

7 reasons to invest in the Western Balkans

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The six countries of the Western Balkans – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia – face formidable challenges but also offer untapped potential, exciting growth prospects and promising opportunities.

1

Prospective EU membership

All the countries have applied for EU membership. While the process is at different stages, the past year has seen further progress in most countries in the EU enlargement process.

3

Strategic location

The region is the bridge between northern and southern Europe with a growing network of transport links.

5

Diverse economies

A diverse economy is also one that allows human capital development to expand in many different directions.

7

Growth drivers

Several factors are in place in the Western Balkans which should boost growth:

- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)
- Trade integration within the region and the global economy
- Rich energy resources
- Improvement of the transport infrastructure
- Innovation towards the technology frontier

2

Macroeconomic stability

All the countries enjoy a high degree of macroeconomic stability with fixed or tightly controlled exchange rates and very low inflation.

4

Favourable taxes and cost

Most countries have made significant progress in reforming their tax systems. All Western Balkans countries have lower unit labour costs compared to the EU average.

6

Well-educated population

Basic education levels and literacy rates are high by international standards.

Did you know?

- Albania's Patos Marinza is the biggest on-shore oil field in Europe
- Serbia, Montenegro and FYR Macedonia also boast on- and offshore oil resources
- Macedonia's Ilovitza, the first mining greenfield project in the Balkans in 20 years, could become a producing mine by 2018
- Less than 40 per cent of hydropower potential of Bosnia and Herzegovina is being exploited

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