



Welcome to Western Balkans Fund

WBF – 2025



About WB Fund

2015/2017

The Agreement for the creation of WB Fund was signed by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of WB6, on November 2015. The Fund has become operational on October 1, 2017, after the conclusion of the ratification procedures by all parliaments of its constitutive members.

● Founded by the MFA's

WB Fund is founded by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo *, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

● Core financing

WB Fund is financed by the six Contracting Parties in equal quotas. Six Contracting Parties representatives make the Fund's Council of Senior Officials. Fund is managed by the Executive Director. The First appointed WB Fund Executive Director, elected by the WB Fund Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs is Mr. Gjergj Murra.

● Headquarters & staff

WB Fund is located in Tirana, Albania. WB Fund employs 13 employees, coming from six Contracting Parties.

Our mission & objectives

as per "Agreement on the establishment of WBF";
"Statute of Western Balkans Fund"

- Developing closer cooperation between CP's
- Strengthening the ties among the WB CP
- Supporting the integration of the CP's into the
- EU Common presentation of the CP's in third countries

**cultural
cooperation**

education

scientific exchange and
research in the field of
education

**sustainable
development**

crosscutting issues

youth, media, environment,
gender etc.

Funding and partnerships

CORE funding

6 Contracting parties
annual contribution



Donors & Partners



Co-funded by the
European Union



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

**Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC**



JAPAN GOV
THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN



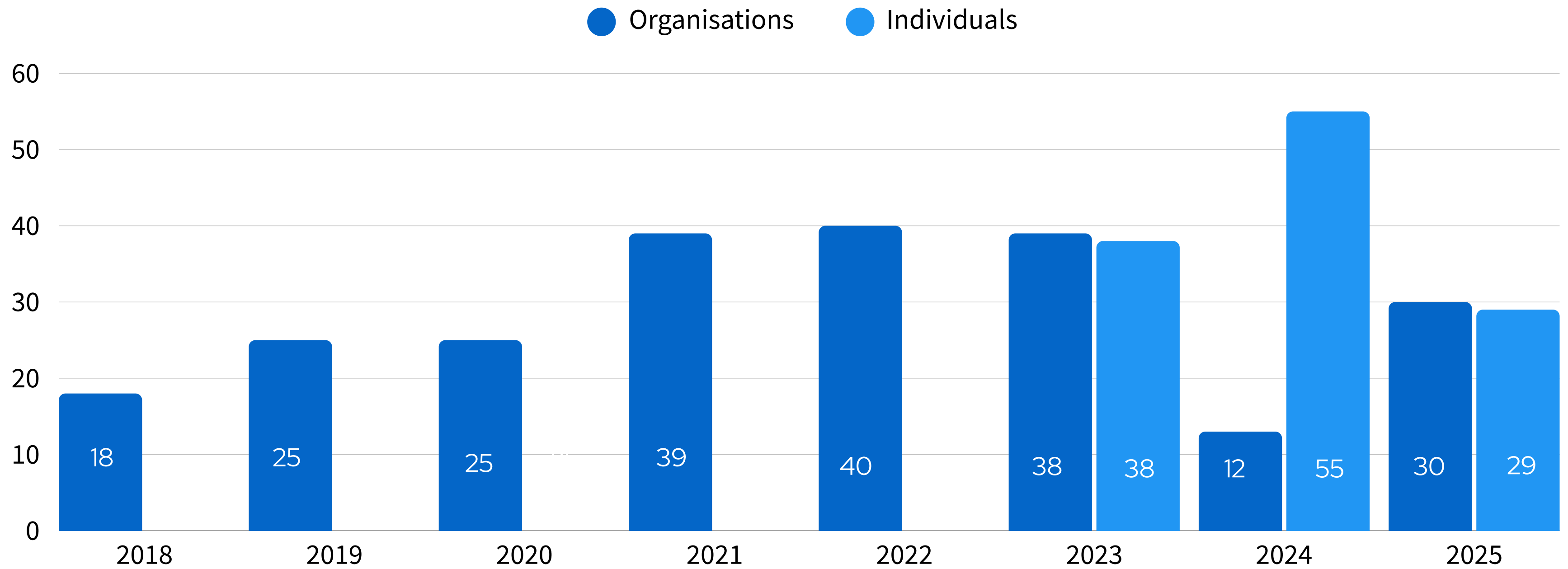
What we do

From 2017 till 2025, WBF has organised 13 calls for grants and 7 advocacy events



- 01 GRANTS
- 02 ADVOCACY
- 03 CSO's capacity building

Grants



228

Organisations supported

122

Individuals supported

>EUR 3.1 M

Granted

>700

Regional partnerships supported

10%

DEMAND VS FUNDING

On average, we are able to support 10% of total applications

33.5%

NEWLY ESTABLISHED

33.5% of our applicants are newly established (less than 5 years of experience)

max
15.000
eur

INCREASE IN GRANT VALUE

The average grant value in first three calls was 11.500 EUR and has increased in the last two calls to the average of 13.500, the usual 15.000 EUR per grantee was raised in a test call to 30.000 EUR

