

**Ivana Božić Miljković<sup>1</sup>****Review scientific article****UDC 339.92(4-672EU)****334.752:339.944(497.11-15)****COBISS.SR-ID 109712649****DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62907/eemr220102044b>**

## **Cross-Border Cooperation on the Example of Border Municipalities of the Western Balkan Countries<sup>2</sup>**

**Abstract:** Over the last decade of the last century, cross-border cooperation programs have been promoted as a very important instrument of support in overcoming the challenges of the transition process in the Western Balkans. The countries belonging to this Balkan geopolitical sub region are the countries of the former Yugoslavia: Serbia, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, including Albania. The common features of these countries are the transition processes that have lasted for more than three decades, the low level of economic development in relation to the countries of Western, Central, and Eastern Europe, and the political orientation towards membership in the European Union. Over the past three decades, the European Union has made various pre-accession assistance instruments available to the Western Balkans. The goal of engaging these instruments is to help the countries of the Western Balkans quickly overcome the challenges of the transition process and quickly join the European integration process. Part of that assistance relates to cooperation projects between the border municipalities of the Western Balkans. In the last two decades, a large number of such projects have been implemented, and cultural cooperation, understanding, and tolerance among neighbors have been improved. However, the real development effects have not been achieved to a significant extent.

---

<sup>1</sup> Associated Professor, Metropolitan University Belgrade, [ibozicmiljkovic@gmail.com](mailto:ibozicmiljkovic@gmail.com)

ORCID 0000-0002-3311-7841 JEL: F15, F36

<sup>2</sup> The work was presented at: Gelisim-UWE 6th International Conference on Economics and Finance, Istanbul, Turkey, May 12-13, 2022.

**Keywords:** Western Balkans, European Union, cross-border cooperation programs, border municipalities, economic underdevelopment

## **Introduction**

Since the 1990s, the issue of borders between nation states has gone beyond the definition that "borders are human constructs, created to control human behavior in a spatial context" (Popescu, 2016: 7). The events that marked this period conditioned the need to observe and study borders not only from the administrative point of view, but also as sociological, economic, political, and ecological phenomena. This is especially true for those borders that emerged as a result of the creation of new states, the establishment of which was defined by the coordinates of transition, political instability, economic backwardness, and lack of cooperation with neighboring newly created states. The Western Balkans sub-region geographically belongs to the Balkan Peninsula and the southeastern part of Europe. Positioned between East and West, the entire Balkan region has historically been exposed to various, often conflicting, geostrategic interests of the great powers. The result was frequent conflicts and the recomposition of space according to the will and plans of the great powers. Two world wars and several local and regional ones took place in this area, which resulted in huge human and material sacrifices. After each conflict, the problem of demographic devastation in this area deepened, its economic underdevelopment and mistrust among neighbors grew. The end of the 20th century brought great political changes and posed new challenges to the entire Balkan region. Political and economic events that marked the post-socialist period resulted in new divisions in the Balkans and defined the Western Balkans sub-region as extremely underdeveloped and potentially politically problematic. The disintegration of the former Yugoslavia and all the events that marked the period immediately before and after the independence of the former republics contributed to such a view of the Western Balkans. With the formation of new states on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, the geographical and administrative position of municipalities changed. Many of them, which were located on national roads within the common state and at the center of regional development units, became border municipalities. They are recognized as particularly developmentally problematic areas. Their inferiority in

relation to the municipalities from the "center" is not exclusively economic but also has a sociological, cultural, and demographic dimension. They do not have a dynamic economic life, a large number of companies, no factories (these municipalities are not interesting to foreign investors for capital investment), no cultural events, and the demographic structure of the population is unfavorable and the old population has a large share in that structure. Uneven regional development in which there are developed municipalities from the "center" and underdeveloped municipalities from the border. The comparative advantage of these municipalities is in natural resources: clean drinking water, herbs, clean air and opportunities for agricultural development. However, natural resources The large outflow of population from border areas to large cities, as well as the unfavorable age structure of the population that remains in the area, are major impediments to launching any serious economic activity.is underdevelopment and has the characteristics of border areas. In recent decades, the European Union has played an important role in establishing institutions and determining the economic development paths of the Western Balkan countries. An important part of the European Union's engagement took place through cross-border cooperation projects that have been implemented in the countries of this region. The basis for the development of cross-border cooperation programs is the regional development policy of the European Union, while the revitalization strategy is defined by special programs that take into account the specifics of each area involved in these projects. The realization of such projects is just one of a series of elements of the European Union's assistance to these countries in overcoming the transition process faster. However, they do not have long-term economic effects on the economies of the Western Balkans, nor do these projects encourage structural changes that would significantly improve the economic position of these areas.

