



BANCA D'ITALIA
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EU funded Programme for Strengthening the Central Bank Capacities in the Western Balkans with a view to the integration to the European System of Central Banks - Phase II

1. Launch event for the programme

On 21 September 2022 Banca d'Italia hosted the launch event for a three-year EU funded programme aimed at supporting central banks and banking supervisory agencies in EU candidate countries and potential candidates from the Western Balkans.¹ The programme is the follow-up to a similar initiative that was successfully completed in 2021.²



¹ See [Press release](#).

The recipient institutions are: the Bank of Albania, the Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Banking Agency of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Banking Agency of Republika Srpska, the Central Bank of the Republic of Kosovo, the Central Bank of Montenegro, the National Bank of the Republic of North Macedonia and the National Bank of Serbia.

² The first phase of the programme was successfully concluded on 19 January 2021, see [International Technical Cooperation Newsletter No. 17](#).

Twenty national central banks (NCBs) from the European System of Central Banks (ESCB)³ will take part as donors; the European Central Bank (ECB) will also provide experts. The Bundesbank will coordinate the activities. The European Union will fund the initiative with a €3 million budget, provided by the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II),

At the launch meeting, Mr Luigi Federico Signorini, Senior Deputy Governor of Banca d'Italia, delivered the [opening address](#), highlighting the importance of international technical cooperation as an instrument for institutional dialogue which contributes to building prosperity and peace.

Mr Florian Hauser, Team leader at the European Commission's Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, pointed out the significant contribution of the programme in supporting the Western Balkans central banks integration into the ESBC.

Ms Alexandra Hachmeister, Director General at the Deutsche Bundesbank, underlined the importance of reinforcing the institutional ties and of collaboration for the purpose of achieving tenable results.

The launch event was followed by the first Pro-



gramme Steering Committee (PSC), with the aim of sharing the project's institutional framework, its structure and the communication strategy with the participants, and discussing the planned incoming activities and the related financial tasks.

³ Namely, the central banks of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain.

2. Programme structure and Banca d'Italia's commitment

The programme has two components which will be implemented in parallel:

- **Component I**, consisting of 20 training events, addressing key central banking and supervisory issues, and three high-level policy workshops;
- **Component II**, which includes bilateral measures for a total of 90 man-days per beneficiary and internships.



The PSC is made up of members appointed from each of the participating institutions, both donors and beneficiaries. It is entrusted in managing the programme, reviewing its progress, giving guidance and taking decisions whenever required. It meets quarterly.

Banca d'Italia will be closely involved in the realization of the programme.

As regards Component I, Banca d'Italia will organize four training events on: payment systems, green and sustainable finance, monetary policy implementation, accounting. It will also take part in training events organized by other central banks on: internal audit, central bank governance, and cash management.

As regards Component II, Banca d'Italia will be responsible for eight bilateral activities on different issues with the central banks of Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. Banca d'Italia will also host an internship for the National Bank of Serbia on payment systems.

Video recorded during the meeting