
COVID-19 Coronavirus: EU Commission, €38 million to Balkan countries to address health emergency

In these times of health crisis, the European Commission also looks to the Western Balkans and today announced “up to €38 million in immediate support” for the region to tackle the health emergency, and the “reallocation of €374 million to help the socio-economic recovery”. The immediate aid will go to Albania, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo and Serbia to “cover the immediate needs of their public health systems” in terms of “medical devices and personal equipment” (ventilators, laboratory kits, masks, goggles, and safety suits). The lion’s share of the funds (15 million) will go to Serbia, the Commission announced, since it is “the most affected country”. In “the short and medium term”, the Commission will support the “private sector” and help increase social protection, “with a specific attention to vulnerable groups”, and strengthen “resilience in the public health sector”. Other initiatives are underway to address issues affecting the supply and the facilitation of movement of goods within the region, and between the region and the EU. “Europe is facing an unprecedented public health crisis, but even in these difficult times, we will always be there for our Western Balkan partners, who belong to the EU”, said Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Olivér Várhelyi.

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