### **Methodology**

The nature of this work does not require the application of complex statistical methods, but the basic statistical method is the collection of data from relevant databases and sources. The work also used the historical method, which has its social cognitive component. It is presented through a brief overview of the historical factors in

the countries of the Western Balkans that determined their current position in Europe and the world. The second method is statistical-deductive. Its importance is reflected in drawing conclusions based on statistical indicators. Based on the presented factual situation, a conclusion was made about the low level of economic development of the border municipalities of the Western Balkan countries. Involvement in European Union projects that support the cooperation of border municipalities is a way to activate the natural, economic and human potential of these countries and, with the help of financial support from European Union funds, undertake activities to improve their economic situation. The paper also used a comparative method, which basically compares the values of macroeconomic indicators from different periods and, based on them, makes relevant conclusions related to the topic of the paper. The key bearers and performers of cross-border cooperation projects are people, and in actions like these, their social behavior and cooperation come to the fore. The social behavior of people is a product of the interaction of the individual and society, the attitudes of individuals and social values. This emphasizes another methodological principle used in this work - social action as the most basic analytical unit of social structure and social events. Objective social behavior (in this case cooperation) depends on the subjective behavior of individuals. Related to this specific topic, in order for people from border areas to become interested in European Union projects and to be motivated to cooperate, there must be a desire for a new experience. In order to include every individual, especially members of vulnerable social groups, there must be compassion. In the end, in order for the stages of the project to be successfully implemented, there must be a desire for recognition and a desire for security. In this process, project participants define the situation, form courses of action and direct the interests of individuals and groups according to certain values. This is the essence of social action as a methodological approach.

## **1. Economic and development problems of the border municipalities of the Western Balkans**

All the countries of the Western Balkans are in the process of transition, which has lasted for three decades. Apart from Albania, all the others developed within

Yugoslavia throughout almost the entire 20th century and after the Second World War on the basis of socialist social relations, applying industrialization as a method of economic development. In the transition from the 80s to the 90s of the last century, they all entered a phase of political and economic crisis that will have a devastating effect on the development of their economies in the future. Geographically and macroeconomically, it is a group of small countries with a relatively narrow domestic market. In accordance with that, their development potential is very modest, especially if we take into account modern conditions and factors of economic development that impose and condition modern processes of development in the European and world economies (Božić Miljković, 2018). Some of the development problems burdening this group of countries are: limited investment sources; lagging behind in technical and technological development; openness of the economy to import products from European Union countries with low export competitiveness; insufficient level of cooperation with neighbors in the region; environmental protection and sustainable development; etc.

Table 1: Macroeconomic indicators of the development of the Western Balkan countries compared to selected EU countries.

	GDP (in mil current \$)	GDP <i>per capita</i>	Unemployment rate	Inflation rate	External balance on goods and services (in mil \$)
Albania	14.887,6	5.246,3	13,3	1,6	-2.195,6
BiH	19.946,5	6.079,7	15,3	-1,1	-2.785,7
Serbia	53.355,0	7.720,5	9,0	1,6	-4.418,4
Montenegro	4.769,9	7.677,2	17,9	-0,3	-1.670,1
North Macedonia	12.263,7	5.917,3	17,2	1,2	-1.568,0
Hungary	155.808,4	15.980,7	4,3	3,3	2.651,3
Poland	596.624,4	15.721,0	3,2	3,4	40.529,8
Greece	188.835,2	17.622,5	16,3	-1,2	-14.379,6
Italy	1.888.709,4	31.714,2	9,2	-0,1	69.685,3
Germany	3.846.413,9	46.208,4	3,8	0,5	220.216,5