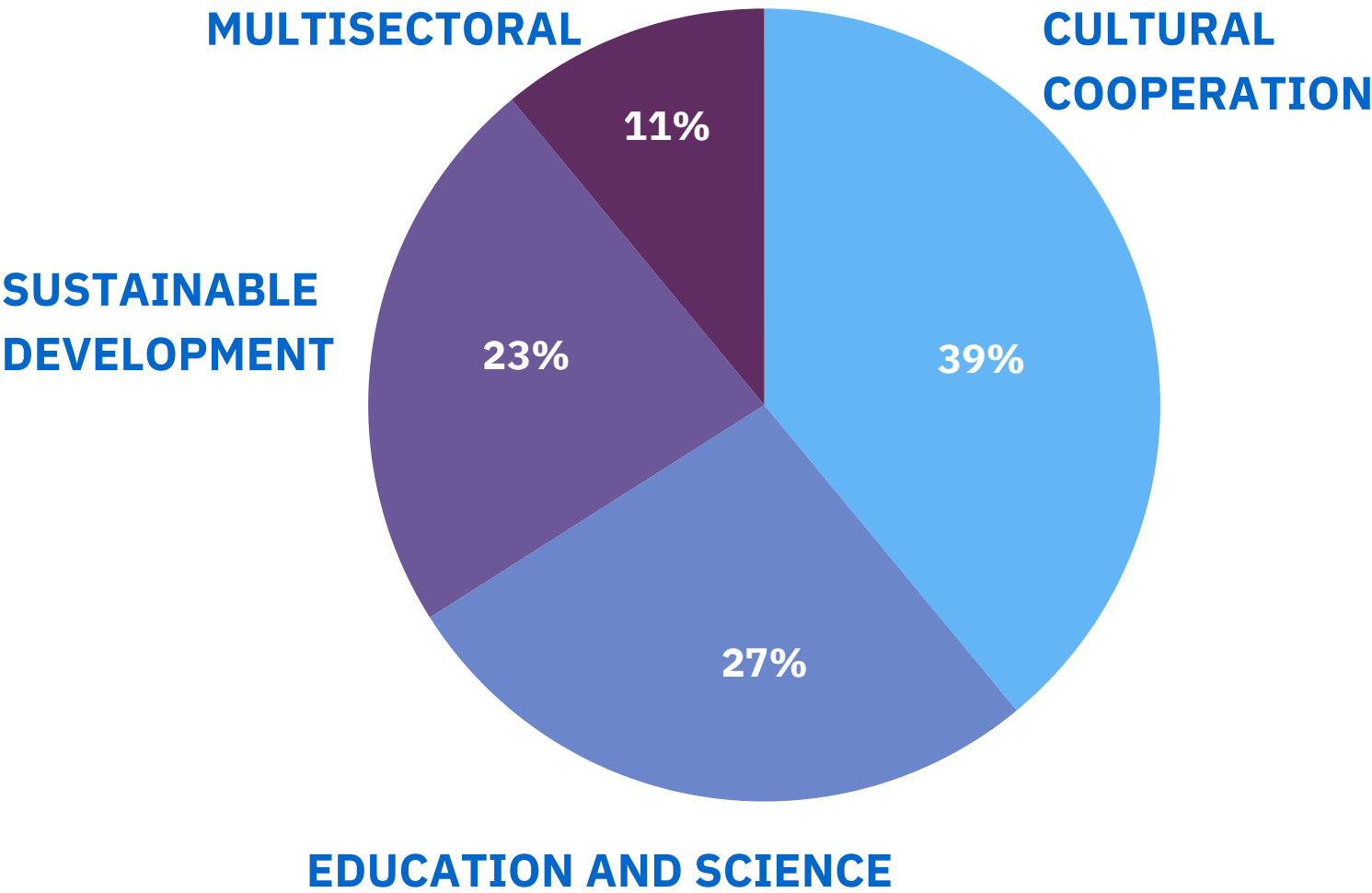
2
out of
5

GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD

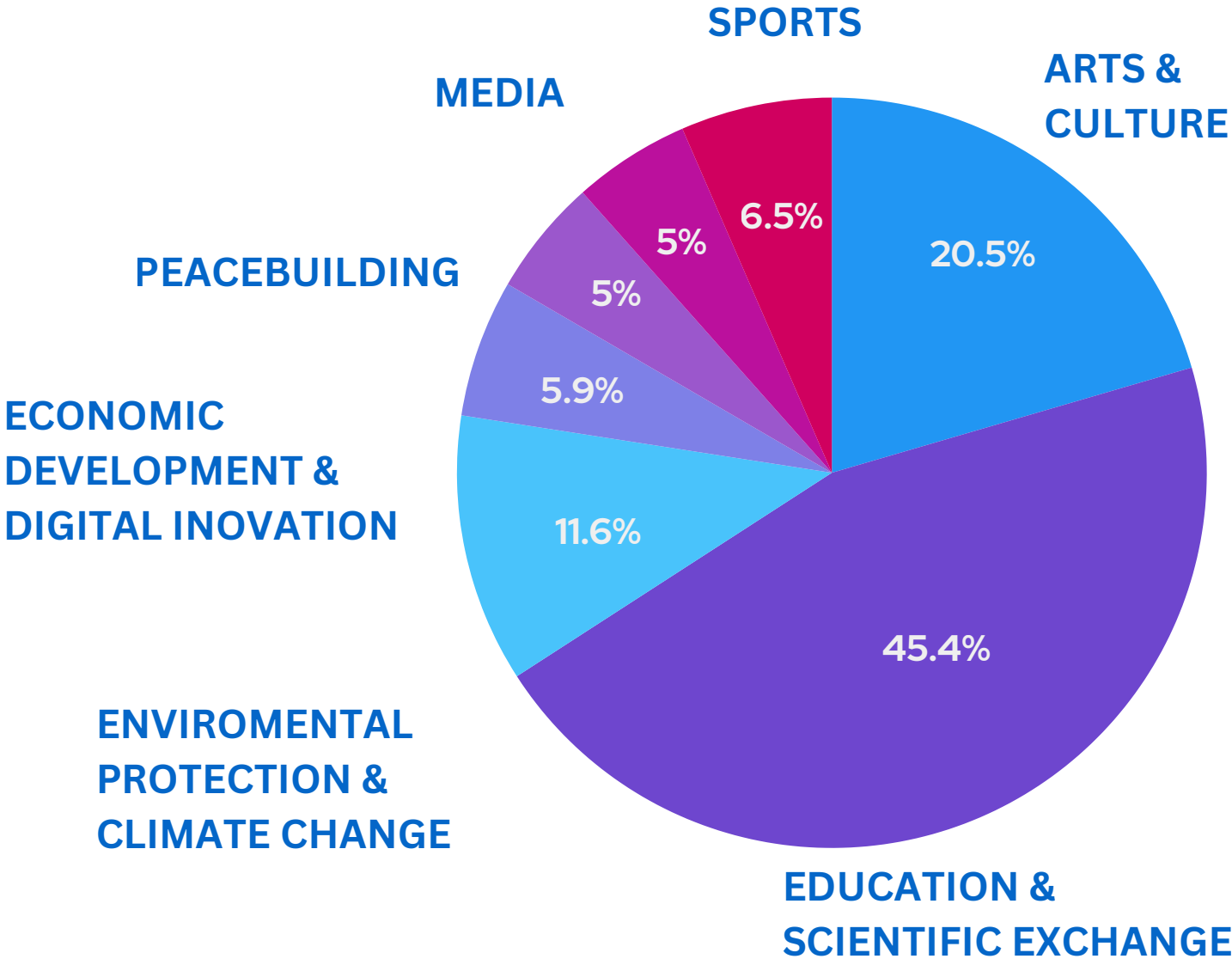
2 out of 5 of our applicants are coming from non-capitals

