



WESTERN BALKANS INTEGRATED BORDER MANAGEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING FACILITY (WBIBM)

Background

The increasingly complex mixed migration dynamics in the WB, coupled with the operational challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic since the beginning of 2020, have revealed important institutional needs and gaps in the field of border management and border security in the region, including: *digitalization of border and identity (ID) management; identity and travel document fraud, including the lack of related regional trends analyses; smuggling and trafficking in persons; gaps in gender- and protection-sensitive and humanitarian border management; and management of travellers potentially ill with COVID-19.*

In order to address these identified gaps, and with the aim to support the WB authorities to effectively manage their borders and respond to border security challenges while aligning their legal and operational frameworks with the international and European Union (EU) standards, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) will implement the project through a combination of policy, dialogue and capacity-building interventions tailored to the needs of each WB beneficiary, while fostering interinstitutional coordination and intra-regional cooperation and harmonization. Conceptualized as an **Integrated Border Management Capacity Building Facility (WBIBM)**, the project will provide sufficient flexibility and adaptability to meet the specific, evolving needs of the beneficiaries, while ensuring complementarity and inter-operability with other existing initiatives and Facilities.

Through this project, IOM will contribute to enhancing border management among WB authorities and supporting their effective rights-based response to border security challenges through digitalization of the identity and border management systems and procedures; building capacity in addressing document and identity fraud, including through regional trend analysis; facilitating the adoption and implementation of international standards related to passenger data (API/PNR); development of relevant policy and operational guidelines on humanitarian border management and management of ill travellers potentially ill with COVID-19 at Points of Entry (PoEs); and development of robust fundamental rights monitoring and compliance mechanisms at international borders.

The 36-month project will be implemented in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Republic of Serbia and Kosovo*, under the overall coordination and management of IOM Belgrade.

BUDGET:

DKK 22,400,000.00

DONOR:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark

IMPLEMENTED BY:

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

DURATION:

36 months

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE:

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo*

BENEFICIARIES:

Ministry of Interior of Albania, Ministry of Interior and Service for Foreigners' Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ministry of Interior of Montenegro, Ministry of Interior of North Macedonia, Ministry of Interior of Serbia, Ministry of Interior of Kosovo* and migrants as indirect beneficiaries

The overall objective of this programme is to support the authorities in the Western Balkans (WB) to effectively manage their borders and respond to border security challenges mindful of migrant protection principles, through the **Western Balkans Integrated Border Management Capacity Building Facility (WBIBM)**



Outcome 1

WB authorities implement successfully border management actions funded by the WBIBM Facility, adapted to their needs, and in line with international and European migrant protection standards

At the start of the implementation period, IOM will conduct a review of all available border management-related recommendations and strategies the organization has formulated in the region over the past few years. Consequently, IOM consult with beneficiary authorities to review these recommendations, identify pending actions, assess and identify the key, newly emerged needs and priorities of the beneficiaries. In assessing the requests from the authorities, priority will be given to activities that focus on capacity building and digitalization of border management procedures, while also promoting engagement and cooperation within the region and with the EU and EU Member States.

Outcome 2

Strengthened digitalization of ID management in the Western Balkans, in line with EU standards, leads to improved border management in the region

Under the WBIBM Facility, IOM will contribute to the further digitalization of ID and border management procedures and systems by developing necessary upgrades of the relevant IT systems and procuring adequate equipment.

IOM will also provide support to authorities through legal and innovative technical upgrades and IT tools. In addition to facilitating cross-border movement for travellers, such improvements will also facilitate the registration of migrants, thus reducing the possibility to be left in a legal limbo and without access to protection and services.

Additionally, IOM will support beneficiaries in strengthening and upgrading specific systems for inter-institutional coordination related to the management of ill-travellers at PoE, including timely information exchange, as a response to the current COVID-19 pandemic, with due regard to privacy and protection of personal data.

Outcome 3

Border management agencies have enhanced operational and analytical capacities to address and mitigate border security and transnational organized crime challenges in the mixed migration context

IOM will provide support to select beneficiaries in developing appropriate operational frameworks on identity and travel document fraud and facilitate the development and implementation of API/PNR systems also by supporting the elaboration of national laws and operational capacities. Furthermore, IOM will support the roll-out of the Document Examination Support Centre (DESC) initiative across the region, coupled with the procurement of advanced and cost-effective secondary inspection systems on document examination. Lastly, IOM will contribute to the continuous and effective functioning of existing inter-institutional mechanisms for the identification, referral and assistance of potential victims of organized crime, including trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants.

Outcome 4

Border management procedures in the WB are gender-, protection-sensitive and fundamental rights compliant, in line with EU and international standards

To support the operationalization and implementation of the developed frameworks, under the WBIBM Facility, IOM will provide support to transpose, adapt, digitalize and roll-out training curricula on humanitarian border management and management of ill-travellers at PoEs within the national border management systems. The support will result in a regional network of fundamental rights monitoring focal points, the development of a number of operational guidelines on the fundamental rights monitoring mechanism, as well as in the number of rights compliant code of conduct for border officials being developed or updated. Also, a training packages in digital version will be available for migration management officials through the IOM's e-learning platform (IOM e-campus) or the national e-training platforms, if available. Special focus will be placed on health and border management related trainings. IOM will support the development of gender- and protection-sensitive operational frameworks on registration and referral of migrants and management of ill-travellers at PoEs.

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