Source: The World Bank: <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators> Available on March/2022

As can be concluded from the data given in Table 1, the countries of the Western Balkans lag behind the countries of Western Europe economically, and their inferiority in comparison with the EU member states from Central and Eastern Europe is noticeable. Compared to this group of countries, the countries of the Western Balkans have lower GDP, have high unemployment rates, and have a deficit in their external balance of goods and services. All the problems defined in the table by quantitative indicators have long-term reflections on economic development and the quality of life of the population. The low level of development, the absence of any form of economic modernization, and the low standard of living of the population are particularly visible in the border areas of these countries. The border areas consist of a number of municipalities located in the area that administratively separates the two countries of the Western Balkans. In accordance with the territorial affiliation, there are significant differences between these municipalities in terms of customs, traditions, and culture. What they all have in common is a low level of development, lack of investment in infrastructure, depopulation, and low participation of the educated population in the overall population structure (Andjelković & Stoilković, 2019: 110). The municipalities in the border area between Albania and Montenegro (Andrijevisa, Plav, Gusinje, Shkodra, etc.), Serbia and Northern Macedonia (Tetovo, Kumanovo, Trgoviste, Bujanovac, Presevo, etc.), and Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bjeljina, Tuzla, Srebrenica, Rudo, Uzice, Sabac, etc.), as well as the border municipalities between Serbia and Montenegro (Pljevlja, Bijelo Polje, Rozaje, Priboj, Sjenica, Tutin, and Novi Pazar) are examples of extremely unfavorable economic and demographic indicators. The main features of each of these municipalities are demographic depopulation, long-term low birth rates, and a population structure dominated by people over 65 years of age. Population migrations to large cities and the age structure of the population determine the low educational structure of the population on the border, which, in turn, limits the development perspective of these municipalities.

Table 2: Demographic and economic indicators of selected municipalities in the border area of Western Balkan 2018.

Municipality	Population	Natural increase	Migration score	Number of enterprises	Number of employees	Number of unemployed	Average salary (in EUR)
Andrijevisa (MNE)	4.585	-30	-86	68	502	813	439
Plav (MNE)	8.319	-27	-136	111	1.403	1.799	502
Bujanovac (SER)	30.867	-26	-160	1.369	8.639	7.000	438
Novi Pazar (SER)	106.261	1.470	88	4.380	21.015	19.850	402
Shkoder (ALB)	114.219	-80	-	5.509	25.058	7.840	280
Kumanovo (NMK)	105.484	-290	-	5.531	-	-	527
Bijeljina (BiH)	107.715	-337	280	2.742	25.030	11.589	512
Rudo (BiH)	9.500	-198	-12	97	547	1.814	-

Source: National Statistical Offices: <http://www.monstat.org>; <http://www.instat.gov.al/en/>; <https://www.stat.gov.rs/en>; <https://bhas.gov.ba/?lang=en>; <https://www.stat.gov.mk/> Accessed on March/2022

As can be concluded from the attached data, these are small municipalities that are going through intensive processes of demographic depopulation. An exception in this regard is the municipality of Novi Pazar in Serbia, which in the observed year recorded a high natural increase and has a positive migration balance, which means that more people moved during the observed year than emigrated. The number of companies speaks of the degree of development of economic activity, and the structure of companies is dominated by craft service companies and companies for retail trade, i.e., retail facilities. The large number of unemployed and low average incomes indicate the standard of living and quality of life of the population of these municipalities. The countries of the Western Balkans base their economic development almost entirely on