Grants as per area of intervention

● Organisations



● Individuals



Our beneficiaries range from:

- Sports Associations, Women Organizations , Media Associations , Writers Associations, Theatres and Museums, Schools, Environmental Protection Associations, Chambers of Commerce, Professional associations

Our beneficiaries range from:

- Researchers, students, professors , journalists, actors, artists, musicians activists, experts, doctors

Advocacy

2023 "VerityCon"

In November 2023, WBF organised with support of Japanese government a conference dedicated to the freedom of expression and fight against misinformation. 60 leading experts, journalists, civil society representatives, and policymakers joined the conference.



Active participation

WBF has so far organised one advocacy event per year, but on average we take active participation in 5 to 6 advocacy events in the region (or elsewhere, where regional issues are discussed).



2023 "Unstoppable"

In February 2023, WBF organised with support of Japanese government a conference dedicated to supporting gender equality. Conference lasted 4 days, hosted 60 speakers and 150 participants.



CSO's capacity building

Application process and project management

As 33.5% of our applicants are newly established organisations, strong mentoring and support is provided by WB Fund throughout all phases, starting from info sessions, monitoring and mentoring to closing procedure.



70%

agree that they have strengthened
their ability to forge partnerships
across borders



80%

of grantees would apply
again to WB Fund funds



Strengthening internal capacities

- **ONLINE GRANT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

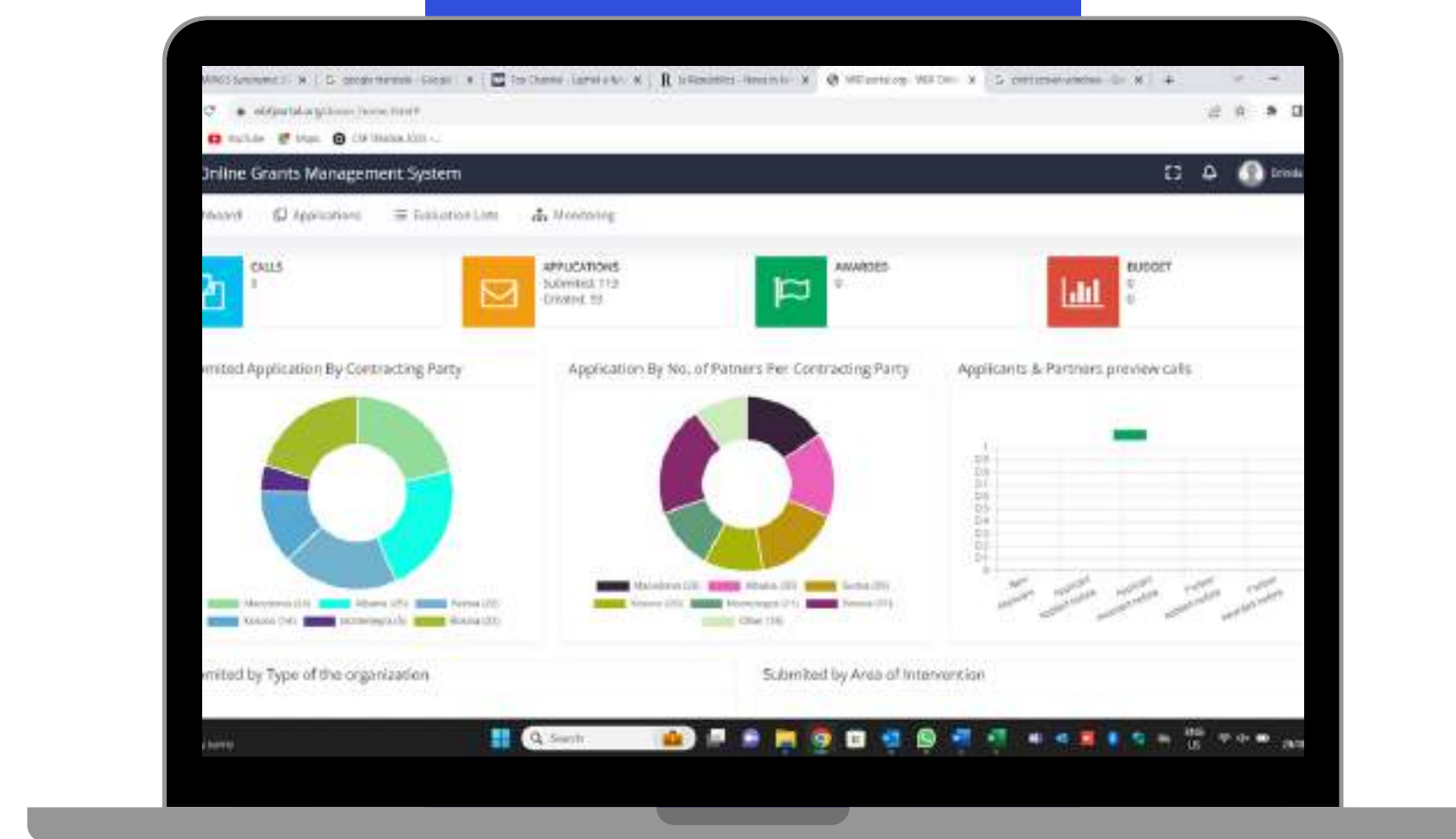
all grant management, from application process, to application review, monitoring and closing is done through online system, for full transparency and compliance

- **MONITORING EVALUATION & LEARNING**

the impact of our actions is measured in quantitative and qualitative terms through MEL reporting and the results readily available to all donors (continuous feedback & evaluation at all stages for applicants and intended beneficiaries and stakeholders)

- **EXPERIENCED STAFF**

13 employees, experienced in project management, CSO support, coming from WB6 CP's, in tune with the specific CP requirements



Meet our Regional Champions

Some of WBF's
recent grantees



EID

Ekološko Istraživačko

Društvo – B&H; Banja Luka

Cooperation of scientists and young researchers from WB in the field of mammalian ecology



- B&H
- Montenegro
- Albania
- N. Macedonia
- Kosovo
- Serbia

- Mammals regional school
- Mammals atlas of B&H – to be included in European atlas
- IUCN Red List – 4 vulnerable species
- Protected area process – Mountain Volujak



CONTEMPORARY FORTRESSES OF BALKANS

KOTOR, NOVI SAD & TREBINJE

KotorArt; Montenegro



- Montenegro
- B&H
- Serbia



YUGOCYCLING

Promoting the Western Balkans greenways network – abandoned railway from Belgrade via Užice, Sarajevo, Mostar, Dubrovnik to Herceg Novi, which passes through 4 countries.

