved:

- Due diligence assessment;
- Technical and economic evaluation;
- Climate resilience analysis;
- Environmental and social impact assessment;
- Gender workforce analysis;
- Preparation of tender documentation.

¹EU contribution concerns only Technical Assistance services for project development

Start date: January, 2025

Duration: 8 months

Key recommendations—further actions:

(to be updated after the sub-project is completed)



Benefits expected due to Technical Assistance:

- **Infrastructure Improvements and Optimization:**
Reduce the journey time and vehicle operating costs of road users between two regional capitals;
Enhance the efficiency and capacity of key transport corridors to support regional development.
- **Regulatory Framework Enhancement:**
Align national policies with EU standards to facilitate seamless integration and investment.
- **Investment Prioritization:**
Identify and promote high-impact projects to attract funding and accelerate implementation.
- **Risk Mitigation Strategies:**
Develop measures to address environmental, financial, and operational risks in infrastructure projects.
- **Sustainability and Resilience:**
Support climate adaptation and green initiatives to ensure long-term project viability.

Impacts anticipated:

- **Infrastructure Improvements and Optimization:**
 - Improved connectivity and efficiency;
 - Reduced journey times;
 - Lower operational costs for road users;
 - Enhanced regional integration.
- **Regulatory Framework Enhancement:**
 - Aligned policies with EU standards;
 - Greater investor confidence.
- **Investment Prioritization:**
 - Efficient allocation of resources;
 - Faster project implementation;
 - Increased funding opportunities.
- **Risk Mitigation Strategies:**
 - Reduced environmental and financial risks;
 - Enhanced resilience to climate impacts;
 - Better contingency planning;
 - Increased project sustainability;
 - Lower long-term costs.
- **Sustainability and Resilience:**
 - Enhanced climate adaptation;
 - Support for long-term economic growth.