the inflow of foreign direct investment (Bartlett, 2021: 186). On that basis, numerous companies originating from Western European countries have started their business activities in this area by opening factories and production plants for various activities. Almost all the investments that have been made in the countries of the Western Balkans in the last two decades have been directed towards large cities, far from the underdeveloped border areas. The lack of adequate road and communal infrastructure in border municipalities, their distance from national airports, as well as the lack of a young and educated population, are factors that limit the possibility for foreign investors to recognize these municipalities as promising areas for investment (Atoyan et al., 2018). The consequence of the absence of investments that would contribute to the economic development of this area is the low level of economic activity of the population, i.e., high unemployment and low living standards. The accelerated economic decline and demographic depopulation of the Western Balkans is a consequence, above all, of the decisions and activities taken during the transition process. The sharp decline in economic activity at the level of each of these countries and the inadequately pursued regional development policies have had numerous consequences for overall economic and social development. Statistical indicators and a large number of analyses of the state and perspectives of development of all Western Balkan countries made during the transition period confirm this, pointing to the fact that the border is their most devastated part, i.e., that there are the strongest negative effects and visible consequences of a quarter of a century of "quasi-development".

## **2. The European Union as a partner and support to the countries of the Western Balkans in overcoming backwardness**

The Western Balkans is a geopolitical determinant that arose from the need to define the area of the Balkans, which consists of countries outside the European Union. Each of these countries has been in the process of transition for three decades, all striving for membership in the European Union, and each of them has a different status in relation to this European integration. In the analysis of the relations between the countries of the Western Balkans and the European Union, the question can be asked,



what does this group of countries expect economically from membership in the Union? The answer to that question implies the identification of economic but also political factors and conditions important for their economies in the future, not only in the domain of overcoming backwardness but much more broadly. By joining the EU, this group of countries would get a more stable political and security environment, which, as a general condition, is important for the economy and economic development. Its economic effects cannot be quantified but are evident, especially when it comes to small and economically underdeveloped countries. With that integration, they share that ambience with almost all European countries. At the same time, their responsibility for its preservation and improvement in the future increases. In economic terms, membership in the European Union is expected to provide the Western Balkans with access to a broad European market, enable the transfer of state-of-the-art technology and knowledge from developed European countries, and allow free movement of labor between these two economically diverse parts of Europe. The European Union has been recognizing and rhetorically supporting the ambitions of these countries for membership in the European Union for decades. The request that the European Union has received from these countries on this issue, from the very beginning of the transition process, concerns the preparations for full membership. In the field of economics, this means that they need to carry out economic system reforms, reorganize the organization and functioning of their economy, raise the level of their economic development, and mitigate the economic problems they face. The European Union shows understanding of the complexity of these requirements and, through its funds, materially helps the countries of the Western Balkans to overcome these tasks and problems easily and faster (Sanfey, Milatović & Krešić, 2016: 11). In that context, the financial assistance of the European Union, which is aimed at developing cross-border cooperation between the countries of the Western Balkans, should also be considered.

Table 3: European Union pre-accession assistance to Western Balkan countries

	CARDS 2000.- 2006.	IPA I 2007.- 2013.	IPA II 2014.- 2020.
Albania	221,1	591,2	639,5
BiH	412,5	655,3	552,1
Montenegro	146,3	235,6	279,1
North Macedonia	229,0	615,1	608,7
Serbia	1389,0	1.385,4	1.539,1

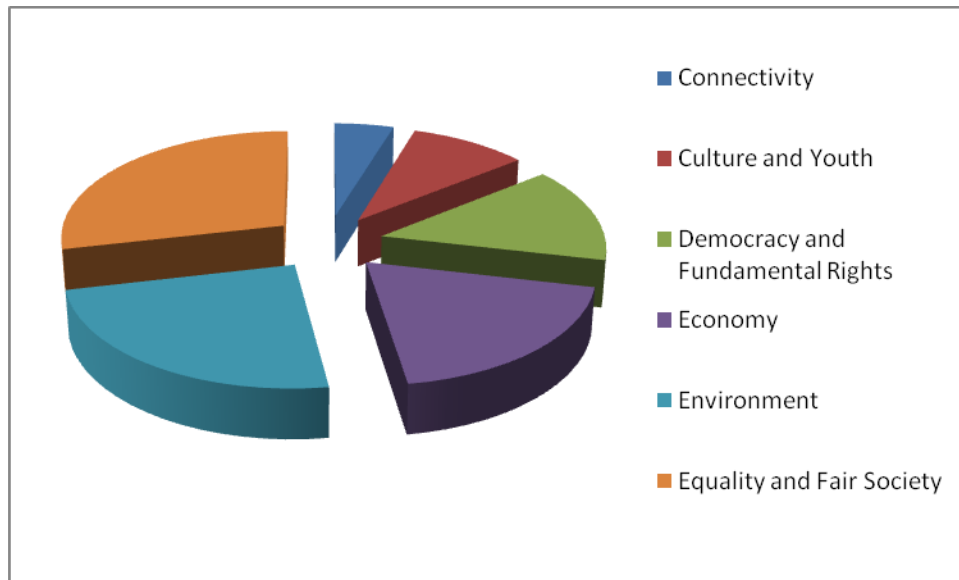
Source:

<https://bankwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/toolkit-IPA-II-SR.pdf>;  
[https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/enlargement-policy/overview-instrument-pre-accession-assistance\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/enlargement-policy/overview-instrument-pre-accession-assistance_en)

Financial support to the countries of the Western Balkans, including that part of the assistance related to the cooperation of border municipalities, is based on the European Union's request that countries in transition improve their mutual cooperation in order to cooperate within the union. Assistance and support from European Union funds are considered a kind of preparation for the Western Balkan countries' membership. The type of funds available to individual countries, the amount of funds approved, the procedures and the way of deciding on their use depend on the status of one country in relation to the Union. The closer the status is to the European Union (candidate status, for example), the more diverse and larger the types of assistance. The effect that financial assistance from European Union funds has on improving cross-border cooperation of border municipalities is not great and does not have far-reaching positive economic effects. However, without the help of the European Union, the countries of the Western Balkans would have to provide funds from their own revenues. Given the dynamics and quality of the economic development of these countries in

previous decades, it would not be realistic to expect them to base their development on the principle of self-financing (Kmezić, 2020: 58). Another potential source of financing for development would be borrowing from loans that would increase the cost of development, but the effects would not be significantly greater than those achieved through financing from Union funds.

Picture 1: Areas of cross-border cooperation financed from EU funds



Source: <https://seerural.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Annex-15-IPA-III-presentation.pdf> Accessed on March/2022

Cross-border cooperation projects include a wide range of areas in which action can be taken to improve understanding, tolerance, and good neighborly relations (Lukšić & al., 2022). European Union intervention with pre-accession assistance is most common in the fields of equality and fair society and the environment. Funds intended for the cooperation of border municipalities are directed to projects from all the above areas, and the dominant projects are related to promoting employment, labor mobility, and social and cultural inclusion across the border; protecting the environment; promoting climate change, adaptation, and mitigation; risk prevention and management; and encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage (<https://www.euro-access.eu/programm>). The new pre-accession assistance program

from 2021 to 2027 has allocated EUR 1,279.4 million in assistance and support to the Western Balkans. Most of the assistance will be directed to environmental protection programs, regional development and cohesion, and the development of innovation and digitalization. The fourth priority is the development of good neighborly cooperation, and the program of cooperation between the border municipalities of the Western Balkans is included in the body of these activities.

Picture 2: IPA III Funds of the European Union's Pre-Accession Assistance to the Countries of the Western Balkans



Source: <https://seerural.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Annex-15-IPA-III-presentation.pdf> Accessed on March/2022

In cross-border cooperation projects financed by IPA funds, both cooperating countries have part of the responsibility for development and effective Europeanization, i.e., effective acceptance of the rules and norms of the European Union (De Sousa, 2012: 8). It is understood that both countries cooperating within the project must have highly developed administrative capacities. Officials in the administration must have the authority to manage funds from pre-accession assistance, and it is assumed that they

have the knowledge in the field of finance that is necessary for the management of these funds. In addition to the administration, local governments of border municipalities must be involved in the process of managing European funds. Representatives of local authorities, in addition to managing European Union funds, must be able to present a project idea with which they apply for pre-accession funds and must know the laws and regulations in the fields of public procurement, prevention of conflicts of interest, and reporting on spending public funds. The institutional framework for implementing the cross-border cooperation project consists of: inspections that supervise and control the spending of budget funds; the state audit institution; the anti-corruption agency; the police and the prosecutor's office; and an independent and efficient judiciary to prevent abuses.

