

BiH DAYTON PROJECT



Council of Ministers approves talks with IBRD on \$20 million to fight COVID-19 – N1

April 7, 2020

The Council of Ministers Tuesday appointed a delegation for talks with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) over a \$20 million loan to help BiH deal with the coronavirus pandemic and its consequences.

The Council of Ministers also approved the redistribution of money from the European Union's IPA 2018, IPA 2019 and IPA 2020 funds (Instruments for Pre-Accession Assistance) towards the response to COVID-19 pandemic and migrant crisis, as proposed by the EU Delegation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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Bosnia and Herzegovina is our home. And Europe is yours. – EUSR

April 7, 2020

The [EU Delegation to BiH](#) posted the following op-ed by all EU ambassadors to BiH, the EUFOR Commander, and the Head of the EU Delegation to BiH/EU Special Representative in BiH.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is our home. And Europe is yours.

07.04.2020

It's been three weeks since the reality of the coronavirus pandemic caught up with Bosnia and Herzegovina. It feels like it has been a year!

Fighting Invisible Enemy in Solidarity

Although the EU is Bosnia and Herzegovina's largest trading partner and its largest donor, our relationship is not based exclusively on mutual economic advantage or even on geography or culture. It is based on the fundamental principle of solidarity that brought the people of Europe together in the years after the Second World War. That is the spirit in which we are working with the people and authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina today. We will never abandon this principle: without solidarity, we cannot succeed in our efforts to defeat the virus! Countries across the world, including those in Europe, have introduced quarantine measures and travel restrictions to prevent the spread of the virus. This however does not mean that they have abandoned mutual assistance. Exports of medical equipment from the EU have not been suspended: they are continuing, subject to authorisation by member states. BiH has also been invited to join, together with the Western Balkans neighbours, the Joint Procurement Agreement for urgent medical equipment together with the EU Member States. Swift steps are now needed to finalize this process.

We are also jointly working to facilitate transportation of goods across borders, inside the region and with the EU. We hope that all countries in the region will join BiH in endorsing the green lane initiative by Transport Community and the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA). It was designed to speed up the delivery of essential goods to the region, including BiH. Another 'solidarity mechanism' is the Union Civil Protection Mechanism that has just been activated to provide BiH through member state resources, with in-kind assistance.

We are in daily contact with the BiH authorities and actively coordinate with the UN, World Health Organization, international financial agencies and EUFOR.

Our single objective is to get tangible assistance directly to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina as quickly as possible.

Health First

This has been on our mind for the past three weeks as we raced against time to help purchase the most urgent medical equipment for BiH. For this purpose, last week EU Ambassador Sattler signed the first part of the €7 million worth financial package with UNDP. Deliveries are already underway: 7500 tests have been distributed, and 15000 face shields for medical workers will be delivered by the end of the week. The first 40 respirators will arrive in April and the rest will be delivered in May.

Saving Jobs too

Apart from immediate health issues, we are acutely aware of how this situation is difficult for the economy of BiH in general and small businesses in particular. The EU is mobilizing over €410 million

Categories

Current Developments

Editors' Journal

FOCUS ON: BiH Government Reform

FOCUS ON: Terrorism & Security

Foundational Documents

News Archive

Official Statements

On the Issues

Studies and Reports

Top Stories

Uncategorized

in assistance to the Western Balkans for COVID-19 response; the financial assistance to BiH will be ramped up to €80.5 million to help it tackle the effects of the virus both in terms of immediate medical needs *and* socio-economic recovery.

Personal Responsibility: #OstaniKući

Meanwhile, our EU family in BiH joined the campaign appealing to the citizens to stay home to protect the most affected and to help “flatten the curve”. This is basically about slowing down the virus to allow this society to tackle it without overburdening medical professionals and causing the collapse of the public health system.

Respect for Human and Democratic Rights

While we support necessary actions of authorities in BiH in tackling this crisis, it is of the utmost importance to maintain the right balance between the preventive measures and the respect for human and democratic rights of all citizens. In this regard, it is particularly important to ensure that the rights and needs of the vulnerable groups are fully respected and addressed in light of the current situation.

In this together

We in Europe – all of Europe – have been hit hard by this virus and we will beat it together. We will beat it by drawing on European values – the values of cooperation, transparency and solidarity. Also common sense. In the midst of this crisis – when solidarity is needed more than ever – the EU will maintain its commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Since mid-March, we and our staff have been working from home. By home, we mean home in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is our home too and Bosnia and Herzegovina’s home is in Europe.

We are in this together and we will win this together!

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-
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-
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Minister: Bosnia could launch intl dispute over Croatia's nuclear waste disposal – N1

April 7, 2020

BiH Foreign Trade and Economic Minister Stasa Kosarac told Croatia's Environment and Energy Minister Tuesday that Croatia's intention to dispose nuclear waste near the border with BiH is "utterly unacceptable" and this is the common stance of all levels of authorities in BiH.

He announced that Bosnia would form a team of experts who will be dealing with this open issue and said he would insist on the Espoo Convention, which sets out the obligations to assess the environmental impact of certain activities at an early stage of planning.

Kosarac expressed hope the issue would be solved in a diplomatic manner, but if Croatia keeps on insisting on the same location, Bosnia will initiate an international arbitral dispute, he underlined.

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[Top Stories](#)

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