MOVE grants:
initiative to define the new Euro Velo Route



www.westernbalkansgreenways.com

WESTERN BALKANS GREENWAY CONNECTS:

- SERBIA (Belgrad, Užice, Priboj)
- BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (Sarajevo, Mostar, Trebinje)
- CRONTIA (Dubrovnik)
- MONTENEGRO (Njasi, Herceg Novi, Zelenika)

Co-funded by  **The European Union**

WBF Western Balkans Fund
www.westernbalkansfund.org

PARTNERS IN PROJECT:
YugoCycling Campaign, Belgrade, Serbia
The Mountain Biking Organization M7BA, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Nature Lovers Montenegro, Njasi, Montenegro

SUPPORTED BY WESTERN BALKANS FUND
This design is part of the project "TRANSFORMATION OF THE WEST BALKANS GREENWAYS NETWORK"
The author: YugoCycling Campaign, Belgrade, September 2022
DESIGN: Studio ZIDA, Pancevo



GREENWAYS CONCEPT:

- improve communications and non-motorised itineraries in Europe
- promote healthier and more balanced ways of life
- promote rural development
- bring Europeans closer to both their natural and cultural environment
- encourage a more human and closer relationship among citizens

CHARACTERISTICS:
Greenways must comply with a series of common physical characteristics, which permit easy access and use by the maximum possible number of users, gentle inclines (maximum 3%), set apart from the road network, limited number of crossing points with roads, route continuity through the maintenance of their public ownership

STAKEHOLDERS:

- people who use greenways on a daily basis to walk or cycle to work or to travel to a public transport pick up point,
- public and students who use them to travel to school,
- people who use them to travel to shopping areas, sports centres and other leisure activity centres,
- people termed as "vulnerable" (elderly, disabled, people with children)
- walkers, for whom greenways are places of leisure and rest,
- children who use greenways as play areas or for learning to ride a bicycle or roller-skate,
- users who use greenways to keep fit,
- tourists who can use them as an alternative way of getting to know the town and countryside.

private and public sector infrastructure authorities responsible for areas earmarked as future greenways (public and private rail companies, canal and navigable river authorities etc.),
local authorities of the towns and cities through which the greenways pass, who would like to conserve them and integrate them into a wider urban transport plan,
regional and national governments, with decision-making responsibility in town and country planning, environment, heritage, tourism, sport and leisure activities, finance,
development agencies and tourist officers who recognise the significant tourism potential of greenways and civil sector associations

Aside from the fact that the greenways constitute transport infrastructure for non-polluting traffic, they also form green corridors where special eco-systems can be introduced and maintained.
These ecological corridors not only contribute to preserving bio-diversity and cleaning the air, but also to the preservation of a visually attractive environment, they are ideal places for organising classes on ecological subjects for children and teenagers within a region's history and development. Reuse of these routes enables the continuity of these communication networks to be preserved, as well as the buildings and small scale heritage which correspond to them: stations, brick houses, signals, beacons, waymarks, etc., in addition to stimulating knowledge of cultural, natural and human heritage.

WESTERN BALKANS GREENWAYS



TRANSFERRING ABANDONED RAILWAYS INTO CYCLING AND PEDESTRIAN GREENWAYS, CONNECTING THE DANUBE AND THE ADRIATIC



Priboj-Uvac GREENWAY IN REPUBLIC OF SERBIA



ROUTE:
Although Priboj is surrounded by hills and mountains, the former railway follows the bank of Tadićka river in its wide plain. Near and Priboj are 274 meters and same village is on 300 meters above sea level.

CONDITION OF THE TRACK:
The surface of the ancient abandoned track, Trebinje and some alternative change from macadam to asphalt, and the big segment is occupied by high vegetation, although most of objects are preserved. The beautiful station building in town is fully abandoned and ruined, and the building in Trebinje serves for community centre.

HISTORY OF THE RAILROAD:
This railway in Montenegro was part of Austro-Hungarian project of constructing railway-gauge railroad at the beginning of the 20th century. Most of it was set up in 1901, and the station in Priboj was the most important railway station in 1901/02. The line between Priboj and Trebinje was built from Trebinje through Priboj and Njasi. After the railway line was built, the new parallel railway corridor and the traffic from 1901. Later on it was abandoned.

ROUTE:
Although Priboj is surrounded by hills and mountains, the track follows the previous railway without any change. The altitude is 304 - 305 meters above sea level.

CONDITION OF THE TRACK:
From the Priboj station, the concrete well maintained and illuminated 3.5 kilometers long pedestrian and cycling track, which is permitted to the second greenway in Serbia. The bridge over Uvac river is closed to the traffic and vehicles must use the official border crossing. Further on in the track is a line of modern traffic and could be repaired for greenway without huge investments.

HISTORY OF THE RAILROAD:
The section of the railway-gauge railroad in the municipality of Priboj in SRP is built in 1900 by the Austro-Hungarian and the last station on the track was Priboj. The beautiful station building of this station is preserved until today, but totally devastated and requires much investment in its restoration. The railway from Priboj to Njasi was constructed in 1923, during the period of Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The whole railway was abandoned 40 years ago. In 1993, the state border between Serbia and SRP was established on the Uvac bridge and along the line near.

Hum-Trebinje-Jazina GREENWAY IN REPUBLIC OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



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Sutorina-Herceg Novi-Zelenika GREENWAY IN REPUBLIC OF MONTENEGRO



ROUTE:
Herceg Novi is a coastal town surrounded by the high mountains and the greenway mostly follows the line of the sea shore. The only climb is towards the Dubrovnik border crossing with Croatia, which is in Herceg Novi, and on 300 meters above sea level.

CONDITION OF THE TRACK:
After the dismantling of the railway facilities, the track between Sutorina and Zelenika was in the early 1990s transformed into the beautiful sea waterfront. The first greenway of SRP type in Herceg Novi. There is a short section with renovated tunnel between Sutorina and Zelenika which serves as pedestrian and cycling communication. Other sections in Herceg Novi and Zelenika are local streets. From Sutorina to Zelenika, the greenway is mostly paved and serves as a four-lane macadam road. There are several turning points where the track is used or occupied by illegal buildings. The railway station in Herceg Novi is beautifully renovated and is used in tourist and cultural purposes. The station in Zelenika is a residential building which is not in good condition. The surrounding former railway premises is also in bad condition.

HISTORY OF THE RAILROAD:
The section of the railway-gauge railroad in Herceg Novi was built under the Austro-Hungarian rule as a rail connection of the big naval military base in Zelenika with the rest of the Montenegro. After the World War I, it was used as the main communication of the Herceg Novi people with the rest of the Montenegro. This railway was opened in July 1911, and abandoned in June 1940. The former railway station in Zelenika is the first of the last years of the former Western Balkans railway and pedestrian Greenway corridor between the Adriatic and the Danube.

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Meet our **MOVE** grantees

Some of WBF's
recent grantees



Aleksandar Crnogorac

Photo reportage

Photo reportage on multicultural and
multireligious marriages across WB countries

Serbia, B&H, Montenegro





Katarina Devalijeva

Cervical cancer research

Two leading professors are putting in the joint efforts of Vinča Institute of Nuclear Sciences in Belgrade and the Research Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology “Georgi D. Efremov” in Skopje.

North Macedonia, Serbia



Nikola Vučić

Fighting toxic masculinity

Journalist, producer and book writer from Sarajevo challenging traditional masculinity perception in the Balkans. Visiting Belgrade and Podgorica to expand on his previous book research and public debate.

B&H, Serbia, Montenegro



