

Dear WBIF partners,

against the developments related to COVID-19, we want to address you personally to express our sympathy for all the people who have been affected by this unprecedented event and our appreciation for all involved in healthcare, governments, public services and local communities who are on the front line fighting to contain the virus.

In our more than 10 years of collaboration we have joined efforts and supported socio-economic development across the Western Balkans. As we address a pandemic, we want to reassure you that our commitment to you, our Western Balkan partners, will if anything, be stronger than ever.

Already we have taken measures to guarantee the continuous operation of the WBIF. Our staff, partners and our consultants continue to work, we are planning to hold our project (Investment grants and Technical Assistance grants) related meeting as a video conference soon, further IT solutions are being rolled out across the Western Balkans, all with a joint vision of mitigating the impact of this crisis as much as possible. In this climate, all of us should join, align and maximise efforts to secure progress of our WBIF project portfolio as much as possible, and to come out of this period, together, as strong and prepared as possible.

We wish you all the best in these difficult times.

Sincerely,

Wolfgang Schlaeger, Head of Sector WBIF, DG NEAR

Stine Andresen, Head of WBIF Secretariat