### **3. Examples of good cooperation**

Since the beginning of the European Union's financial engagement in the Western Balkans, a large number of cross-border cooperation projects have been financed from pre-accession assistance funds. Participation in projects covered almost every border municipality, and the effects of that cooperation were most often visible in the fields of sustainable development, entrepreneurial initiative, encouragement of digital literacy, development of tourism, or preservation of cultural heritage. One in a series of examples of good cooperation between the border municipalities of Montenegro and Albania is a project called "Montenegro and Albania towards Zero Waste." The bearers of this project are the municipality of Gusinje in Montenegro and the border municipality of Tropoje in Albania. The duration of the project is from 2021 to 2023, and the amount of allocated funds is 563,515.5 € (<http://www.euic.me/project/montenegro-and-albania-towards-zero-waste/>). The aim of this project is to connect the mentioned municipalities with the European Zero Waste network. The project envisages numerous activities aimed at reducing waste and developing recycling centers in both municipalities. The European Union also directs part of its financial resources to support the employment of people with disabilities living in the border areas of the Western Balkans. Such a project was implemented

between the border municipalities of Montenegro (Berane, Petnjica, Mojkovac, Kolain, and Danilovgrad) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Foa, Pale, Nevesinje, Rudo, Prozor/Rama, and Sokolac). The goal of this one-year project was to start the development of beekeeping in the areas covered by the mentioned municipalities. The bearers of entrepreneurial activity are people with disabilities. This project has created the possibility of self-employment for these people, their more active involvement in economic and social life, and poverty reduction in this area. The budget allocated for this project was €245,388 and included a training program for people with disabilities for beekeeping, the procurement of basic equipment for starting a business and mentoring their activities for a certain period of time (<http://www.euic.me/project/persons-with-disabilities-leaders-in-beekeeping/>). In the analysis of the development potential of border areas, the European Union recognizes and financially supports those who are focused on the development of tourism. In recent years, two such projects have been financed with European funds. The first includes the cooperation of municipalities from Bosnia and Herzegovina (National Park Sutjeska and Municipality of Foa) and Montenegro (Regional Nature Park Piva and Municipality of Pluine). Almost half a million euros have been set aside for the realization of the Tourism, Adrenaline, and Rafting Adventure project, and the deadline for realization is two years. This project promotes the development of active and adventurous tourism, the development of which can have favorable economic effects on the area and, in addition, can contribute to environmental protection and sustainable development (<http://www.euic.me/project/tourism-adrenaline-and-rafting-adventure-tara/>). The second project of this type was implemented in the period from 2018 to 2021 between the municipalities of Ulcinj, Bar, Podgorica, and Rozaje in Montenegro and the municipalities of Shkodra and Lezha in Albania. Within this project, the participants, who are otherwise tourist municipalities, are developing child-friendly tourism as part of the overall tourism industry, which aims to enrich the tourist offer with content intended for the youngest population (<https://www.zid.org.me/tekuci-projects/cft>). In addition to cooperation between border areas administratively belonging to the Western Balkans, the European Union also finances projects implemented between the border municipalities of the Western Balkans and neighboring border municipalities belonging

to the Balkan member states of the European Union (Jelinčić & Knezović, 2021: 4). Due to the fact that one of the partners in the project is a member of the European Union, the funds allocated for the implementation of these projects are greater than those intended for the Western Balkans. Examples of good cooperation in this area are numerous. For example, cooperation between the Serbian municipality of Knjazevac and the municipality of Kula in Bulgaria regarding the maintenance of the road and the part of the Stara Planina that extends territorially to both municipalities. Within the cross-border cooperation between Romania and Serbia, a project called "Heritage on the Danube border" was realized (<https://www.energetskiportal.rs/kladovo-zelena-opstina/>). This project includes the municipalities of Kladovo in Serbia and Turn Severin and Borosteni in Romania. The project aims to complete the tourist offer of this part of the border between the two neighboring countries with various exhibitions and performances. By engaging funds from the European Union, a certain level of cooperation has been achieved in the border areas of these countries, and positive economic effects for the local community have been provided. However, the effects of implemented projects are visible only at the local level and do not have a broader economic significance that would affect the quality of macroeconomic indicators or contribute to the economic development of the participating countries as a whole.

