

## Investing in Digitalisation in the Western Balkans

09:00 – 13:00

*followed by*

### Donor Coordination Meeting

## Common Regional Market in the Western Balkans - Regional Digital Area

14:15 – 16:50

Sarajevo, Swissôtel, Vrbanja 1

**28<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

### Agenda

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08:30 – 09:00 **Registration**

09:00 – 09:20 **Welcome Remarks**

- Christoph Denk, Managing Director, Policy Strategy and Delivery, EBRD
- Matteo Rivellini, Head of Enlargement Division, EIB Global
- Majlinda Bregu, Secretary General, Regional Cooperation Council

09:20 – 10:35 **Panel I: Developing a thriving digital economy in the Western Balkans**

Chair: Manuela Naessl, Head of Bosnia and Herzegovina, EBRD

#### Panel

- HTec (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina): Digitalisation as a generator of new revenue streams, Miroslav Virjevic
- Gjirafa (Western Balkans): Perspectives from an e-commerce platform in the region, Mergim Cahani
- Invenio Partners (Southeast Europe): Perspectives from a PE & growth equity fund, Elvin Guri
- Raiffeisen Bank, Bosnia and Herzegovina, partner Bank of GoDigital in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Banks as partners to deliver the digital transition of SMEs, Rainer Schnabl
- EIB: Supporting the development of the digital sector in the Western Balkans region: experiences with the Digital Innovation and Scale-up Initiative (DISC), Harald Gruber, Head of the Digital Infrastructure Division

*Q&A (10min)*

10:35 – 10:50 **Coffee break**



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**10:50 – 12:05 Panel II: The role of digital skills and digital ecosystems to support the digitalisation of SMEs**

Intro: Digital skills gap analysis of the Western Balkans, EBRD, Dragana Marjanovic

Chair: Jacek Kubas, Head Digitalisation Hub, EBRD

Panel

- Albanian ICT Association ( Albania ), Dritan Mezini
- EIB: Connect Schools Project, Patricia Castellarnau, Head of Education & Public Research Division
- ICT Cluster Vojvodina (Serbia), Milan Solaja

*Q&A (10min)*

**12:05 – 13:00 Case studies: Accelerate broadband rollout and digital connectivity in the region – private and public investment**

- Salience Consulting: Broadband development - successful implementation models, Ivan Skenderoski
- EBRD case study: Rural Broadband Rollout, role of the private sector, Ersida Docaj
- EIB case study: High speed mobile telecommunications in Serbia, Benoit Denis, Senior Economist

*Q&A (10min)*

**13:00 – 14:15 Lunch and networking**



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#### 14:15 – 14:25 **Welcome to the Donor Coordination Meeting**

- *Majlinda Bregu, Secretary General, Regional Cooperation Council*
- *DG NEAR, European Commission (tbc)*

#### 14:25 – 15:30 **High-level panel: Challenges and needs for a better digitally connected region**

*Moderated by: Regional Cooperation Council*

The high-level panel aims at highlighting key needs to support digital transformation across Western Balkans. The panel will help shedding light on the digital infrastructure investment needs as well as other soft digital needs to expedite digital transformation in the Western Balkans.

- *Western Balkan ICT Ministers by alphabetical order (5 – 7 minutes)*

#### 15:30 – 16:45 **Investment needs and prospects to support implementation of regional digital transformation**

*Moderated by: Regional Cooperation Council/European Commission (tbc)*

This panel aims to build on the discussions of the high-level panel and connect the needs with existing financing instruments and new investment potentials. Impulse interventions from DG NEAR on current digital infrastructure investments will feed into the discussion as well as interventions from donors and financing partners.

- *DG NEAR, European Commission (tbc)*
- *Interventions from IFIs and donors*

#### 16:45 – 16:50 **Closing**