## **Conclusion**

Life in cross-border areas is in many ways special. On the one hand, living outside the "center" of the population can be an advantage, and on the other hand, it can be a great challenge because the population is deprived of a number of benefits provided by living in cities. In terms of development planning, the population of border areas is less "visible" than the population in the central part of the country. The result is underdeveloped border areas with outdated infrastructure, a small number of households and a mostly aged population. Within the framework of defining and implementing policies of common interest towards the countries of the Western Balkans, the European Union has at its disposal certain funds and provides material support for their development in several areas. A significant part of these funds is directed to cross-border cooperation projects, namely the part of cooperation that includes municipalities

from the border areas of neighboring countries. The role of cross-border cooperation projects is to help border municipalities overcome and eliminate social and economic inferiority through various forms of cooperation with border municipalities of neighboring countries. Even when the results of this cooperation are below expectations, the participation of local governments in border municipalities in these projects is the only way to raise administrative and human resources for local development in them. Within the projects of cross-border cooperation of local communities, European standards and norms that should be implemented in domestic policies of border municipalities are pointed out. The implementation of these standards and norms would contribute to the development potential coming to the fore, i.e., to use this potential more efficiently.

#### **References:**

1. Anđelković Stoilković, M. (2019). “Zastupljenost demografskih problema pograničnog prostora Republike Srbije u javnim politikama”. *Demografija* 16 (2019): 103-118. doi: 10.5937/demografija1916103A
2. Atoyan, R. et al. (2018), “Public Infrastructure in the Western Balkans: Opportunities and Challenges” *IMF Departmental Paper No. 18/02*, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/Departmental-Papers-Policy-Papers/Issues/2018/02/07/Public-Infrastructure-in-the-Western-Balkans-Opportunities-and-Challenges-45547> (accessed on 25/04/2022).
3. Bartlett, W. (2021). “International assistance, donor interests, and state capture in the Western Balkans”, *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 29:2, pp.184-200.
4. Božić Miljković, I. (2018). *Ekonomije Balkanskih zemalja na početku XXI veka*, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, Beograd, pp.42
5. <https://www.cbc-mne-alb.org/projects-of-the-2nd-cfp/montenegro-and-albania-towards-zero-waste/>
6. <https://evropskakuca.me/project/persons-with-disabilities-leaders-in-beekeeping/>
7. <http://cbc.bih-mne.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/t-a-r-a.pdf>
8. <https://www.energetskiportal.rs/kladovo-zelena-opstina/>



9. Jelinčić, A.D., Knezović, S. (2021). "Cross-border Cultural Relations of Croatia and Serbia: Milk and Honey if Money is Involved." *Journal of Regional Security* (2021), Belgrade Centre for Security Policy DOI: 10.5937/jrs16-27837
10. Kmezić, M. (2020). "Recalibrating the EU's Approach to the Western Balkans." <https://doi.org/10.1177/1781685820913655> *European View* 2020, Vol. 19(1) 54–61
11. De Sousa, Luis. "Understanding European Cross- Border Cooperation: A Framework for Analysis." *Journal of European Integration* 35, No 6 (2013): 669-687.
12. Lukšić, I., Bošković, B., Novikova, A. *et al.* „Innovative financing of the sustainable development goals in the countries of the Western Balkans“. *Energy, Sustainability and Society* **12**, 15 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13705-022-00340-w>
13. Popesku, J. (2016), *Menadžment turističke destinacije*, Univerzitet Singidunum, Beograd.
14. Sanfey, Milatović & Krešić, (2016). „How the Western Balkans can catch up, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development“, *Working paper No. 186*, pp. 1-43 <https://www.ebrd.com/documents/oce/pdf-working-paper-186.pdf>
15. The World Bank <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators>