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# Study on the Accelerated Integration Opportunities for the Western Balkans

Regional Cooperation for EU Integration

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The accelerated integration is a new mechanism for candidate countries introduced in the 2020 renewed methodology for enlargement. If the need arises for clearer incentives for candidates by supporting robust and accelerated economic development and delivering tangible benefits for citizens, thereby creating an environment that facilitates the substantial reforms required, such as enhanced investment opportunities, employment for accelerated integration, and a “phasing-in” to individual EU policies, the EU markets and EU programmes, this mechanism aims to ensure a level playing field and enhanced regional integration.

In October 2022, the European Council called for an acceleration of the accession process and further advancement of the gradual integration between the European Union and the Western Balkans, adopting a reversible and merit-based approach based on the revised methodology.

With the launch of the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans in October 2023, the significance of accelerated integration has been further elevated through its direct linkage to certain areas within pillar 1 of the Growth Plan. Specifically, the pillar targets seven areas: free movement of goods; free movement of services and workers; access to the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA); facilitation of road transport; integration and decarbonisation of energy markets; the Digital Single Market; and integration into industrial supply chains.

Since the introduction of accelerated integration as an instrument, there has been no comprehensive list of possibilities. This paper has identified 333 potential requests for accelerated integration to date. The aim of this study is to utilise the existing GIZ EUIO network to validate the data gathered, and to augment it with information regarding the degree

of integration into various networks, bodies, or institutions, all of which are interconnected with the overall level of EU integration.

By leveraging on existing network capacities and promoting regional cooperation among the countries, the Regional Cooperation for EU Integration project has developed this document to elucidate all the potential opportunities for accelerated integration, as well as to facilitate the exchange of experiences regarding how and why each country has identified specific targets as significant at this stage of integration.

The methodological approach to populating the table with the list of accelerated integration requests

The table comprises a list of possibilities for the accelerated integration of the Western Balkans on their path to EU membership. The list has been compiled using available information from online sources and contributions received from representatives of the GIZ EUIO Network in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Albania, to whom the team extends its utmost gratitude. To complete the table based on various instruments of accelerated integration the following methodology has been applied.

**For the bodies that are membership-based**, the following methodology has been used: **Member** – accepted to participate as a full member; **Observer** – Just observing the work, participating in meetings without possibility to affect the decision-making process. Usually connected to the EU membership; **Affiliated member** – Usually, in the advanced phase of integration where it is possible to become an affiliated member with voting rights till membership. Connected to the EU membership; **Not**

**a member** – Planned accelerated integration, but not yet embarked on the membership procedure or the reply received from the EC is that it is too early; and **Participating\cooperating on the basis of an agreement** – related to those bodies, institutions or EU programs where candidate countries take part on the basis of a separate agreement or contract.

**For bodies that do not consider membership**, the following methodology has been utilised: **“participating in meetings”** – usually for the bodies and networks that invite non- member states to participate, **“designated contact point”** – for the bodies and networks that consist of coordination amongst contact points and **“does not participate in the works”**.

The column of the table entitled **NOTES** has been used to state the status of the request. This part has been used to explain the following special information that are of importance for an accelerated integration: Considering a possible request; Request expressed at the screening or in the negotiation positions; Request sent to the European Union for obtaining the accelerated integration; Requests that are under negotiations with the EU; Positive reply, but pending the finalisation; Part of the reform measures under the Growth Plan Reform Agenda; Not recognized at this integration phase as a priority; Any other note you find useful to explain the situation under the request.

The whole work process on this important document started with the GIZ Regional Workshop entitled *“EU enlargement methodology and opportunities and challenges of the accelerated integration and new Growth Plan”* held on **15-18 April 2024** in Herceg-Novi, Montenegro. This marked the beginning of the work on the compilation and the processing of various data belonging to the overall list of the possible accelerated integration opportunities.

The work continued throughout 2024 and was finalised with the Regional Cooperation for EU Integration (RCEI) Workshop entitled *“Training on monitoring and reporting for the Growth Plan Reform Agendas & Accelerated*

*Integration requests”*, held on **16-18 December 2024**, in Tirana, Albania. This important meeting provided an excellent opportunity to discuss further the updating of the table, the work on specific accelerated integration possibilities and the approach to informing the government on the way forward once joining an accelerated integration.

During **January – March 2025**, the experts continued with the compilation of the table with the support of the national administration that actually provided their own inputs. To this end, inputs have been gathered from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Albania. All this very important and official information included in the table, has helped to ensure the validity of the findings of the experts, as well as to provide information on the missing data and where exactly they are missing.

The final meeting on the accelerated integration opportunities under the GIZ RCEI network was held in the framework of the Regional Workshop *“EU enlargement methodology and opportunities and challenges of the accelerated integration and new Growth Plan”* introducing the *“Regional Study of the Accelerated Integration Opportunities for the Western Balkans”*, from **7 to 10 of April 2025** in Budva, Montenegro. The table was presented during this meeting along with this document and further in-depth discussions were held in order to disseminate more information and knowledge to the stakeholders from the region.

## 2. ACCELERATED INTEGRATION AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE EU CANDIDATES

Accelerated integration into the European Union presents a vital opportunity for the Western Balkans, especially regarding economic development and stability. As these countries pursue EU membership, the potential benefits of accelerated integration can enhance their capacities to align with EU standards, foster economic growth, and ensure a smoother and stronger entry into the EU. The renewed methodology for the EU negotiations introduced in 2020 and the commitment of various EU officials towards the integration of the Western Balkan countries underscore the importance of this process. This methodology introduced more structured approach to the accelerated integration opportunities that already existed in various forms. Hence, this is now an instrument of becoming a part of EU policies decision-making prior to the EU membership.

From an economic perspective, accelerated integration serves to boost investor confidence in the region. By engaging in accelerated integration processes, the Western Balkan countries can benefit economically through improved market access, regulatory alignment with EU standards, and the potential to become integral parts of EU supply chains. Aligning with EU regulations will ultimately enhance the competitiveness of local businesses, facilitate trade, and create a conducive environment for innovation.

The economic implications of this accelerated integration extend beyond mere access to EU markets. It also asks for substantial investments in reforms that foster good governance, judiciary independence, and infrastructural development. In conclusion, accelerated integration into EU bodies, networks, and ICT platforms offers a significant pathway for the Western Balkan countries on their journey toward EU membership. By enhancing collaboration, these nations can better align with European

standards, thereby unlocking vital economic opportunities. The history of previous initiatives, coupled with the renewed methodologies established in 2020, highlight the importance of integration into the EU mechanisms as fundamental steps toward achieving broader economic stability and growth. The collective vision from EU leaders for a prosperous and stable Western Balkans further emphasises the need for these nations to engage actively in EU networks. Therefore, embracing accelerated integration is essential for establishing a resilient economic foundation and contributing meaningfully to the broader European community.

### 3. INTEGRATION STATUS OF THE WESTERN BALKANS

**Montenegro** opened its EU accession negotiations in June 2012. Since then, all negotiating chapters have been opened, with six provisionally closed (7, 10, 20, 25, 26 and 30). In June 2024, Montenegro achieved a major milestone with the positive assessment on meeting the interim benchmarks for the rule of law chapters. The intergovernmental conference with Montenegro held on 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2024 paved the way for the provisional closure of the negotiation chapters. This makes Montenegro the frontrunner of accession talks and the country that can share its experience on many levels of integration.

According to the many statements of EU leaders, Montenegro has an opportunity to finalise its accession negotiations in the foreseeable near future. This means that the focus in the future period will be on completing and closing the benchmarks in the rule of law area and closing benchmarks in the remaining chapters.

**Serbia** - Serbia opened accession talks in 2014 and has 22 out of 35 negotiating chapters open, two of which are provisionally closed. This makes Serbia the most advanced country after Montenegro. Frequent electoral cycles in Serbia have had an adverse impact on the continuity and the speed of the reforms progress related to EU accession. The authorities have continued to declare EU membership as their strategic goal. The path towards opening further clusters with Serbia will depend in particular on the progress and pace of rule of law reforms, as well as on the normalisation of relations with Pristina.

Serbia needs to fulfil interim benchmarks for Chapter 23, 24 and 35 and make enough progress to open the additional clusters (chapters) in order to proceed with its integration to the EU. The country is expecting

to open the remaining chapters from Cluster 3 (remaining 3 chapters 10, 16 and 19).

**Albania** - On 18 October 2019, the European Council considered opening accession negotiations with Albania. On March 25, 2020, the General Affairs Council of the EU decided to open accession negotiations with the Republic of Albania. On March 26, 2020, the European Council adopted the decision of the General Affairs Council of the EU to open negotiations with Albania. With the official opening of accession talks in July 2022, the country has managed to finalise the screening exercise and fulfil opening benchmarks for the Fundamentals cluster.

At the end of 2023, Albania submitted its roadmaps on the public administration reform and the rule of law, which allowed for the Fundamentals cluster to be opened in October 2024 during the second Intergovernmental Conference. Albania opened Cluster 6 – External relations in December 2024. The country also opened cluster 2 in March 2025, and cluster 3 in May 2025.

**North Macedonia** - The country officially opened the accession talks in July 2022 together with Albania. It has successfully finalised the screening exercise and is working on the opening of the first and the most significant Cluster (Fundamentals). In December 2023, North Macedonia adopted the roadmaps on the rule of law and on the public administration reform.

The adoption of the action plan on the protection of minorities is still pending. Existing bilateral agreements, including the Prespa agreement between Greece and North Macedonia and the Treaty of Friendship,



Good Neighbourliness and Cooperation between Bulgaria and North Macedonia, represent also one of the basis for the progress in the negotiating process.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina** - In line with the Commission's recommendation, in December 2023 the European Council decided to open accession negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina, once the necessary degree of compliance with the membership criteria is achieved. In light of the results achieved since 2022, on 12 March 2024, the Commission considered that Bosnia and Herzegovina had reached the necessary level of compliance with the membership criteria. Building on the Commission's recommendation, the European Council decided to open the EU accession negotiations with the country on 22 March 2024. Following this decision, on 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2024, the Commission held a first introductory meeting to explain the process ahead, in particular the screening.

The Commission is preparing the negotiating framework, aiming to have it adopted by the Council the very moment all relevant steps set out in the Commission recommendation of October 2022 are taken. However, the positive momentum was affected by the adoption of separate entity laws on election, referenda and immunity, the continued non-recognition of the Constitutional Court's authority and decisions, as well as continued secessionist rhetoric. The country needs to receive the general negotiating framework from the EU in order to be able to hold its first Intergovernmental Conference and commence with the bilateral screening.

**Kosovo** has been part of the Stabilisation and Association Process since the Thessaloniki Summit in 2003. Its European future has been reaffirmed and consistently confirmed in the European Council conclusions over the past two decades. Currently, Kosovo holds the status of a potential candidate for the European Union (EU) membership. The EU – Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Agreement has entered into force on 1 April 2016. On 15 December 2022, during the Czech EU Presidency, Kosovo submitted the formal application for EU membership to this Presidency, in Prague, in line

with Article 49 of the Treaty on the European Union. Kosovo has shown the capacity to fulfil its obligations under the SAA through the National Programme for European Integration and the European Reform Agenda. Kosovo is also actively implementing its Reform Agenda under the EU Reform and Growth Facility (RGF) / Growth Plan for the Western Balkans, focusing on four pillars: integration with the EU's single market, regional economic integration, reform agenda, and increased financial support. These efforts have significantly improved the quality of public policies and legislation, demonstrating Kosovo's ability to adopt and implement the EU *acquis*. Since 1 January 2024, Kosovo nationals have been enjoying visa-free travel to the EU.

### **The growth plan and reform agendas of the Western Balkans countries**

- The Commission adopted the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans on 8 November 2023. This plan aims to accelerate the socio-economic convergence of the region with the EU and to pave the way toward EU membership. The Plan is supported by an increase of the financial assistance through the new Reform and Growth Facility which entered into force on 25 May 2024. The Facility will complement the current financial assistance under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III). The Facility has a financial envelope of €6 billion, including €2 billion in grants and €4 billion in highly concessional loans. At least half of the total amount (grants and loans) will go to investments through the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF). The remaining amount of loans will be provided to the treasuries of the Western Balkan governments to accelerate growth based on socio-economic reforms.

The Commission approved the Reform Agendas of Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia at the end of October 2024, following the EU Member States' positive opinion. In their ambitious Reform Agendas, the five Western Balkans governments commit to undertake the socio-economic and fundamental reforms to spur growth and convergence with the EU under the Growth Plan for the period of 2024 - 2027. Bosnia- Herzegovina missed the deadline to file a reform agenda, which

is necessary to receive EU Growth Plan funds. This step was key to allow payments under the EU's €6 billion Reform and Growth Facility which is possible upon completion of the agreed reform steps.

The Reform Agendas focus on the reforms in the priority areas of the rule of law and other fundamentals, governance, the digital and green transition, human capital development and the business environment. In addition, each beneficiary has proposed a list of indicative investments to be funded under the Facility, critical to unlocking socio-economic growth, to be approved in the context of the Western Balkan Investment Framework.

The Commission has assessed each Reform Agenda based on the criteria established by the Reform and Growth Facility Regulation. The Commission concluded that the Reform Agendas fulfil the objectives of the Facility, including to accelerate the closing of the socio-economic gap between the beneficiary and the Union, and to further strengthen the fundamentals of the enlargement process.

Payments will be made twice a year until 2027, based on requests submitted by the Western Balkans partners and verification by the Commission. Albania and North Macedonia were the first ones to receive these. On 24 March 2025, the EU released its first funds for North Macedonia worth 52.2 million euros, of which 24.5 million will go to the state budget for reforms, and 28 million for infrastructural projects. Albania was allocated 64.5 million euros the day after, of which 30 million in the form of loans to support reforms and 34.5 million euros will be allocated through the Balkan Investment Fund for infrastructure.

## 4. FORMS OF ACCELERATED INTEGRATION

Within the European Union, accelerated integration is achieved through a variety of forms, each represented by distinct EU institutions and mechanisms that promote convergence and policy harmonisation among member states.

This comprehensive table, which catalogues **333** distinct accelerated integration requests, provides a detailed overview of the opportunities available for candidate countries on their path to EU membership. Each of these **333** entries represents a specific form of accelerated integration, encompassing a broad spectrum of mechanisms across diverse thematic clusters. A review of the first column of the table—the one listing the various forms—reveals a heterogeneous mix of opportunities.

These opportunities can be broadly classified into several categories. For instance, those with titles incorporating terms such as “Agency,” “Bank,” or “College” are grouped as official bodies; titles that include “Expert Group,” “Committee,” or “Working Group” indicate committee-type instruments; references to “Programme” or “Fund” suggest union programmes; entries containing “Network” denote networking platforms; those mentioning “Institute” refer to dedicated research or capacity-building bodies; and finally, references to “Portal,” “Platform,” or “System” are typically associated with ICT platforms.

An aggregated analysis based on these key indicators shows an approximate distribution of:

- 42 opportunities classified as official bodies,
- 169 as committees or expert groups,

- 25 as union programmes,
- 67 as networks,
- 10 as institutes, and
- 18 as ICT platforms.

Although these figures are estimations derived from textual cues within the integration form names, they effectively illustrate the diverse and multifaceted nature of the accelerated integration framework.

Further insights are provided by data on how each WB member participates in these opportunities. The table covers **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia**, including the status for every integration request recorded for each. Four of them have provided relevant official data on their participation, namely Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Albania, while two countries have not provided official data on their side, hence the table contains data available from official sources leaving blank those spaces where no data is available.

Having provided their official data, the overall outlook is as follows for **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Montenegro**:

**Albania provided data on the 328 out of a total of 333 accelerated integration opportunities.**

### **1. OFFICIAL BODIES**

- members in 9 cases,
- affiliated members in 4 cases,
- not a member in 17,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 8,
- observer in 2,
- designated contact point in 1.

### **2. PROGRAMMES**

- members in 1 case,
- not a member in 9 cases,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 13 cases,
- participating in meetings in 1 case,
- designated contact point in 1 case.

### **3. COMMITTEES**

- members in 12 cases,
- not a member in 137 cases,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 6 cases,
- observer in 11 cases,
- participating in meetings in 2 cases.

### **4. NETWORKS**

- members in 15 cases,
- not a member in 45 cases,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 3 cases,
- observer in 2 cases,
- participating in meetings in 1 case.

### **5. INSTITUTES**

- members in 3 cases,
- not a member in 7 cases.

### **6. ICT PLATFORMS**

- members in 6 cases,
- not a member in 12 cases.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina provided data on the 285 opportunities of accelerated integration out of 333 possible.  
The division of the received data is as follows:**

#### **1. OFFICIAL BODIES:**

- members in 8 cases,
- affiliated members in 1 case,
- not a member in 16 cases,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 9 cases,
- observer in 1 case and
- designated contact point in 1 case.

#### **2. UNION PROGRAMMES:**

- not a member in 4 cases,
- observers in 1 case,
- participating in meetings in 1 case,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 1 case,

#### **3. INSTITUTES**

- not a member in 3 cases,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 11 cases.

#### **4. COMMITTEES**

- not a member in 140 cases, membership is achieved in 2 cases,
- observers in 5 cases,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 4 cases and
- participating in meetings in 1 case.

#### **5. NETWORK**

- members in 8 cases,
- not a member in 40 cases.

#### **6. ICT PLATFORM**

- members in 2 cases,
- not a member in 13 cases,
- observer in 1 case,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 1 case.

**Kosovo provided data in 276 cases of possible accelerated integration opportunities out of 333 possible.  
The division of the received data is as follows:**

#### **1. OFFICIAL BODIES:**

- not a member in 18 cases,
- members in 4 cases,
- affiliated members in 5 cases,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 5 cases,
- observers in 1 case
- designated contact point in 1 case.

#### **2. UNION PROGRAMMES:**

- not a member in 4 cases,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 5 cases,
- observer in 1 case
- participating in meetings in 1 case.

#### **3. COMMITTEES**

- not a member in 151 cases,
- membership is achieved in 1 case,
- observers in 3 cases,
- cooperating on the basis of an agreement in 2 cases and
- participating in meetings in 1 case.

#### **4. NETWORK**

- not a member in 48 cases,
- members in 3 cases,
- affiliated members in 1 case,
- participating in meetings in 1 case.

#### **5. INSTITUTES**

- not a member in 3 cases

#### **6. ICT PLATFORM**

- not a member in 17 cases.

**Montenegro provided data on 278 accelerated integration opportunities out of 333 possible.  
The division of the received data is as follows:**

### **1. OFFICIAL BODIES:**

- not a member in 14 cases,
- members in 7 cases,
- affiliated members in 54 cases,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 8 cases,
- observers in 2 cases
- designated contact point in 1 case.

### **2. UNION PROGRAMMES:**

- members in 1 case
- not a member in 5 cases,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 11 cases,
- designated contact point in 1 case,
- participating in meetings in 1 case.

### **3. COMMITTEES**

- not a member in 124 cases,
- membership is achieved in 9 cases,
- observers in 10 cases,
- cooperating on the basis of an agreement in 4 cases and
- participating in meetings in 1 case.

### **4. NETWORK**

- not a member in 40 cases,
- members in 12 cases,
- participating on the basis of an agreement in 2 cases,
- observers in 2 cases, and
- participating in meetings in 1 case.

### **5. INSTITUTES**

- not a member in 3 cases

### **6. ICT PLATFORM**

- members in 6 cases.
- not a member in 10 cases

Given that North Macedonia and Serbia have not provided detailed data, only general data have been gathered through publicly available sources and the work of such consultations is presented hereto.

**North Macedonia** has available data on 170 cases of the accelerated integration opportunities. They are full members in 30 instances, with observer status recorded in 8 cases and participation on the basis of an agreement in 35 instances. North Macedonia is not a member in 97 instances.

According to the available data on 175 accelerated integration opportunities, **Serbia** is noted as a full member in 32 instances, holds observer status in 10 cases, and participates on the basis of an agreement in 33 instances. Serbia is not a member or does not actively participate in 100 opportunities.

\* \* \*

These aggregated figures serve as a valuable diagnostic tool for understanding the current state of accelerated integration among the Western Balkans and help identify areas where targeted efforts might yield further *progress toward EU membership*.

*In summary, each of the accelerated integration opportunities, from official bodies to ICT platforms—embodies a facet of the EU's multifaceted approach to accelerated integration. By drawing on the expertise of specialised agencies, leveraging the collective wisdom of expert committees, and engaging citizens through dynamic programmes and networks, the European Union creates an environment where reform and convergence are not merely aspirational but are achieved through concrete, innovative mechanisms.*



## 5. EXAMPLES OF VARIOUS FORMS OF ACCELERATED INTEGRATION

### 5.1. OFFICIAL BODIES (AGENCIES, BANKS, COLLEGES)

*Official bodies underpin the integration process by providing specialised functions that ensure coherence and efficiency in the implementation of EU policies. Agencies such as the **European Banking Authority** are tasked with upholding the integrity of the Union's financial sector, while the **European Investment Bank** plays a crucial role in funding infrastructural and development projects that further the single market. In the realm of education and research, institutions such as the **European University Institute** in Florence serve as centres of academic excellence and policy training, nurturing a generation of experts well-versed in EU law and governance.*

**1. European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA)** enables cooperation with WB countries through a working arrangement aimed at addressing drug-related challenges. This agreement coordinates efforts on health-related drug issues and criminal drug activities, respectively. The partnership is aimed to strengthen countries National Drug Observatory and establish an Early Warning System for drugs, enhancing ability to monitor and react to emerging drug trends effectively. All WB countries are affiliated members. The membership in the European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA) offers several advantages:

- 1. Enhanced Cooperation:** Membership fosters collaboration between EUDA and the Western Balkans, allowing for shared knowledge, resources, and strategies to tackle drug-related challenges effectively. This allows the members of the Western Balkans to obtain the benefits at the same level as the EU Member States.
- 2. Strengthening National Drug Observatories:** EUDA provides support to enhance the capabilities of the national drug observatories of the Western Balkans, which help countries to monitor drug use, trends, and related health issues more effectively.
- 3. Early Warning System:** Members can establish and participate in an Early Warning System for drugs, which aids in promptly identifying and responding to emerging drug threats and trends.
- 4. Access to Expertise and Training:** Members benefit from access to EUDA's expertise, training programs, and best practices in drug monitoring, prevention and treatment methods.
- 5. Increased Funding Opportunities:** Membership may open avenues for receiving funding or resources from the EU or related organisations to implement drug-related initiatives and research.
- 6. Promoting Policy Alignment:** Being part of EUDA encourages alignment with EU drug policies and practices, aiding in the development of effective drug strategies for the key institutions dealing with preventive and criminal aspects of drugs.
- 7. Improved Health Outcomes:** By addressing drug-related health issues cooperatively, members of the WB can improve public health outcomes and reduce the impact of drug misuse in their populations.
- 8. Networking Opportunities:** Membership provides opportunities for our administrations in networking with other countries and organisations, facilitating partnerships that can enhance drug-related research and responses.

*Overall, EUDA membership strengthens the capacity of the WB countries to manage drug-related challenges effectively and to implement evidence-based policies and practices.*

**II. EU Agency for Asylum (EUAA)** enables cooperation with the WB countries through a structured partnership established by a “Roadmap for Cooperation”. This roadmap defines joint goals for enhancing countries asylum procedures, aligning them with the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and EU standards. The agreement focuses on technical and capacity-building support to improve the country’s ability to process and manage asylum applications effectively, ensuring that the legal and operational frameworks are harmonised with EU best practices. Under this roadmap, EUAA provides expertise in areas like initial applicant identification, case management, and processing standards.

Specific improvements include the development of standardised procedures for the initial contact and registration of asylum seekers as well as detailed training on asylum application processing. Additionally, EUAA assists in developing enhanced safeguards for vulnerable groups, particularly unaccompanied minors, to better ensure the rights and well-being of children in asylum procedures. By focusing on the strategic institutional strengthening, the country is positioning itself to align with broader EU asylum policies, which supports its goal of EU membership and demonstrates a commitment to adhering to the EU law within Chapter 24 of the accession process. None of the WB countries is a member, but **Montenegro** signed a cooperation agreement. Membership and cooperation with the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) through the “Roadmap for Cooperation” provide several advantages to the Western Balkan (WB) countries, particularly as they work towards aligning their asylum procedures with the EU standards. Here are the key benefits:

**1. Alignment with the EU Standards:** The roadmap helps WB members align their asylum procedures with the Common European Asylum

System (CEAS) and EU legal frameworks, facilitating smoother integration into the EU.

- 2. Technical and Capacity-Building Support:** EUAA offers technical support and capacity-building initiatives to our countries which help to enhance the capabilities of our authorities to effectively process and manage asylum applications.
- 3. Expertise and Best Practices:** this is a very good opportunity for our administrations to gain access to EUAA’s expertise in asylum policy implementation, including case management, initial applicant identification, and processing standards, ensuring adherence to best practices.
- 4. Standardised Procedures:** The development of standardised procedures for the initial contact and registration of asylum seekers improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the asylum process, which for the region of the Balkans is of the utmost importance being at the crossroads of the migrant routes.
- 5. Training Sessions:** EUAA provides detailed training on asylum application processing, equipping personnel with the necessary skills and knowledge to handle cases appropriately, which the asylum offices in the Western Balkans can use in their everyday work.
- 6. Improved Safeguards for Vulnerable Groups:** The roadmap emphasises the development of enhanced protections for vulnerable populations, especially unaccompanied minors, ensuring their rights and well-being during asylum procedures.
- 7. Support for EU Membership Goals:** By adhering to EUAA guidelines, our countries demonstrate a commitment to align with broader EU policies, advancing their aspirations for EU membership and

facilitating their accession process, particularly in relation to Chapter 24 on justice, freedom and security.

8. **Networking and Collaboration Opportunities:** Cooperation with EUAA opens up networking opportunities for our administrations with other countries and organisations, fostering collaboration on mutual challenges in the field of asylum.

**III. European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO)**, enables countries to establish a significant cooperative relationship with the EPPO to strengthen anti-corruption and anti-fraud measures, particularly concerning EU budget protection. Usually, a working arrangement is signed with the EPPO to facilitate collaborative efforts in combating crimes involving EU financial interests. This arrangement includes guidelines for information sharing, joint investigations, and coordination on cases involving EU budgetary fraud and financial crime. This cooperation allows countries to participate in joint investigation teams alongside EPPO member countries for efficient cross-border prosecution and information exchange on strategic matters.

As part of the agreement, the country may also appoint a liaison officer to the EPPO's headquarters in Luxembourg, enhancing its operational capacity and communication with the EPPO. Currently, only **Montenegro** has signed the agreement on cooperation. Membership and cooperation with the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) offer several advantages for countries, especially regarding strengthening anti-corruption and anti-fraud measures. Here are the key benefits:

1. **Enhanced Cooperation:** Establishing a cooperative relationship with EPPO allows the prosecution offices in the Western Balkans to work collaboratively with the EU member states on issues related to EU budget protection and financial crime.

2. **Strengthening Anti-Corruption Measures:** The membership enhances a candidate country's ability to implement effective anti-corruption strategies, aligning local practices with the European standards in combating fraud.
3. **Access to Expertise:** The countries gain access to the EPPO's expertise, resources, and best practices in prosecuting crimes related to EU financial interests, which can improve the methodologies of the prosecution services in the Balkans.
4. **Joint Investigations:** The agreement can facilitate WBs' participation in joint investigation teams, promoting efficient cross-border collaboration in tackling complex crimes that impact EU financial interests.
5. **Information Sharing:** The framework promotes guidelines for sharing information and intelligence with the EPPO, improving the capacity to respond to financial crime and enhancing legal outcomes, with a direct benefit to our administrations.
6. **Coordination on Cases:** Our administrations can benefit from organised coordination on cases involving EU budgetary fraud, leading to a more effective prosecution and resolution of cases affecting EU finances.
7. **Operational Capacity Enhancement:** By appointing a liaison officer to the EPPO's headquarters, the WB administrations can enhance their operational capacity, improving communication and collaboration with EPPO's officials.
8. **Improved Legal Frameworks:** Participation in the EPPO cooperation fosters the development of the WB legal frameworks that are consistent with the EU law, thereby strengthening the rule of law within the region.

9. **Demonstration of Commitment to EU Values:** Engaging with the EPPO sends a strong signal that our region is committed to upholding the EU values of transparency, accountability and good governance.
10. **Increased Trust and Credibility:** Cooperation with the EPPO can enhance the credibility of the WB countries among EU institutions and member states, improving relations and fostering further cooperation in other areas.

**IV. The European Committee for Standardisation (CEN)** – represents an alliance that brings together national standardisation bodies of 34 European countries. The Republic of Serbia, i. e. the Serbian Institute for Standardisation, is a member of the Committee. Hence, this activity can be considered fulfilled in the context of Serbia. From the Western Balkans region, North Macedonia, i. e. the Institute for Standardisation of the Republic of North Macedonia, is also a member. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro are affiliated members, while Kosovo is considering a membership request. The candidate countries and the Western Balkans members of CEN can benefit in several concrete ways:

1. **Trade Facilitation** – Adopting the European standards simplifies export procedures by ensuring products meet EU market requirements, reducing costs and time for businesses in the Western Balkans.
2. **Regulatory Alignment with the EU** – Membership helps our administrations to harmonise their technical regulations with the EU legislation, supporting their EU accession process.
3. **Market Competitiveness** – Companies from the Western Balkans can gain access to the best practices and internationally recognised standards, improving product quality and market positioning.

4. **Improved Consumer and Environmental Protection** – Compliance with CEN standards ensures higher safety, quality, and sustainability levels in products and services in the region of the Balkans.
5. **Support for Innovation and Industry Development** – Participation allows access to cutting-edge standardisation processes, fostering technological advancements and innovation. Considering the low level of innovation and industry development in the WB, this benefit represents one of the key features.
6. **Regional and EU Integration** – Strengthening cooperation with the EU and regional partners through common standardisation frameworks enhances economic and political ties to bring the Western Balkans closer to the EU.
7. **Simplified Access to Funding and Investment** – Compliance with the European standards makes it easier for the WB economies to attract EU funding, international investors and economic support for infrastructure and industry projects.
8. **Capacity Building and Expertise Exchange** – The Western Balkan standardisation bodies benefit from knowledge-sharing opportunities, training and cooperation with the European counterparts.

**V. The European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation (CENELEC)** – represents an alliance that brings together national standardisation bodies in the field of electrotechnology. Serbia is a member of the Committee. The practice of participating countries in CEN/CENELEC has shown that countries can have one representative national standardisation body in both Committees or two separate bodies. The Serbian Institute for Standardisation is a member of both Committees. North Macedonia has the same representation model (the Institute for Standardisation of the Republic of North Macedonia). Albania, BiH and

Montenegro are affiliated members, while Kosovo is considering a membership request. Participating in CENELEC offers several advantages, including:

1. **Access to European Standards** – Participation ensures alignment with the European electrotechnical standards, facilitating trade and market access within the EU and beyond for the candidate countries.
2. **Influence on Standardisation** – Candidate Countries can contribute to the development of technical standards, ensuring that their national interests are taken into consideration when shaping regulations.
3. **Harmonisation of Regulations** – Adopting CENELEC standards helps the Western Balkan Members create a unified regulatory framework, reducing technical barriers to trade.
4. **Improved Competitiveness** – Industries benefit from internationally recognised standards, enhancing product quality and increasing global market opportunities, including the candidate countries.
5. **Stronger Regional Integration** – Participation supports closer collaboration with the neighbouring countries, fostering economic and technical cooperation not just for the EU MS, but also for the members of the WB as well as intra-regional cooperation (i. e. EU – Western Balkans).
6. **Knowledge Transfer and Innovation** – Engaging with CENELEC facilitates access to the latest technological developments and best practices in electrotechnology which for the Balkan institutes for standardisation is sine qua non.
7. **Support for EU Integration** – For non-EU countries, aligning with CENELEC standards can be an important step toward EU accession and compliance with the EU directives. Therefore, this allows our administrations to improve our way forward to the membership.

## 5.2. COMMITTEES (EXPERT GROUPS)

*Committees composed of expert groups represent another pivotal form of accelerated integration within the EU. These committees, convened by bodies such as the European Commission, bring together specialists from diverse fields to advise on critical issues ranging from digital transformation to environmental sustainability. An example of this is the **High-Level Expert Group on Artificial Intelligence**, which was tasked with providing recommendations on the ethical and regulatory frameworks necessary to foster innovation while safeguarding public interest. Through such expert groups, the EU ensures that its policies remain adaptive and forward-looking, informed by the latest research and technological advancements.*

Membership of Western Balkan (WB) countries in the **Consumer Financial Programme Committee** offers various advantages related to consumer protection, financial education, and aligning local practices with the EU standards, ultimately contributing to stronger and more resilient financial systems. According to the data provided, only Montenegro is a member, while Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina are not members. As for the remaining countries there have been no data provided or they are available.

1. **Enhanced Consumer Protection:** The membership of the WB countries provides a framework for sharing best practices and developing policies that protect consumers in financial markets, ensuring they are treated fairly and transparently.
2. **Improved Financial Literacy:** Participation of the WB countries in the committee promotes initiatives aimed at increasing financial literacy among consumers, helping them make informed decisions about financial products and services.
3. **Access to Resources and Expertise:** The WB countries gain access to valuable resources, research, and expertise from other member states



and institutions, facilitating the development of effective consumer financial protection strategies.

4. **Collaboration on Regulatory Practices:** The membership of candidate countries allows for collaboration on the development and harmonisation of regulatory practices related to consumer finance, aligning local policies with the EU standards.
5. **Addressing Consumer Issues:** The committee provides a platform for discussing and addressing emerging issues in consumer finance, enabling WB countries to stay informed and proactive in tackling challenges.
6. **Promotion of Fair Financial Services:** Membership encourages the promotion of fair practices in the provision of financial services, helping to create a more competitive and equitable financial market for consumers.
7. **Strengthening Trust in Financial Systems:** By enhancing consumer protection and financial education, the membership can help build consumer trust in financial institutions, which is essential for a robust financial system.
8. **Facilitating Regional Cooperation:** The involvement in the committee fosters regional cooperation among WB countries, promoting collective efforts to address consumer finance challenges and share successful initiatives.
9. **Data Sharing and Best Practices:** Membership allows for the exchange of data, insights, and best practices related to consumer financial behaviour, which can inform policy-making and improve financial services.
10. **Support for Economic Stability:** By promoting responsible lending and borrowing practices, the committee helps to support overall

economic stability and prevent issues related to over-indebtedness among consumers.

11. **Increased Participation in Policy Development:** The membership provides WB countries with a voice in policy discussions at the European level, allowing them to influence decisions that affect consumer finance and advocate for their interests.
12. **Alignment with EU Standards:** Engaging with the Consumer Financial Programme Committee helps align WB countries' consumer finance policies with the EU regulations and standards, supporting their integration into European frameworks.

### 5.3. UNION PROGRAMMES

*Union programmes are among the most visible instruments of accelerated integration, as they actively engage citizens and institutions in collaborative projects across borders. **Erasmus+** stands out as a flagship initiative that facilitates educational exchanges and cultural mobility, forging a shared European identity among young people and professionals alike. Similarly, **Horizon** has been instrumental in promoting research and innovation, connecting universities, businesses, and research institutions to address societal challenges and drive economic growth across the continent. These programmes not only provide financial support but also establish networks of collaboration that underpin the broader goals of the Union.*

**I. The Digital Europe Programme** is a new digital development strategy created and presented by the European Commission. The aim is to create a strategic fund for the development of supercomputers, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, digital skills and digitalisation. The WB countries do not have direct access to the fund, but indirectly through the Horizon

Europe programme, which is addressed in the New Growth Plan as a form of associated status. The plan envisages a new institutional framework for full inclusion in the Digital Europe programme. Given that the Republic of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo signed agreements on association with the Horizon Europe programme in 2021, the Growth Plan specifically highlights the need to extend the agreement on wider participation in the programme.

This applies in particular to the Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities, as well as Restore our Ocean and Waters strategies. In this light, it is necessary to analyse the potentially new institutional framework for participation in the Horizon Europe programme with the European Commission. Membership and association with The Digital Europe Programme (DEP) offer several advantages for the Western Balkan countries, especially considering their pathways for indirect access through the Horizon Europe programme. The key benefits are as follows:

1. **Access to Funding for Digital Development:** While WB members do not have direct access to DEP funds, involvement in Horizon Europe provides financial support for projects related to digital infrastructure, AI, cybersecurity and digital skills enhancement.
2. **Alignment with EU Digital Standards:** Engaging with the DEP through the associated status allows WB countries to align their digital strategies with the EU standards and practices, aiding in advancing their digital transformation agendas.
3. **Enhanced Digital Infrastructure:** Participation in Horizon Europe can facilitate investments in digital infrastructure in the WB economies, including supercomputing capabilities, which are crucial for advancing research and innovation.
4. **Capacity Building in Digital Skills:** The programme emphasizes developing digital skills, enabling the WB economies to enhance their human capital and prepare a workforce equipped for the digital economy.
5. **Collaboration on Research and Innovation:** Being part of Horizon Europe fosters collaboration of the WB economies with the EU member states and other associated countries, promoting joint research initiatives and innovation projects in digital sectors.
6. **Increased Competitiveness:** Accessing financial resources and expertise from DEP-related projects can enhance the competitiveness of local businesses and industries in the digital space, promoting economic growth in the Western Balkans.
7. **Support for Climate Initiatives:** Enhanced participation in initiatives related to Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities aligns with global sustainability goals, positioning the WB members to contribute to and benefit from climate-related projects.
8. **Networking Opportunities:** Participation creates opportunities for networking of the WB members with other countries and institutions involved in digital initiatives, fostering knowledge exchange and collaboration on best practices.
9. **Strengthened Institutional Framework:** The proposed new institutional framework for participation in DEP emphasises the development of robust governance structures that can support ongoing digital initiatives and ensure effective implementation in the Western Balkans.
10. **Boosting Policy Development:** Engaging with the DEP encourages the WB countries to develop sound digital policies and regulatory frameworks that facilitate digitisation and foster innovation ecosystems.
11. **Long-term Strategic Goals:** The association with the DEP aligns with broader goals for European integration, supporting WB countries in

their aspirations for closer ties to the European Union and contributing to the region's overall development.

**II. The ERASMUS+ programme** for education, training, youth and sport is one of the largest programmes of the Union for education and youth. Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. It has an estimated budget of €26.2 billion. This is nearly double the funding compared to its predecessor programme (2014- 2020). The 2021-2027 programme places a strong focus on social inclusion, the green and digital transitions and promoting young people's participation in democratic life. It supports priorities and activities set out in the European Education Area, Digital Education Action Plan and the European Skills Agenda.

The programme also supports the European Pillar of Social Rights, implements the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 and develops the European dimension in sports. The Western Balkans Growth Plan envisages membership in the ERASMUS+ programme for all economies of the Western Balkans. Membership in the Erasmus+ programme offers numerous advantages for countries, particularly for those in the Western Balkans. Here are the key benefits:

- 1. Access to Funding:** With an estimated budget of €26.2 billion, Erasmus+ provides significant financial resources that can be utilised for various educational, training, and youth initiatives, also enabling the WB countries to enhance their educational systems.
- 2. Strengthened Educational Cooperation:** Membership promotes collaboration between educational institutions across Europe, allowing the WB countries to share best practices, resources, and experiences that can improve local education systems.
- 3. Social Inclusion:** The programme emphasises social inclusion, thus helping to ensure that marginalised groups, such as the economically

disadvantaged youth, have access to quality education and training opportunities in the Western Balkans.

- 4. Support for Green and Digital Transitions:** Erasmus+ aligns with the goals of the green and digital transitions, providing training and resources that prepare students and institutions in the Western Balkans for the challenges and opportunities of a digitised and sustainable future.
- 5. Increased Mobility Opportunities:** The programme provides opportunities for students and staff to study, train, or work abroad, fostering cultural exchange and enhancing personal and professional development in the Western Balkans.
- 6. Youth Participation in Democracy:** Erasmus+ encourages young people to engage in democratic processes, empowering them with the skills and knowledge necessary to participate effectively in civic life, which is a key issue for the WB members and their work on the fundamentals.
- 7. Development of Skills and Competencies:** The programme supports initiatives aimed at developing key skills and competencies in students and young people in the Western Balkans, aligning training with the European Skills Agenda.
- 8. Promotion of Higher Education and Vocational Training:** Erasmus+ supports both higher education and vocational training in our region, helping to ensure that educational offerings meet labour market demands and enhance employability.
- 9. Fostering Sports Development:** The programme contributes to the development of the European dimension in sport, promoting participation in sports activities, which can improve health and social integration in the Western Balkans.



**10. Networking and Partnerships:** Membership facilitates networking opportunities and the establishment of partnerships between educational institutions, NGOs, and organisations across the EU and the Western Balkans, fostering collaboration and innovation.

**11. Alignment with EU Policy Goals:** Engaging with Erasmus+ supports the implementation of various EU policy frameworks, such as the European Education Area and the EU Youth Strategy, promoting regional integration and alignment with the EU standards both for the EU and the Western Balkans.

**III.** Montenegro joined the **EU4Health programme** in January 2024, becoming the first Western Balkan country to do so. Bosnia and Herzegovina has done the same afterwards. The programme, with a budget of €5.3 billion for 2021–2027, aims to enhance health resilience and support the digital transformation of health systems. By joining, the countries now can access funding to modernise their healthcare infrastructure, particularly in areas like mental health, cancer treatment, and digital healthcare solutions. The EU4Health partnership also enables countries to take part in joint actions with other European countries, facilitating knowledge-sharing and collaboration on health innovations and preparedness strategies. Membership in the EU4Health Programme offers several **significant advantages** for countries like Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially as they aim to improve their healthcare systems and resilience. Here are the key benefits:

- 1. Access to Substantial Funding:** With a budget of €5.3 billion for 2021–2027, the EU4Health Programme provides financial resources that can be utilised for various health initiatives, enabling the members of the Western Balkans to modernise and enhance their healthcare infrastructure.
- 2. Enhanced Health Resilience:** The programme focuses on improving health resilience, which is crucial for better preparedness against

health crises, such as pandemics or public health emergencies, which we have all experienced with the latest Covid crisis.

- 3. Support for Digital Transformation:** EU4Health can assist the Western Balkan countries in transitioning to digital health solutions, fostering the implementation of telemedicine, electronic health records, and other digital healthcare innovations that improve service delivery.
- 4. Focus on Priority Health Areas:** The programme specifically supports key areas such as mental health and cancer treatment, allowing the Western Balkan countries to target pressing health issues and improve outcomes for their populations.
- 5. Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing:** Membership enables participation of the Western Balkan countries in joint actions with other EU countries, facilitating collaboration on health innovations, research, and best practices, which can enhance local capabilities.
- 6. Strengthened Public Health Systems:** The programme supports the strengthening of public health systems, improving disease prevention, health promotion, and healthcare services for the Western Balkan communities.
- 7. Capacity Building:** EU4Health provides opportunities for capacity building within the healthcare workforce, enhancing training and resources for healthcare professionals and institutions including in the Western Balkans.
- 8. Alignment with EU Health Standards:** By participating in EU4Health, the WB countries can align their health policies and practices with EU standards, improving the quality of healthcare and ensuring compliance with European regulations.

9. **Integration into European Health Networks:** Membership allows WB countries to be part of the European health networks, enhancing their ability to engage in dialogue and cooperation on shared health challenges.
10. **Long-Term Health Strategy Development:** The support provided by EU4Health helps the WB countries develop long-term health strategies that are responsive to both current needs and future challenges in the health sector.
11. **Demonstration of Commitment to Health Goals:** Joining EU4Health signifies a commitment to improving public health and aligns the WBs with the broader European goals for health, ultimately supporting regional cooperation and integration.

**IV. EU Single Market Programme (SMP)** has a budget of €4.2 billion from 2021 to 2027, and is designed to enhance the internal market, support the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and promote economic recovery across Europe. Previously, countries benefited from similar support through the COSME programme, which helped local businesses gain access to international networks and expand their capabilities through initiatives such as the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) and Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs. Countries of the WB now cooperate on the basis of an agreement with this programme. Membership and participation in the EU Single Market Programme (SMP) offer several advantages for the Western Balkan (WB) countries, especially as they seek to enhance their economic development and integration with the European Union. Here are the key benefits:

1. **Access to Funding:** With a budget of €4.2 billion for 2021 to 2027, the SMP provides significant financial resources that can be utilised in the Western Balkans for various initiatives aimed at enhancing the internal market and supporting economic recovery.

2. **Support for SMEs:** The programme places a strong emphasis on enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), helping local businesses in the WB access funding, training, and resources necessary to grow and thrive.
3. **Facilitated Market Access:** Participation in the SMP assists WB countries in better integrating into the EU single market, enhancing their trade opportunities and allowing for the free movement of goods, services and investments.
4. **Strengthening Business Networks:** Similar to the previous COSME programme, SMP can support the WB in the development of international networks, including access to the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), which connects businesses with partners, customers and resources across Europe.
5. **Capacity Building Initiatives:** The programme offers training and support for entrepreneurs and business owners in the Western Balkans, contributing to the enhancement of skills, knowledge and capabilities within the local workforce.
6. **Innovation Promotion:** SMP encourages innovation and research collaboration, allowing the WB countries to participate in various initiatives that promote technological advancement and modernisation of industries.
7. **Economic Recovery Support:** The programme is designed to foster economic recovery in the aftermath of crises, providing resources necessary for the WB countries to rebuild and strengthen their economies.
8. **Alignment with EU Standards:** Engaging with the SMP helps the WB countries align their regulatory frameworks and business practices

with the EU standards, which can enhance the attractiveness of their markets to foreign investors.

- 9. Collaboration on Policy Development:** Membership allows for collaborative efforts in developing regulatory and policy frameworks that support business growth and sustainability, facilitating better governance and business environments in the Western Balkans.
- 10. Access to EU Programs and Resources:** Participation in SMP provides the WB countries with access to various EU programs and initiatives, facilitating engagement with EU institutions and benefiting from technical assistance and expertise.
- 11. Cultural and Business Exchange:** The programme promotes cultural and entrepreneurial exchanges in the Balkans, fostering greater understanding and collaboration between the WB countries and EU member states.
- 12. Long-Term Economic Integration:** By participating in the SMP, the WB countries demonstrate their commitment to long-term economic integration with the EU, which can support their aspirations for eventual EU membership.

## 5.4. NETWORKS

*Networks within the EU play an essential role in bridging gaps between policy formulation and implementation, ensuring that best practices are shared across national boundaries. The **European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity**, for instance, exemplifies how a network can contribute to the efficient management of critical infrastructure. By facilitating continuous dialogue between member states on issues such as energy security and sustainability, these networks help standardise processes and promote convergence in regulatory practices.*

*This interconnectedness is vital for maintaining a coherent approach to challenges that transcend national borders.*

**1. Membership and participation of the Western Balkan (WB) countries in the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Electricity (ENTSO-E)** offer several advantages related to electricity transmission, market integration and energy security. Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina are members, Kosovo is participating on the basis of an agreement, while others are not participating. In summary, membership and participation of the Western Balkan countries in ENTSO-E provide significant opportunities for improving energy security, integrating into the European electricity market, fostering regional cooperation and supporting the transition to sustainable energy systems. Some of the key benefits are:

- 1. Enhanced Energy Security:** By participating in ENTSO-E, the WB countries can strengthen their energy security through improved coordination and collaboration on electricity transmission, reducing the risks of energy shortages.
- 2. Access to a Broader Electricity Market:** Membership facilitates integration of the Western Balkans into the European electricity market, providing access to a larger market for electricity trading and enhancing overall energy supply reliability.
- 3. Improved Interconnection:** ENTSO-E promotes the development of interconnections between the WB and the EU, which can enhance cross-border electricity trade and optimise resource sharing among participating countries.
- 4. Standardisation and Best Practices:** Membership in ENTSO-E allows the WB countries to adopt the European standards and best practices in electricity transmission, ensuring that their systems are efficient, reliable, and aligned with the EU regulations.

5. **Facilitation of Renewable Energy Integration:** ENTSO-E supports the integration of renewable energy sources into the electricity grid, helping the WB countries transition to greener energy systems and to comply with the EU climate goals.
6. **Collaboration on Grid Stability:** Participation enables the WB countries to collaborate on maintaining grid stability and reliability, sharing expertise and resources to address challenges related to electricity supply.
7. **Investment Opportunities:** Being a member of ENTSO-E can attract investments in the WB energy infrastructure projects from European and international stakeholders, facilitating modernisation and expansion of the electricity grid.
8. **Enhanced Data and Information Sharing:** Membership promotes access to valuable data and information related to electricity transmission and market dynamics, aiding in informed decision-making and strategic planning in our region.
9. **Regional Cooperation:** ENTSO-E fosters cooperation that can lead to joint initiatives and projects that address common energy challenges and promote regional integration in the energy sector.
10. **Capacity Building and Technical Assistance:** Membership provides opportunities for training and capacity building, equipping professionals in the WB countries with the skills and knowledge required to manage modern electricity systems effectively.
11. **Alignment with EU Energy Policies:** Engagement with ENTSO-E helps the WB countries align their energy policies and regulations with the EU standards, facilitating the path toward EU membership and energy integration.

12. **Support for European Energy Transition Goals:** Participation allows the WB countries to contribute to broader EU goals related to energy transition and sustainability, aligning their national energy strategies with the European Green Deal.

## 5.5. INSTITUTES

*The establishment of dedicated institutes further bolsters the integration process by fostering research, dialogue and capacity building. The **European Institute of Innovation and Technology** is a prime example, acting as a catalyst for entrepreneurship and innovation by linking education, research and business sectors. Such institutes offer a platform for interdisciplinary collaboration, ensuring that policy decisions are grounded in robust evidence and forward-thinking analysis. They also contribute to building a collective European vision, informed by a deep understanding of the complex dynamics at play in an increasingly integrated global environment.*

I. Membership and participation of the Western Balkan (WB) countries in the **European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)** provide numerous advantages, particularly in fostering innovation, education and collaboration in various sectors. Currently, according to the available data, only Bosnia and Herzegovina is cooperating on the basis of an agreement, while other WB countries are not members. Here are the key benefits from participating or becoming a member in this institute:

1. **Access to Funding and Resources:** EIT provides financial support for innovative projects and initiatives, enabling the WB countries to access funding that can be used to drive research and development.
2. **Enhanced Innovation Ecosystems:** Participation helps develop local innovation ecosystems by connecting businesses, research

institutions and universities, fostering collaboration that leads to the commercialisation of innovative ideas in the Western Balkans.

3. **Capacity Building:** EIT promotes knowledge-sharing and capacity-building activities, equipping professionals and entrepreneurs in the WB countries with the skills needed to thrive in rapidly changing markets.
4. **Networking Opportunities:** Membership opens doors to a vast network of innovators, entrepreneurs and researchers across Europe, facilitating partnerships and knowledge exchange that can enhance local capabilities.
5. **Support for Start-ups and SMEs:** EIT initiatives often focus on supporting start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), providing the necessary resources, mentorship and guidance to help them grow and succeed.
6. **Focus on Education and Training:** By participating in EIT, the WB countries can align their educational programs with the European standards, focusing on skills that are essential for innovation, including digital skills and entrepreneurship.
7. **Promotion of Research Collaboration:** EIT encourages collaborative research projects that can address pressing societal challenges, allowing the WB countries to participate in European and global research initiatives.
8. **Alignment with EU Policies:** Engagement with EIT helps the WB countries align their innovation and education policies with the EU standards, facilitating smoother integration into the European research and innovation landscape.

9. **Economic Development:** Strengthening innovation and entrepreneurship can lead to economic diversification and growth, helping the WB countries transition to more knowledge-based economies.
10. **Contribution to Societal Challenges:** EIT focuses on addressing global challenges, including climate change, health and sustainability, allowing the WB countries to contribute to solutions that have a broader impact.
11. **Involvement in Strategic Projects:** Participation in EIT allows the WB countries to be involved in strategic projects and thematic priorities that are set at the European level, enhancing their influence in shaping innovation agendas.
12. **Increased Visibility and Attractiveness:** Engaging with a reputable European institution like the EIT increases the visibility of the WB countries' innovation capabilities, potentially attracting foreign investment and partnerships.

## 5.6. ICT PLATFORMS

*Finally, ICT platforms are indispensable tools that underpin the EU's modern approach to integration. The **European Commission's Open Data Portal** exemplifies the use of digital technology to enhance transparency, allowing stakeholders to access a wealth of data on policy implementation and outcomes. In addition, initiatives aimed at creating a **Digital Single Market** have enabled the harmonisation of digital infrastructures and services, ensuring that citizens and businesses benefit from a connected and efficient regulatory environment. These platforms facilitate real-time communication and collaboration among the member states, ensuring that the integration process is not only comprehensive but also agile enough to respond to the rapidly changing digital landscape.*



I. Membership of the Western Balkan (WB) countries in the New Computerised Transit System (NCTS) provides various benefits that enhance customs operations, trade facilitation and regional cooperation. Membership of the Western Balkan countries in the New Computerised Transit System offers significant benefits in terms of trade facilitation, customs efficiency, security and regional integration, ultimately supporting economic development and closer ties with the European Union. Some of the key advantages are:

1. **Streamlined Customs Procedures:** NCTS facilitates faster and more efficient customs procedures, reducing delays and simplifying the transit of goods across borders for the WB countries.
2. **Enhanced Trade Facilitation:** By implementing a standardised computerised system, NCTS promotes smoother transit operations, which can lead to increased trade volumes as goods move more freely for our region, too.
3. **Improved Security and Risk Management:** NCTS allows for better monitoring and risk assessment of goods in transit in the Western Balkans, enhancing security and helping customs authorities identify and mitigate potential risks associated with smuggling or illegal activities.
4. **Increased Transparency:** The system provides real-time data and tracking capabilities in the Western Balkans, improving transparency in transit operations and allowing for better visibility of goods throughout their journey.
5. **Reduced Administrative Burdens:** By automating and digitising various customs processes, NCTS reduces the administrative workload on customs officials, allowing them to focus on higher-value tasks and improving overall efficiency in the Western Balkans.
6. **Harmonisation of Customs Procedures:** Membership aligns the WB countries with the EU standards and practices, helping to harmonise customs procedures and regulations with those of EU member states, thus facilitating smoother integration into the European market.
7. **Better Inter-Country Collaboration:** NCTS fosters collaboration among customs administrations across the WB countries and the EU, enhancing communication and coordination in managing transit operations.
8. **Support for Economic Growth:** By improving the efficiency of customs operations and facilitating trade, NCTS contributes to economic growth in the WB countries, supporting local businesses and attracting foreign investments.
9. **Capacity Building:** Participation in NCTS offers opportunities for capacity building and training for the WB customs officials, enhancing their skills and knowledge in modern customs practices and technologies.
10. **Data Collection and Analysis:** The computerised system allows for the collection and analysis of data related to transit operations, providing valuable insights for policymakers in the Western Balkans to make informed decisions and improve transit policies.
11. **Facilitation of Regional Integration:** As WB countries enhance their customs and transit operations through NCTS, they can strengthen ties with each other and with the EU, promoting regional integration and cooperation.
12. **Enhanced Competitiveness:** Improved customs processes and reduced transit times can enhance the competitiveness of businesses in the WB countries, making them more attractive to international markets.

## 6. PREPARATORY APPROACH TO JOINING AND ACCELERATED INTEGRATION

Joining an accelerated integration process requires a clear and strategic approach to ensure that candidates for EU membership in the Western Balkans effectively engage with the European institutions, networks and programmes. The process involves structured steps that provide a well-defined pathway to participation in EU mechanisms before full membership is granted. By carefully preparing for this integration, the WBs can maximise the economic, political and social benefits while ensuring their legal and administrative frameworks are aligned with the EU standards.

The **initial stage** in the approach to accelerated integration is the **identification of potential opportunities**. This step involves a detailed analysis of available integration mechanisms, taking into account the country's specific needs, policy priorities and economic strengths. Governments must conduct a **comprehensive assessment** of which EU agencies, committees, networks or programmes would provide the most significant advantages in terms of economic development, governance improvements and social progress. Sources of information include the European Commission's official documentation, ongoing accession negotiations and recommendations arising from bilateral discussions with EU institutions. Additionally, **practical considerations** such as compatibility with national policies and institutional readiness play a crucial role in this phase.

Once the relevant opportunities have been identified, an **evaluation of the potential benefits and obligations** follows. Accelerated integration is not merely a symbolic process; it requires substantial commitment in terms of policy alignment, financial contributions, and administrative capacities. Governments must weigh the short-term costs against the long-term advantages, which include improved market access, increased investment opportunities and stronger regional cooperation. This assessment also

necessitates engagement with key stakeholders, including national institutions, the private sector and civil society, to ensure that the anticipated benefits align with broader national interests. Case studies from previous enlargements and comparative experiences from other candidate countries can provide valuable insights into the practical implications of joining specific EU bodies.

A critical component of this approach is the **financial aspect of participation**. Many EU agencies, programmes and networks require financial contributions from participating countries, even if they have not yet attained full membership. Governments must prepare realistic financial forecasts that account for the costs of membership, operational expenses and any necessary structural adjustments. Simultaneously, they should identify potential economic gains, such as increased access to EU funding mechanisms, participation in regional development projects and enhanced trade opportunities. This financial assessment should be presented to the relevant authorities to ensure budgetary support for the integration process and to prevent financial constraints from becoming an obstacle to deeper engagement with the EU.

A **cost benefit analysis** is pivotal in the process of joining an accelerated integration framework because it serves as a comprehensive tool for weighing the expected benefits against the potential financial and administrative costs. This analysis helps governments and stakeholders to make informed decisions by quantifying both the immediate and long-term **economic implications** of engaging with EU bodies, networks and programmes.

At its core, the cost benefit analysis will allow for evaluation of the viability of accelerated integration by outlining the tangible gains—such as increased market access, enhanced competitiveness, and the potential for securing EU funding—against the direct costs of membership. These costs might include financial contributions, necessary investments in infrastructure or administrative capacity and the expenses associated with aligning domestic policies with the EU standards. By presenting a clear picture of the trade-offs, the analysis ensures that the commitments made are not only economically justifiable but also strategically beneficial.

Furthermore, a thorough cost benefit analysis promotes accountability and transparency. It compels decision-makers to rigorously scrutinise the expected returns from integration efforts, thereby minimising the risk of unforeseen expenditures and ensuring that public funds are used efficiently. This disciplined approach also facilitates prioritisation— identifying which areas of accelerated integration offer the most significant return on investment and where targeted reforms or resource allocations may yield optimal results.

In the broader context, the cost benefit analysis supports a sustainable integration process. It helps to ensure that the initial financial and administrative outlay is offset by the broader economic and social advantages that come with closer alignment to EU policies. For candidate countries, this means not only a smoother transition towards eventual EU membership but also the reinforcement of domestic economic resilience and institutional capacity. Ultimately, the analysis becomes a cornerstone in the strategic planning and implementation of accelerated integration, providing a clear rationale for the steps taken and helping to secure political and public support for the reforms necessary to achieve lasting benefits.

Following this preparatory work, the **formal steps towards accession to an accelerated integration mechanism** must be undertaken. This involves fulfilling **legal and administrative requirements, submitting official requests** for participation and **ensuring compliance** with the EU's

procedural norms. Governments need to determine the precise instrument required for accession, whether it is an international agreement, a memorandum of understanding or a regulatory alignment process. The relevant national institutions must work closely with their EU counterparts to finalise the necessary documents and procedures. Additionally, the establishment of a designated national contact point or coordination body is essential for ensuring smooth communication and compliance with the EU directives.

**Institutional preparations** are another key aspect of successful accelerated integration. This entails the creation or strengthening of domestic bodies responsible for overseeing the country's participation in EU networks and ensuring effective implementation of obligations. Capacity-building initiatives, training programmes and technical assistance may be necessary to equip national authorities with the expertise needed to navigate complex EU procedures. Furthermore, governments should implement mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the impact of accelerated integration, ensuring that participation in EU frameworks leads to tangible benefits and policy improvements.

Engaging in **strategic diplomacy and advocacy** efforts is also crucial. Western Balkan governments should proactively engage with EU institutions, member states and relevant stakeholders to advocate for greater inclusion in integration mechanisms. Diplomatic efforts should focus on demonstrating the country's commitment to EU values, institutional preparedness and willingness to contribute positively to EU-wide initiatives. By fostering constructive relationships with key EU actors, candidate countries can enhance their prospects for deeper integration and secure political support for their accession efforts.

**Public communication and awareness campaigns** should complement the technical and diplomatic aspects of the integration process. It is essential to keep citizens, businesses and civil society organisations informed about the benefits and implications of accelerated integration.



Public support is a critical factor in ensuring the sustainability of the integration process, as it fosters national consensus and encourages collective commitment to the necessary reforms. Governments should use transparent communication strategies to explain the expected advantages of participation in EU networks, addressing any concerns related to costs, regulatory adjustments or sovereignty issues.

In conclusion, the best approach to joining an accelerated integration mechanism involves a well-structured, multi-faceted strategy that encompasses identification, evaluation, financial planning, legal formalities, institutional readiness, diplomatic engagement and public communication. The Western Balkan countries stand to benefit significantly from participation in EU agencies, networks and programmes, as these mechanisms provide opportunities for economic growth, institutional strengthening and regional stability. By adopting a systematic and proactive approach, these countries can effectively position themselves for eventual full EU membership while reaping the advantages of deeper integration in the interim period.

## 6.1. INFORMING THE GOVERNMENT

The most important thing in the accessing opportunities for accelerated integration is to inform the government of the relevant possibilities and steps to achieve the goal, including possible implications. A successful **information package to be sent to the government** regarding joining an accelerated integration initiative should be comprehensive and clearly structured. It must address multiple facets that collectively justify the decision and outline the path forward. Key elements include:

- **A clear identification of available opportunities:** This section should catalogue the various accelerated integration mechanisms—whether they are EU agencies, expert committees, networks or ICT platforms—that the country can engage with. It

should also highlight how these opportunities align with national priorities and the current stage of integration.

- **In-depth research of the benefits:** The package needs to provide an analytical review of the practical advantages that the participation would offer. This involves outlining the direct benefits (such as enhanced market access, increased investment or improved policy alignment) and the broader, long-term gains in institutional capacity and economic competitiveness.
- **A detailed cost benefit analysis:** This element is crucial to show that the financial, administrative and structural investments required for accelerated integration are justified by the expected returns. It should include both immediate costs (like contributions or infrastructural investments) and long-term economic and social benefits (like access to EU funds, increased trade and improved governance).
- **A description of formal accession steps:** Clear, step-by-step guidance on the formal procedures necessary to join the accelerated integration mechanism should be included. This involves detailing the legal instruments required, the documentation process and the necessary administrative actions that must be taken to ensure compliance with EU requirements.
- **Institutional readiness and coordination measures:** It's important to highlight any preparatory actions needed at the domestic level, such as the establishment of designated contact points or the strengthening of relevant government departments. This ensures that the country can manage its commitments effectively and sustain the integration process.
- **A strategic and financial forecast:** The information package should present a realistic timeline, a budget forecast and an assessment of how the integration process will affect public finances in both the short and long term. This reassures decision-makers that the necessary resources are available or can be mobilised.

## 6.2. IDENTIFICATION OF POSSIBILITIES

It is here that through relevant research the candidate country is associated with the possibility of accelerated integration. There are various sources used at this stage to indicate the possibilities. The main would be the following:

- *The Growth Plan*
- *The European Commission's lists*
- *The requests deriving from the accession process (negotiations, SAA bodies meetings etc.)*
- *The practical needs of the relevant national institutions.*
- *The political decisions aiming to a faster integration into EU.*

This was the main reasoning behind the GIZ analyses on accelerated integration, since for now there is a clear need to make a list as exhaustive as possible and to compare the different interests and levels of integration of the Western Balkan countries.

Following identification, there is a need to shortly describe the mechanism\body\network\institution.

**Research of the benefits of accelerated integration** - The main part of the information should consist of the relevant data explaining how the relevant subject of accelerated integration works in practice and what are the possible benefits and obligations for the accession to this. Main sources of gathering data are:

- Direct communication with the network\body\institution that is the subject of the accelerated integration request.
- Analyses of the work of the identified network\body\institution so far and connection to the realistic needs of a candidate country.

- Comparative experience of other EU member states from the most recent enlargements.
- Comparative experience of other candidate countries (one of the aims of the analysis).

**Calculation of the financial aspects of the contribution and possible gains** - In order to inform the Government properly there is a need to clear out what are the financial obligations or possible gains from the membership or any other status of accelerated integration into the recognised subject. Main directions for performing this task are:

- Direct communication with the network\body\institution that is the subject of the accelerated integration request, identifying the necessary formula to calculate the participation (not all of them require contribution).
- For those that do not require contribution identify possible costs of participation.
- Simulate a possible situation using the advantage of the participation in this subject and calculate possible gain.
- *Present the information to the relevant authorities in order to ensure budget support for the accession.*

**Formal steps how to accede to the relevant body\network\institution** - As in every process of establishing mutual relations with the EU or any of the subjects of accelerated integration, there is a need to follow domestic procedure in order to conclude the task. In that sense it is important to:

- Identify the necessary formal way and instrument to enter membership or get the status available for non-member states. (Agreement, decision, exchange of notes etc.)
- Prepare the relevant identified documents.
- Align the text with the body\network\institution that the country accedes to –

- exchange different versions of the document until the text is agreed.
- Prepare institutions for the membership (contact point, designation of the sector that will be in charge of cooperation, capacity building etc.)
- Have a formal adoption\processing by the Government or other relevant institutions.

Each of these elements contributes to a well-rounded, persuasive presentation that not only informs the government of the technical and financial requirements but also underscores the strategic importance of accelerated integration for the national development.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

The accelerated integration opportunities for the Western Balkan countries are of profound importance for the region's future, particularly in the light of their aspirations to eventually join the European Union. This rapid integration is not merely a bureaucratic or administrative exercise; rather, it represents a transformative process that promises to redefine the economic, political and social landscapes of these nations. Over the recent decades, the Western Balkans has endured considerable challenges, including economic instability, political turbulence and the lingering effects of past conflicts. In this context, the prospect of accelerated EU integration offers a beacon of hope—a pathway towards stability, prosperity and renewed international legitimacy.

At its core, the accelerated integration process is about **aligning national policies** with the stringent criteria set by the EU. This alignment necessitates comprehensive reforms in governance, legal frameworks and economic policies. By undertaking these reforms at an expedited pace, the countries of the Western Balkans can not only bridge the gap between their domestic systems and EU standards but also stimulate internal improvements that benefit their societies directly. The process is inherently transformative, compelling governments to address issues such as corruption, inefficient public administration and insufficient judicial independence. In overcoming these challenges, the region can expect to see the emergence of more robust institutions and a greater adherence to the rule of law, both of which are essential pillars for sustainable development and democratic governance.

**Economic revitalisation** is another crucial aspect of the accelerated integration agenda. The prospect of EU membership is closely linked to the promise of increased access to a vast single market, which offers

substantial opportunities for trade, investment and innovation. As Western Balkan economies modernise and integrate into the broader European economic framework, they can attract foreign direct investment and enhance competitiveness on a global scale. Moreover, EU membership would enable these countries to benefit from structural funds and various forms of financial assistance aimed at modernising infrastructure, improving education systems and bolstering research and development. Such economic support is particularly significant for nations that have historically lagged behind in industrialisation and technological advancement. With a strengthened economic base, the Western Balkans can gradually overcome long-standing challenges such as high unemployment rates and the brain drain of young, skilled professionals seeking opportunities elsewhere.

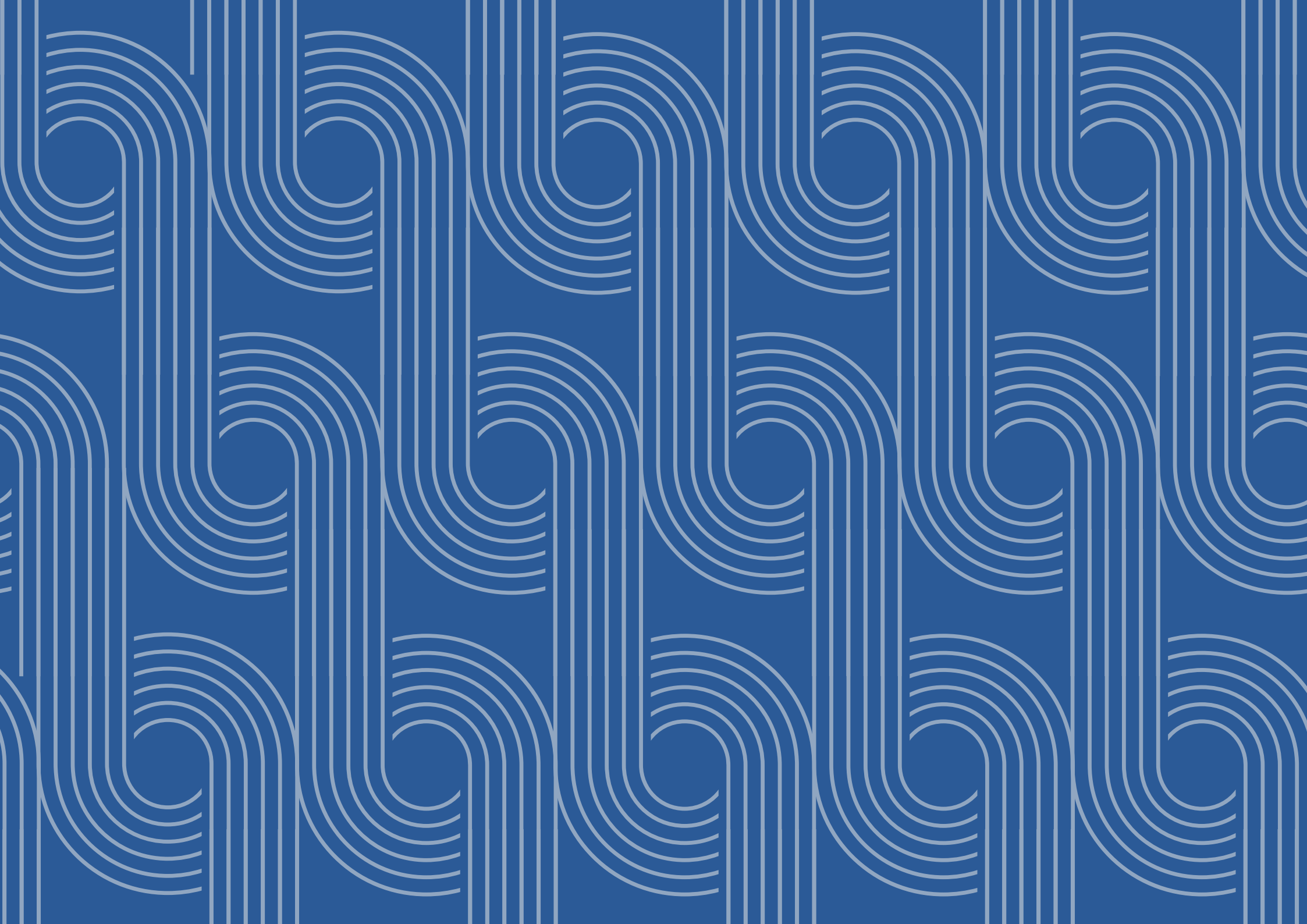
The political implications of accelerated EU integration are equally compelling. For many Western Balkan nations, the EU represents not only an economic partner but also a symbol of modernity, democracy and a commitment to human rights. The EU's emphasis on democratic values, transparency, and accountability offers a framework within which these countries can stabilise their political systems and nurture a culture of democratic participation. This process of political modernisation is essential for fostering an environment in which citizens can trust their governments and engage in civic life with a sense of hope and responsibility. Furthermore, by aligning themselves with the EU values and standards, the Western Balkan countries can enhance their international standing and gain a greater voice in global affairs. Such a shift is likely to contribute to regional stability, as the mutual commitments and shared values associated with EU membership tend to reduce the likelihood of conflicts and promote cooperative security arrangements.

**Social cohesion and the development of civil society** also stand to benefit significantly from accelerated integration. The EU places a high priority on social inclusion, minority rights and the promotion of cultural diversity, all of which are areas where the Western Balkans have experienced considerable strain. By adhering to these principles, the region can work towards mitigating deep-seated ethnic and social divisions, fostering a more inclusive society. The reforms that accompany the integration process often lead to enhanced educational opportunities, improved healthcare services and more effective social safety nets, thereby directly impacting the quality of life for ordinary citizens. In turn, a more inclusive society is better equipped to harness its full human potential, driving further economic and social development.

There is also a strategic dimension to consider. The Western Balkans occupy a pivotal geographical position, bridging Eastern and Western Europe, and their integration into the EU could serve as a stabilising force in a region that has historically been prone to geopolitical volatility. As these countries become more firmly anchored in the European institutions, they can play an active role in the regional security and cooperation initiatives. This increased political engagement is likely to contribute to a more secure and resilient Europe overall. The prospect of EU membership thus offers not only individual benefits to the Western Balkan countries but also wider implications for the security and stability of the entire continent.

In conclusion, the accelerated integration opportunities available to the Western Balkan countries are of paramount importance for several inter-related reasons. They provide a structured and rigorous pathway towards economic revitalisation, ensuring that these nations can modernise their economies and benefit from the broader European market. The process also compels necessary political reforms, fostering stronger institutions and promoting a culture of democracy and accountability. Moreover, the social and cultural benefits of adhering to EU standards hold the promise of increased inclusion and cohesion, paving the way for a more harmonious

society. Ultimately, the accelerated integration is not just about joining an economic bloc; it is about realising a future that is defined by stability, prosperity and a shared commitment to the values that underpin the European Union. Such a future is essential for the long-term success and development of the Western Balkan region, making the pursuit of accelerated integration a strategic imperative that holds a transformative potential for generations to come.



# ANNEX I

MANUAL FOR PREPARING  
INFORMATION FOR THE GOVERNMENT  
ON THE ACCELERATED INTEGRATION  
OPPORTUNITIES, INCLUDING EXAMPLES  
OF INFORMATION FOR THE ACCESSION  
OF A CANDIDATE COUNTRY TO THE  
CIVIL PROTECTION MECHANISM





# ANNEX I

## THE MANUAL FOR PREPARING INFORMATION FOR THE GOVERNMENT ON THE ACCELERATED INTEGRATION OPPORTUNITIES, INCLUDING EXAMPLES OF INFORMATION FOR THE ACCESSION OF A CANDIDATE COUNTRY TO THE CIVIL PROTECTION MECHANISM

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A fundamental prerequisite for seizing opportunities for **accelerated European integration** is ensuring that the **Government** has access to **comprehensive, strategic and timely information** about the available mechanisms, the formal steps required for accession and the broader implications of such engagement. This enables policymakers to make **informed decisions** that align with the national interests and the overall European integration trajectory.

To facilitate this process, any information provided to the **Government** regarding requests for **accelerated integration** must comprehensively cover the following key areas:

- **Identification of available opportunities** for enhanced participation in the European mechanisms.
- **In-depth assessment of benefits**, evaluating the strategic, economic and political advantages of early integration.
- **Financial considerations**, including cost-benefit analysis, contribution obligations and expected returns.
- **Procedural roadmap**, detailing the necessary institutional and

administrative steps required to gain access to a specific mechanism, body, network or institution.

- **Legislative and regulatory requirements**, outlining any legal adaptations, policy adjustments and formal requests needed to obtain membership (or an alternative status available to non-member states).

By addressing these aspects, decision-makers can ensure that the **path towards deeper integration** is well-structured, financially viable and aligned with the national priorities.

### 2. IDENTIFICATION OF OPPORTUNITIES

The **first step** in the process involves conducting a **comprehensive assessment** to identify the most relevant and beneficial opportunities for **accelerated integration**. This requires a **systematic approach** that takes into account **existing EU frameworks, ongoing negotiations** and **sector-specific needs**.

To ensure a thorough evaluation, candidate countries rely on various sources of information, including:

- **Pillar I of the Growth Plan** – A strategic framework that defines economic and institutional priorities for the Western Balkan countries, outlining pathways for closer alignment with the EU.
- **European Commission (EC) listings** – Official EU documents and recommendations that specify available mechanisms for engagement by non-member states.

- **Accession process requirements** – Conditions and expectations derived from formal **negotiations, Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) bodies and related policy dialogues**.
- **Institutional needs** – Specific demands from **government institutions, agencies, and ministries** that require closer co-operation with European structures to fulfil their mandates effectively.
- **Political priorities** – High-level **government strategies** aimed at deepening integration **beyond the standard accession process**, leveraging existing partnerships and political agreements.

Given the **complex and dynamic nature** of the European integration, it is crucial to establish a **coherent methodology** for **tracking, evaluating and prioritising** available opportunities. Various mechanisms, networks and institutions present different levels of **integration potential**, requiring a tailored approach that balances **immediate benefits** with **long-term strategic objectives**.

Recognising this need, **GIZ conducted an extensive analysis on accelerated integration** to map out all existing opportunities in a **comprehensive and up-to-date format**. The objective of this study was not only to identify **concrete integration mechanisms** but also to **compare the different interests, priorities and levels of engagement** among the Western Balkan countries.

Once a viable **opportunity for accelerated integration** is identified, it is essential to **provide a clear and structured description** of the respective **mechanism, body, network or institution**. This includes:

- The **purpose and scope** of the mechanism.
- The **eligibility criteria** and **membership requirements**.
- The **expected benefits and obligations** for participating states.

- The **alignment with the broader EU accession process**.

By ensuring a **detailed yet accessible** presentation of each opportunity, policymakers and institutional stakeholders can make well-informed decisions, ensuring that the **integration process is optimised, strategically sound and effectively implemented**.

**Research of the benefits of accelerated integration** - The main part of the information should consist of the relevant data explaining how the relevant subject of accelerated integration works in practice and what are the possible benefits and obligations for the accession to this. The main sources to gather the data are:

- Direct communication with the network\body\institution that is the subject of the accelerated integration request.
- Analyses of the work of the identified network\body\institution so far and connection to the realistic needs of a candidate country.
- Comparative experience of other EU member states from the most recent enlargements.
- Comparative experience of other candidate countries (one of the aims of the analysis).

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costs of participation.

- *Simulate a possible situation using the advantage of the participation in this subject and calculate possible gain*
- Present the information to the relevant authorities in order to ensure budget support for the accession.

### Formal steps how to accede to the relevant body\network\institution -

As in every process of establishing mutual relations with the EU or any of the subjects of accelerated integration, there is a need to follow domestic procedure in order to conclude the task. In that sense it is important to:

- Identify the necessary formal way and instrument to enter membership or get the status available for non-member states. (Agreement, decision, exchange of notes etc.)
- Prepare the relevant identified documents.
- Align the text with the body\network\institution that the country accedes to – exchange different versions of the document until the text is agreed.
- Prepare institutions for the membership (contact point, designation of the sector that will be in charge of cooperation, capacity building etc.)
- Have a formal adoption\processing by the Government or other relevant institutions.

**Civil protection** is an integral component of a broader **protection and rescue system** designed to respond to emergency situations. It encompasses a range of **humanitarian activities** aimed at safeguarding **citizens, infrastructure and the environment** from threats posed by **natural, technological, biological, chemical, nuclear, radiological and other hazards**. The primary objective of civil protection is not only to ensure the **immediate safety and survival** of affected populations but also to **preserve**

**material and cultural assets** while mitigating the long-term consequences of disasters.

The **legal foundation** of civil protection is enshrined in the **international humanitarian law**, particularly in the **Geneva Conventions of 1949** and the **Additional Protocols I and II of 1977**. These instruments define the role and obligations of civil protection structures in disaster response and conflict situations. Their significance lies in their **moral authority and universal recognition**, as they establish the principle that civil protection efforts must remain strictly **humanitarian** in nature to benefit from **international legal protection**. Compliance with these conventions is widely supported, reinforcing the idea that adherence to **humanitarian principles** should be a global priority.

## 3. THE EUROPEAN UNION'S APPROACH TO CIVIL PROTECTION

In the **European Union (EU)**, civil protection extends beyond national boundaries and is understood as a **collective responsibility** aimed at protecting **populations, ecosystems and cultural heritage** in the event of major disasters. These include **natural calamities, industrial accidents, pandemics and environmental crises**, which often transcend national jurisdictions. The increasing frequency and severity of such incidents have demonstrated that **isolated national responses are insufficient** to tackle complex emergencies.

By recognising this challenge, the EU member states have progressively strengthened **cooperation mechanisms**, allowing for the **harmonisation of standards** in emergency management. This coordination enhances **preparedness, response and recovery efforts**, ensuring a more **effective and efficient** implementation of the civil protection measures. Key aspects of this cooperation include:

- The **alignment of the national and EU-wide disaster response frameworks** to facilitate cross-border assistance.
- The **development of supranational policies** at the **subregional, regional and global levels**, fostering international collaboration.
- The **harmonisation of regulations and response protocols** to improve interoperability among national civil protection agencies.
- The **creation of international strategies, programmes and action plans** to strengthen the resilience of European and neighbouring countries against major disasters.

Since the early 1990s, the **European Union** has played an increasingly **prominent role** in global disaster response efforts. With the establishment of the **European Civil Protection Mechanism**, the EU has positioned itself as a **leader in international emergency management**, providing **rapid and coordinated assistance** in times of crisis.

## 4. EVOLUTION OF THE EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION MECHANISM

The EU's structured approach to civil protection began in **1992** with the creation of the **European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO)**. This office, now an integral part of the **European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations**, laid the groundwork for **coordinated disaster relief efforts** both within and beyond EU borders.

A significant milestone in the evolution of the EU civil protection was the **adoption of the Maastricht Treaty (1992)**, which reinforced the principle of **subsidiarity**, ensuring that decisions are made as closely as possible to the affected communities. Over time, the EU and its member states have

**expanded cooperation** in civil protection, recognising the added value of **shared resources and joint response mechanisms**.

To further strengthen this framework, the **EU Council Decision 2001/792/EC** established the **Community Mechanism for Civil Protection**, designed to:

- **Facilitate rapid and effective cooperation** between the national civil protection agencies when assistance is required.
- **Enhance coordination of disaster response actions** at the international level.
- **Activate the European solidarity mechanisms** in emergencies, both within and outside the EU.

In 2001, the **European Commissioner for the Environment** proposed the establishment of this **solidarity-based response system**, enabling the EU member states to pool **resources, expertise and logistical support** during crises. The mechanism covers a broad spectrum of disasters, including:

- **Natural disasters** (earthquakes, floods, wildfires, storms).
- **Industrial and maritime accidents** (oil spills, toxic waste leaks).
- **Biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological incidents.**
- **Terrorist attacks** and other human-induced crises.

The effectiveness of this mechanism was further reinforced following the **Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004**, which prompted the European Commission to propose **amendments to the 2001 EU Council Decision**. The revised framework aimed to **enhance coordination, strengthen response capacities and ensure faster mobilisation of aid**.

## 5. CURRENT LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The **European Civil Protection Mechanism** operates within a robust **legal and financial framework**, ensuring sustained **preparedness and response capabilities**. There are two key regulations that underpin this system:

1. **The EU Council Decision 2007/779/EC, Euratom** – An update to the original 2001 decision, further defining the **scope, governance and operational procedures** of the Civil Protection Mechanism.
2. **The EU Council Decision 2007/162/EC, Euratom** – Establishing the **Financial Instrument for Civil Protection**, which allocates funding for disaster prevention, preparedness and response initiatives.

Together, these regulations provide a **comprehensive legislative basis** for the European **civil protection cooperation**, enabling EU institutions and member states to **mobilise collective resources** efficiently and effectively.

The **European Civil Protection Mechanism** represents one of the most advanced **disaster response frameworks** globally. Through **structured cooperation, shared resources and coordinated policies**, the EU has significantly enhanced **its ability to respond to large-scale emergencies**. The increasing **complexity and cross-border nature** of modern crises underscore the necessity of **international collaboration and the continuous evolution of the civil protection policies**.

The future of **civil protection in Europe** will depend on further **harmonisation of standards, integration of new technologies and strengthened partnerships** with non-EU states, ensuring that disaster response mechanisms remain **resilient, adaptive and capable of addressing emerging challenges**.

## 6. RESEARCH ON THE BENEFITS OF ACCELERATED INTEGRATION

As a **candidate country for European Union (EU) membership**, **[Country X]** aspires to align itself with the **standards and practices** of the Union in all key sectors, including **civil protection**. Recognising the EU's significant investments in **enhancing disaster preparedness, response efficiency and resilience**, **[Country X]** aims to accelerate its integration into the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism**. By participating in this framework, the country would gain access to **advanced tools, funding, expertise and a well-established network of cooperation**, enabling a more **effective and coordinated response** to natural, technological and other types of hazards.

The **EU Civil Protection Mechanism** operates on the principle of **solidarity and shared responsibility**, allowing EU member states, candidate countries and potential candidates to collaborate in disaster prevention, preparedness and response. This cooperative approach enhances **crisis management capabilities**, ensuring a **harmonised and efficient response system** that benefits all participating nations.

There are several **key advantages** that **[Country X]** would gain from joining the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism**, which can be broadly categorised into the following areas:

## 7. THE MONITORING AND INFORMATION CENTRE (MIC) – THE OPERATIONAL HUB

The **Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC)** is the **operational heart** of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. Managed by the **European Commission's Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (DG ECHO)** and based in **Brussels**, the MIC operates **24/7** as a



centralised platform for coordinating disaster response efforts across the EU and beyond.

By joining the Mechanism, **[Country X]** would gain access to the MIC's **comprehensive resources and capabilities**, which include:

- **A rapid-response platform** where affected countries can request immediate assistance in times of crisis.
- **A coordination centre** that facilitates real-time communication between **EU member states, candidate countries and the European Commission**.
- **Up-to-date information sharing**, ensuring that all involved parties have a clear understanding of the evolving situation during an emergency.
- **Logistical and strategic support**, allowing for better resource allocation and decision-making during crises.

Additionally, the MIC plays a crucial **coordinating role** when requests for assistance are approved, ensuring that aid is **efficiently mobilised** from member states to the country affected by the disaster.

## 8. THE COMMON EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM (CECIS) – A SECURE COMMUNICATION NETWORK

The **Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS)** is a **secure web-based platform** designed to **streamline emergency communication** between participating states. It serves as a **critical tool** in **facilitating real-time coordination** and **ensuring swift information exchange** during crises.

The key benefits of CECIS for **[Country X]** include:

- **Reliable early warning and notification systems**, allowing authorities to react quickly to impending threats.
- **Integrated communication channels** between the **MIC and national contact points**, ensuring seamless information flow.
- **Access to detailed records of emergency requests and responses**, providing valuable data for post-crisis analysis and policy improvement.
- **Improved efficiency in mobilising resources**, as CECIS allows for direct interaction between countries offering and requesting assistance.

By participating in CECIS, **[Country X]** would significantly **enhance its ability to respond to emergencies**, benefiting from the EU's **technologically advanced and well-coordinated civil protection network**.

## 9. CAPACITY-BUILDING THROUGH TRAINING AND JOINT EXERCISES

A core component of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism is its **comprehensive training programme**, aimed at **improving coordination, enhancing expertise and fostering best practice exchange** among participating nations.

For **[Country X]**, integration into the Mechanism would provide:

- **Access to EU-funded training sessions**, equipping civil protection professionals with advanced knowledge and skills.
- **Participation in large-scale joint exercises**, allowing emergency response teams to **test and refine** their crisis management strategies.
- **Expert exchange programmes**, where personnel from

[Country X] can work alongside the EU civil protection specialists, gaining valuable hands-on experience.

- **Greater interoperability with the EU civil protection units**, ensuring a **seamless and coordinated response** in times of crisis.

These training initiatives **enhance disaster preparedness** and ensure that emergency response teams are **well-equipped to handle complex and large-scale emergencies**, both **domestically and internationally**.

## 10. CIVIL PROTECTION MODULES – STRENGTHENING NATIONAL RESPONSE CAPABILITIES

The EU Civil Protection Mechanism encourages the development of **specialised response units**, known as **Civil Protection Modules**, which are formed voluntarily from the national resources of participating states. These **highly trained and well-equipped teams** can be rapidly deployed to provide **immediate assistance** in disaster-stricken areas.

For [Country X], participation in this initiative would:

- **Enhance its national disaster response capabilities**, allowing for the rapid deployment of specialised teams.
- **Facilitate cooperation with other EU states**, enabling better resource-sharing and improved crisis management.
- **Provide access to additional EU-funded resources**, such as transport, medical teams and search-and-rescue units.
- **Strengthen cross-border collaboration**, particularly in cases of regional disasters affecting multiple nations.

The ability to **mobilise well-trained, well-equipped units quickly** is a **crucial factor in reducing casualties and limiting damage** in emergency situations.

## 11. DEPLOYMENT OF CIVIL PROTECTION EXPERTS – STRENGTHENING ON-THE- GROUND COORDINATION

Another major advantage of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism is the ability to **deploy highly trained civil protection experts** to crisis-affected regions. These experts serve as **liaison officers** between:

- The **disaster-affected country**.
- The **Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC)**.
- The **EU member states providing assistance**.

These experts play a **critical role** in:

- **Assessing the situation on the ground** and ensuring that the most appropriate aid is provided.
- **Coordinating the efforts of international response teams** to avoid duplication of resources and ensure efficiency.
- **Providing technical guidance and strategic advice** to national authorities.
- **Monitoring the effectiveness of emergency response operations**, ensuring that aid is delivered in the most efficient manner possible.

For [Country X], participation in this programme would mean access to **specialist expertise** in times of crisis, improving the overall efficiency of the national civil protection operations.



## 12. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SOLIDARITY MECHANISMS

The **EU Civil Protection Mechanism** also includes **financial instruments** designed to support countries affected by major disasters. Participating states contribute to **a common emergency response fund**, which can be quickly mobilised to **assist nations in need**.

By joining the Mechanism, **[Country X]** would benefit from:

- **Access to emergency funding** in the aftermath of disasters.
- **The financial support for disaster preparedness and response initiatives.**
- **EU co-financing for critical infrastructure projects**, aimed at strengthening national resilience.

This financial assistance enhances the **long-term sustainability** of civil protection efforts and ensures that participating countries have the **necessary resources to respond effectively to emergencies**.

The **integration of [Country X] into the EU Civil Protection Mechanism** would bring **substantial benefits**, reinforcing its **capacity to prevent, prepare for, and respond to disasters**. Through **access to advanced technology, expert training, financial resources and a well-established crisis management network**, **[Country X]** would significantly improve its **national resilience and disaster response capabilities**.

Given the **growing frequency and severity of emergencies**, it is **imperative** that **[Country X]** seizes this opportunity to **align itself with the EU standards, enhance cross-border cooperation and strengthen its civil protection framework**, ensuring a **safer and more secure future** for its citizens.

## 13. CALCULATION OF THE FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF CONTRIBUTION AND POTENTIAL GAINS

Participation in the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism** involves both **financial contributions and potential economic benefits**. According to the **operational rules of the Mechanism**, the country requesting assistance is generally responsible for covering the **costs of aid provided by participating countries**. However, in practice, many **EU member states and participating nations**—particularly in cases of **natural disasters or large-scale emergencies**—offer their **assistance free of charge** as an act of **solidarity**.

Since **2007**, the **European Commission** has introduced financial support measures to ease the burden on affected countries. Through the **Financial Instrument for Civil Protection**, up to **50% of aid transport costs** can be **co-financed** by the EU. This financial assistance significantly reduces the economic impact on disaster-stricken nations, making participation in the Mechanism **highly beneficial** for candidate countries such as **[Country X]**.

*Formula for Calculating the Annual Membership Contribution*

The **budgetary contribution** for a candidate country participating in the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism** is determined using the following standard formula:

$$\frac{(AMB \times CCh)}{EUh \times GDP_{cc} GDP_{Eu}} \frac{(AMB \times CCh)}{EUh \times GDP_{Eu} GDP_{cc}}$$

Where:

**AMB** = Annual framework budget for the **Financial Instrument for Civil Protection**.

**CCh** = Population of the **candidate country**.

**GDP<sub>cc</sub>** = **Gross Domestic Product per capita** of the candidate country.

**EUh** = Total **population of the European Union**.

**GDPeu** = **Average Gross Domestic Product per capita** of the EU.

This formula ensures that the financial contribution of each participating country is **proportionate** to its **economic capacity**, making the Mechanism financially sustainable and accessible for candidate countries like **[Country X]**.

By contributing to this **solidarity-based system**, **[Country X]** would not only **gain access to emergency assistance, funding, and expertise**, but also benefit from the **cost-sharing arrangements** that significantly reduce the financial burden in times of crisis.

#### Formal Steps to Join the Relevant Body, Network or Institution

Accession to the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism** requires a **structured negotiation process** between the **candidate country and the European Commission**. This process is **formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**, which defines the **terms, conditions and obligations** of participation.

## 14. PRELIMINARY STEPS – EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO INITIAL NEGOTIATIONS

The first step for **[Country X]** to join the Mechanism is to express its **official interest** in participating. The process unfolds as follows:

- The **European Commission** signs a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with each **Western Balkan country** or other interested candidate nation that wishes to join the programme.
- The candidate country submits a **formal request** for participation.

- Negotiations begin between the **relevant national authorities** and the **competent Directorate-General of the European Commission**.
- A series of administrative, financial and legal adjustments must be made by **state institutions** before accession can be finalised. These include:
  - Aligning the **national legislation** with the EU regulations.
  - Establishing the **necessary administrative structures** for programme implementation.
  - Ensuring compliance with the **EU financial control mechanisms**.
  - Adopting the **EU procurement rules and procedures**.

The **European Commission**, along with the key oversight bodies such as the **European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)** and the **European Court of Auditors**, monitors the **financial management** of candidate countries to ensure compliance with the **EU financial regulations**.

## 15. KEY STEPS FOR SIGNING THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

The process of formally **joining the EU Civil Protection Mechanism** involves a series of **structured procedural steps**, outlined below:

### Step 1: Submission of the Official Letter of Interest

- **[Country X]** submits a **formal letter** to the **European Commission**, expressing its **intention to join** the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.
- Following the submission, **preparatory discussions** begin regarding the **draft text of the Memorandum of Understanding**.

## Step 2: Drafting and Review of the Memorandum

- The **European Commission** drafts the **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** and submits it to the **Ministry of Internal Affairs – Sector for Emergency Situations and Civil Security** for review.
- The Ministry **examines the document**, and if necessary, requests additional clarifications or modifications.
- A formal meeting is held between **representatives of the European Commission** and **national authorities** to finalise the draft.

## Step 3: Internal Consultation Process within the European Commission

- Once **both parties agree** on the **MoU text**, the European Commission initiates **internal consultations** among its departments.
- This process, which takes **approximately 3-4 weeks**, may involve **minor adjustments** to the agreement.

## Step 4: Final Approval and Submission to National Authorities

- Upon **internal approval** by the **European Commission**, the finalised document is **submitted back** to the **Ministry of Internal Affairs – Sector for Emergency Situations and Civil Security** for **final review**.
- If no further modifications are required, preparations begin for the **official signing ceremony**.

## Step 5: Signing Ceremony in Brussels

- A formal **signing ceremony** takes place in **Brussels**, attended

by **high-level representatives** from both **[Country X]** and the **European Commission**.

- The **Memorandum of Understanding** is signed at the level of **Director-General** from both parties.

## Step 6: Entry into Force of the Memorandum

- Once signed, the **Memorandum of Understanding** enters into **legal force**, officially granting **[Country X]** access to the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism**.

## 16. CONCLUSION

The **financial and procedural aspects** of joining the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism** are **strategically designed** to ensure that **candidate countries can integrate smoothly and efficiently**. By contributing a **proportionate financial amount**, **[Country X]** would benefit from:

- ☑ **Access to EU co-financing for disaster response costs.**
- ☑ **Participation in joint training programmes and expert exchanges.**
- ☑ **Stronger national preparedness and response capabilities.**
- ☑ **Direct support from the European Commission in times of crisis.**

The **formal accession process**, while requiring **compliance with the EU standards and regulatory frameworks**, is a **structured and transparent pathway** that ultimately strengthens **national resilience** and enhances **cross-border cooperation in disaster management**.

By **seizing this opportunity**, **[Country X]** would take a **crucial step** towards **greater integration with the EU** while **enhancing its civil protection capabilities** in alignment with the European **best practices and solidarity principles**.

## ANNEX II

TABLE OF THE ACCELERATED  
INTEGRATION OPORTUNITIES  
PER CLUSTERS



# ANNEX II

TABLE OF THE ACCELERATED INTEGRATION OPORTUNITIES PER CLUSTERS

CLUSTER 1 - FUNDAMENTALS			
Functioning of democratic institutions			
Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>1. European Cooperation Network on Elections (ECNE)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
Public administration reform			
Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>2. Technical Support Instrument (TSI)</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	BiH used the TSI once.
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>3. Expert Group on Public Administration and Governance</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	

<b>4. Open Innovation Strategy and Policy Group (OISPG)</b>	Albania	No information available	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	Kosovo is exploring an engagement in innovation policy discussions.
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>5. Expert group on Interoperability of European Public Services: Policy Area: Information Society</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Kosovo	Not a member	Kosovo's Agency of Information Society (AIS) is preparing its infrastructure to enhance interoperability of public services. The working group is only for EU member states. Currently, there is not any activity of cooperation of AIS with this Working Group. AIS wants to participate in the meetings of this Expert Group.
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>6. Commission's Expert Group on Tackling Disinformation and Promoting Digital Literacy Through Education and Training: Policy Area - Education, Information Society, Training</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	Considering a possible request. As observer, CRA (Communications Regulatory Agency) follows ERGA Subgroup 3 – Countering disinformation and strengthening democracy in the digital environment
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	



<b>7. Public Sector Information Group (PSI Group)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	Currently, there is not any activity of cooperation between Kosovo's Agency of Information Society (AIS) and this Working Group. AIS wants to participate in the meetings of this Group.
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>8. Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>9. European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA)</b>	Albania	No information available	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	Cooperating under EIPA CAF Resource centre.
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

## 10. European Public Administration Network (EUPAN)

Albania	Observer	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Kosovo	Not a member	Kosovo has never participated in the Network, but it hopes that this year it will receive an invitation to participate in their activities. They are considering a request for being recognised as an observer member. The request shall be subject to approval at the level of Directors-General or Ministers.
Montenegro	Observer	
North Macedonia	Observer	
Serbia	Observer	

## Chapter 23 – Judiciary and fundamental rights

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
11. Anti-fraud Programme	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
12. Commission Expert Group on Whistle-blower Protection	Albania	Not a member	Considering possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating in meetings	Agency for the Prevention of Corruption and the Coordination of the Fight against Corruption (APIK).
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Participating in meetings	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

<b>13. European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Cooperating on the basis of a Working Agreement	Working agreement was signed between the Supreme State Prosecutor's Office and EPPO.
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>14. European Network on Victims' Rights</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>15. EU Network for Children's Rights and the Disability Platform</b>	Albania	No information available	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>16. Fundamental Rights Agency</b>	Albania	Observer	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	Montenegro will soon fulfil its first step towards achieving the Observer status with the Agency, i.e. deliver the letter of intent to the President.
	North Macedonia	Observer	
	Serbia	Observer	

## 17. European contact-point network against corruption (EACN)

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 18. Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 19. Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV).

Albania	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement
Kosovo	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement

<b>20. Justice Programme 2021 - 2027</b>	Albania	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	( The agreement has been signed on 13 March 2024 — applicable as of 01 January 2023)
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	(The agreement has been signed on 02 September 2024 — applicable as of 01 January 2023)
	Kosovo	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	The agreement has been signed on 14 December 2023 — applicable as of 01 January 2023.
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	Confirmed interest to participate in the Justice Programme
	Serbia	Not a member	Confirmed interest to participate in the Justice Programme
<b>21. Camden Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network (CARIN)</b>	Albania	Observer	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available	
	Kosovo	No information available	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>22. European Judicial Network (EJN)</b>	Albania	Observer	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available	
	Kosovo	No information available	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

### 23. Network of European Integrity and Whistleblowing Authorities (NEIWA)

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available
Kosovo	No information available
Montenegro	Member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

### 24. Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative (RAI)

Albania	Member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available
Kosovo	No information available
Montenegro	Member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

### 25. The European Partners against Corruption (EPAC) /European contact-point network against corruption (EACN)

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available
Kosovo	No information available
Montenegro	Member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

### 26. Rule of law report

Albania	Participating
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available
Kosovo	No information available
Montenegro	Participating
North Macedonia	Participating
Serbia	Participating

## 27. EU Network against Corruption

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## Chapter 24 – Justice, freedom and security

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
28. European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)/ EUDA (European Drugs Agency)	Albania	Affiliated member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Affiliated member	
	Kosovo	Affiliated member	
	Montenegro	Affiliated member	
	North Macedonia	Affiliated member	
	Serbia	Affiliated member	
29. European Police College (CEPOL)	Albania	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
	Kosovo	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
	Montenegro	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
	North Macedonia	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
	Serbia	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	



### 30. European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit (EUROJUST)

Albania	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
North Macedonia	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
Serbia	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	

### 31. European Police Office (EUROPOL)

Albania	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
Kosovo	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
Montenegro	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
North Macedonia	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
Serbia	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	

<b>32. European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders (FRONTEX)</b>	Albania	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
	North Macedonia	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
	Serbia	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
<b>33. European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	ENISA guidelines were followed in preparing the cybersecurity legislation and the strategy. Kosovo has established cooperation with this Agency.
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>34. European Asylum Support Office (EASO)</b>	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member	
	Kosovo	Member	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	Member	
	Serbia	Member	

### 35. Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund

Albania	Participating on the basis of an agreement
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement
North Macedonia	Participating on the basis of an agreement
Serbia	Participating on the basis of an agreement

### 36. Prüm Treaty

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	Not a member
Serbia	Not a member

### 37. European Network for Protection of Public Figures (ENPPF)

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	Not a member	
Serbia	Not a member	

### 38. Camden Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network (CARIN Net)

Albania	Observer
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**39. European e-Justice Portal**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	No information available	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**40. EU Asset Recovery Offices Platform (ARO platform)**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**41. European Migration Network**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Observer	On 23 September 2022 Montenegro officially joined EMN as an Observer Country.
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**42. ENFAST**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**43. Joint investigative teams' network**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**44. AQUAPOL**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**45. AIRPOL**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**46. ATLAS**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**47. ENLETS**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**48. ESG**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member	The Central Bank of BiH is the Member of the Network for Greening the Financial System (NGFS) and Sustainable Banking and Finance Network (SBFN).
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**49. HRSN**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**50. European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA)**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	Not a member	
Serbia	Not a member	

## Chapter 5 – Public procurement

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>51. Tenders Electronic Daily (TED)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	Member	
	Serbia	Member	
<b>52. Multi-Stakeholder Expert Group on eProcurement (EXEP)</b>	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Member	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>53. Informal Green Public Procurement Advisory Group</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>54. Network of first instance review bodies on public procurement</b>	Albania	Observer	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	



## Chapter 18 – Statistics

### Area of accelerated integration

#### 55. European Statistical Programme

Country	Status	Notes
Albania		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Observer	
Kosovo	Observer	The Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) benefits in terms of capacity building, methodological harmonisation and modernisation of statistical infrastructure. Currently, through KAS, it participates as an observer in all horizontal activities organized by Eurostat. The goal is to become a full member of the European Statistical System as the country's integration into the EU progresses.
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## Chapter 32 – Financial control

### Area of accelerated integration

#### 56. Pericles IV, Programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting

Country	Status	Notes
Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	Kosovo is considering an engagement to strengthen anti-counterfeiting measures for the euro.
Montenegro	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	Montenegro has been actively participating in the Pericles program since 2002, even as a co-organizer of the activities carried out in the previous period.
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**57. European Investment Bank (EIB)**

Albania	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
Kosovo	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
Montenegro	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
North Macedonia	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
Serbia	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement	

**58. The Contact Committee of the heads of supreme audit institutions (SAIs) of European Union (EU) Member States and the European Court of Auditors**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Observer	The supreme audit institutions of the candidate countries act as observers to the Contact Committee.
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**59. European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)**

Albania	Member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member	
Kosovo	Member	
Montenegro	Member	
North Macedonia	Member	
Serbia	Member	

## CLUSTER 2 – INTERNAL MARKET<sup>1</sup>

### Chapter 1 – Free movement of goods

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>60. European Standards Organisations - CEN</b>	Albania	Affiliated member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Affiliated member	
	Kosovo	Participating\ cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
	Montenegro	Affiliated member	
	North Macedonia	Member	
	Serbia	Member	
<b>61. European Standards Organisations - CENELEC</b>	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Affiliated member	
	Kosovo	Participating\ cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
	Montenegro	Affiliated member	
	North Macedonia	Member	
	Serbia	Member	
<b>63. European Accreditation, Multilateral Agreements (EA-MLA)</b>	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member	
	Kosovo	Affiliated member	Kosovo is a B category member. We aim to become an A category member.
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

<sup>1</sup> Accelerated integration opportunities within this cluster are interconnected with the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans

<b>64. Agreements for Conformity Assessment and Analysis (ACAA)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>65. European Association of National Metrology Institutes (Euramet)</b>	Albania	Member	The status is a liaison organisation.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member	
	Kosovo	Affiliated member	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	Member	
	Serbia	Member	
<b>66. Administrative Cooperation Groups (AdCos) Expert Groups on toys safety</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Observer	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>67. Safety Gate - exchange of information on measures taken against non-food dangerous product</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

## 68. Single Market Programme (SMP) 2021 - 2027

Albania	Cooperation on the basis of an agreement	Cooperates under the component named Competitiveness and sustainability of small and medium-sized enterprises.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cooperation on the basis of an agreement	
Kosovo	Cooperation on the basis of an agreement	
Montenegro	Cooperation on the basis of an agreement	
North Macedonia	Cooperation on the basis of an agreement	
Serbia	Cooperation on the basis of an agreement	

## 69. Access to eSurveillance - WebCrawler

Albania	No information available
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 70. Compliance on REACH and CLP (chemicals labelling)

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Cooperating on the basis of an agreement
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**71. Expert Group on the Internal Market for Products**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**72. Group of Experts on Pyrotechnic Articles**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**73. Commission Expert Group on Radio Equipment**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**74. Commission Expert Group on Textile Names and Labelling**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 75. Technical Regulations Standing Committee

Albania	No information available
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 76. Working Group Pressure Equipment

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Observer
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 77. Group of Experts on Explosives

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 78. Commission Expert Group on Mutual Recognition of Goods

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available



## 79. Expert Group for the Implementation of Directive (EU) 2021/555 (the Firearms Directive)

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available
Kosovo	No information available
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 80. Working Group Measuring Instruments

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Observer
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 81. Internal Market Information System - Expert Group

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 82. Electromagnetic Compatibility Working Party

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Observer
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

### 83. Rapid Exchange of Information System (RAPEX)

Albania	Observer
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

### 84. Single Digital Gateway Coordination Group

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## Chapter 2 – Free movement of workers

### Area of accelerated integration

### 85. European Employment Services (EURES)

Country	Status	Notes
Albania	No information available	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available	
Kosovo	No information available	
Montenegro	No information available	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**86. European Labour Authority (ELA)**

Albania	No information available
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available
Kosovo	No information available
Montenegro	No information available
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**87. Advisory Committee on Freedom of Movement for Workers**

Albania	No information available
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available
Kosovo	No information available
Montenegro	No information available
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**88. Europass**

Albania	Not a member	Montenegro established the National Europass Centre.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### Chapter 3 – Right of establishment and freedom to provide services

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>89. INTERNAL MARKET INFORMATION (IMI) SYSTEM and participation in the single market.</b>	Albania	Observer	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>90. Intra-CEFTA parcel delivery services initiative and in line with the Regulation (EU) 2018/644 on cross-border parcel delivery services.</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>91. Recognition of skills and qualifications between the EU and the Western Balkans, including professional qualifications</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>92. Working Expert Group in the Internal Market for Services</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

### 93. European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

Albania	Member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## Chapter 4 – Free movement of capital

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
94. Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA)	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	Planned to submit application to EPC and join in 2025.
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	

## Chapter 6 – Company law

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
95. Business Registry Interoperable System Interconnection	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

<b>96. Committee of European Auditing Oversight Bodies (CEAOB)</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

### Chapter 7 – Intellectual property law

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>97. European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) Observatory and the IP Education Tools offered by the EUIPO</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>98. AGORATEKA Portal</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>99. Copyright Contact Committee</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

**100. Out-Of-Commerce Works Portal**

Albania	No information available	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**101. Intellectual Property Enforcement Portal (IPEP)**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**102. European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**103. The Group of Experts on Industrial Property Policy (GIPP)**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Observer	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**104. Participation in the European Cooperation projects, membership in the European Union Intellectual Property Network (EUIPN)**

Albania	No information available
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available
Kosovo	No information available
Montenegro	No information available
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**105. Participation in the European Intellectual Property Prosecutors Network (EIPPN)**

Albania	No information available
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available
Kosovo	No information available
Montenegro	No information available
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**Chapter 8 – Competition**

**Area of accelerated integration**

**106. Commission's Expert Group on the Functioning of the Network of Competition Authorities**

Country	Status	Notes
Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	Not a member	
Serbia	Not a member	



**107. European Competition Network**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**Chapter 9 – Financial services**

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>108. European Association of Cooperative Banks</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>109. Banking Federation of the European Union</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Associate member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>110. European Savings Banks Group</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

**111. Eurochambres**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**112. European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA)**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Participating in meetings	Usually for the bodies and networks that invite non-member states to participate
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**113. European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA)**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**114. European Central Bank- Single-Supervisory Mechanism (ECB-SSM)**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**115. BusinessEurope**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**Chapter 28 – Consumers and health protection**

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>116. EU4Health</b>	Albania	Not participating	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Kosovo	Not participating	
	Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	North Macedonia	Not participating	
	Serbia	Not participating	
<b>117. Scientific committee on consumer safety</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>118. Stakeholder expert group to support the application of the Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Directive</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	

<b>119. Consumer Safety Network</b>	Albania	Not a member
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
	Kosovo	Not a member
	Montenegro	Not a member
	North Macedonia	Not a member
	Serbia	Not a member
<b>120. Working Group on Cosmetic Products</b>	Albania	Not a member
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
	Kosovo	Not a member
	Montenegro	Not a member
	North Macedonia	Not a member
	Serbia	Not a member
<b>121. Platform of European Market Surveillance Authorities in Cosmetics</b>	Albania	Not a member
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
	Kosovo	Not a member
	Montenegro	Not a member
	North Macedonia	Not a member
	Serbia	Not a member
<b>122. Single Digital Gateway Coordination Group</b>	Albania	Not a member
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
	Kosovo	Not a member
	Montenegro	Not a member
	North Macedonia	Not a member
	Serbia	Not a member
<b>123. Consumer Policy Advisory Group</b>	Albania	Not a member
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
	Kosovo	Not a member
	Montenegro	Not a member
	North Macedonia	Not a member
	Serbia	Not a member

<b>124. Expert Group on the digital contracts directives</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>125. Expert group on food intended for infants and young children, food for special medical purposes and total diet replacement for weight control</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>126. Expert group on the provision of food information to consumers</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>127. Expert Group on the Internal Market for Products</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>128. Consumer Safety Network</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	

<b>129. Expert group on the provision of food information to consumers</b>	Albania	Not a member
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
	Kosovo	Not a member
	Montenegro	Not a member
	North Macedonia	Not a member
	Serbia	Not a member
<b>130. Expert group on public health</b>	Albania	Not a member
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
	Kosovo	Not a member
	Montenegro	Not a member
	North Macedonia	Not a member
	Serbia	Not a member
<b>131. Pharmaceutical committee</b>	Albania	Not a member
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
	Kosovo	Not a member
	Montenegro	Not a member
	North Macedonia	Not a member
	Serbia	Not a member
<b>132. Expert group Delegated act on safety features for medicinal products for human use</b>	Albania	Not a member
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
	Kosovo	Not a member
	Montenegro	Not a member
	North Macedonia	Not a member
	Serbia	Not a member
<b>133. Expert group on Safe and timely access to medicines for patients</b>	Albania	Not a member
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
	Kosovo	Not a member
	Montenegro	Not a member
	North Macedonia	Not a member
	Serbia	Not a member

<b>134. Medical device coordination group</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>135. Expert group on clinical trials</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>136. Antimicrobial Resistance One Health Network</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>136. Antimicrobial Resistance One Health Network</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>137. Scientific Committee on Health, Environmental and Emerging Risks</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	

### 138. European Medicines Agency working parties and groups

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Observer	Medicines Shortages Single Point of Contact Working Party (SPOC)-one observer; Good Manufacturing/Distribution Practices Inspectors Working Group (GMDP IWG)-one observer; Good Clinical Practice Inspectors Working Group (GCP IWG)-one observer; Pharmacovigilance Inspectors Working Group (PhV IWG)-one observer.
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 139. Heads of Medicines Agencies

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 140. Consumer Financial Programme Committee

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 141. Consumer Law Ready Programme

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	



## CLUSTER 3 – COMPETITIVENESS AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH<sup>2</sup>

### Chapter 10 – Digital transformation and media

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>142. European GNSS Agency (GSA)</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>143. High-Level Expert Group on Artificial Intelligence</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available	
	Kosovo	No information available	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>144. RSPG (Radio Spectrum Policy Group)</b>	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Observer	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

<sup>2</sup> Accelerated integration opportunities within this cluster are interconnected with the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans

<b>145. Digital markets advisory committee</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>146. High Level Group on the Digital Markets Act</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>147. Digital Services Expert Group</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Observer	Sub-group on the monitoring of the Digital Decade Policy Programme and the Digital Europe Programme (E03875/1). This subgroup reports to the Digital Decade Board and assists the Commission in the preparation of a monitoring strategy for the Digital Europe Programme and in developing the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI), the monitoring tool of the Digital Decade. BiH participated for the first time in DESI in 2023. As observer, CRA (Communications Regulatory Agency) follows ERGA Subgroup 4 – EU regulation of digital services – implementation, enforcement and the role of audio-visual regulators and Subgroup 1 – Consistent implementation and enforcement of the European framework for audio-visual media services
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

### 148. Expert Group on Security of Network and Information Systems

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 149. Media Literacy Expert Group

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Observer	As observer, CRA (Communications Regulatory Agency) follows ERGA Action Group on media literacy
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 150. EIDAS Expert Group

Albania	Observer	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 151. Digital Decade 2030

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

<b>152. EU EGovernment Action Plan Steering Board</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>153. European High Performance Computing Joint Undertaking (EuroHPC JU)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>154. Computer Security Incident Response Teams Network (CSIRTs)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>155. European Cyber Security Organisation (ECSO)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

### 156. European Cyber Crisis Liaison Organisation Network (EU CyCLONe)

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 157. NIS Cooperation Group

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 158. Digital Europe 2021 – 2027 Programme

Albania	Cooperation on the basis of an agreement	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cooperation on the basis of an agreement	
Kosovo	Cooperation on the basis of an agreement	
Montenegro	Cooperation on the basis of an agreement	
North Macedonia	Cooperation on the basis of an agreement	
Serbia	Cooperation on the basis of an agreement	

<b>159. RSC (The Radio Spectrum Committee)</b>	Albania	Observer
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
	Kosovo	Not a member
	Montenegro	Not a member
	North Macedonia	No information available
	Serbia	No information available
<b>160. BEREC (Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications)</b>	Albania	Observer
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Observer
	Kosovo	Observer
	Montenegro	Observer
	North Macedonia	Observer
	Serbia	Observer
<b>161. CEPT (European Conference for Postal and Telecommunications Administrations)/ECC (Electronic Communications Committee)</b>	Albania	Member
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member
	Kosovo	Observer
	Montenegro	Member
	North Macedonia	Member
	Serbia	Member
<b>162. European Regulators Group for Postal Services</b>	Albania	Not a member
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
	Kosovo	Not a member
	Montenegro	Not a member
	North Macedonia	No information available
	Serbia	No information available

### 163. Contact committee - Copyright in the information society

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## Chapter 16 – Taxation

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
164. Fiscalis programme (tax administration support)	Albania	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Kosovo	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	North Macedonia	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Serbia	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
165. VAT Expert group	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	To take into consideration when negotiations on EU accession begin
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

<b>166. VAT in Digital Age (ViDA) Council meetings</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	To take into consideration when negotiations on EU accession begin
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>167. VAT Committee</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	To take into consideration when negotiations on EU accession begin
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>168. SCAC – EG - Expert Group in the field of VAT - Administrative Cooperation</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	To take into consideration when negotiations on EU accession begin
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>169. Group on the Future of VAT</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	To take into consideration when negotiations on EU accession begin
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	



**170. Excise Contact Group**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	To take into consideration when negotiations on EU accession begin
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**171. CED (Committee on Excise Duty)**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	To take into consideration when negotiations on EU accession begin
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**172. Tax Administration European Union Summit (TADEUS)**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	To take into consideration when negotiations on EU accession begin
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**173. VAT Information Exchange System (VIES)**

Albania	No information available	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	To take into consideration when negotiations on EU accession begin
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

<b>174. Indirect Tax Expert Group</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	To take into consideration when negotiations on EU accession begin
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>175. ECWP (Excise Movement and Control Systems Working Party)</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	To take into consideration when negotiations on EU accession begin
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

## Chapter 17 – Economic and monetary union

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>176. International Relations Committee (IRC-ESCB)</b>	Albania	Observer	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>177. Payment and Settlement Systems Committee (PSSC)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	

<b>178. Accounting and Monetary Income Committee (AMICO)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>179. Budget Committee (BUCOM)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>180. Committee on Controlling (COMCO)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>181. Market Infrastructure and Payments Committee (MIPC)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>182. Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>183. Statistics Committee (STC)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	

<b>184. Advisory Technical Committee, ACT of European Systemic Risk Board (ESRB)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>185. Banking Supervision Committee</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>186. Financial Stability Committee</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>187. Banking Supervision Committee</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>188. Financial Stability Committee</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>189. Legal Committee (LEGCO)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	

<b>190. Market Operations Committee (COM)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>191. Risk Management Committee (RMC)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>192. Information Technology Committee (ITC)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>193. European System of Central Banks Communications Committee (ECCO)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>194. Banknote Committee (BANCO)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	
<b>195. Internal Auditors Committee (IAC)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	

## Chapter 19 – Social policy and employment

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>196. European Social Fund +</b>	Albania	Not participating	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not participating	Bosnia and Herzegovina has initiated the procedure for participation in the Employment and Social Innovation Program (EaSI), the European Social Fund plus (ESF+). The signing of the Agreement is expected in March/April 2025. BiH initiated participation in the EaSI part of the ESF+ program, not in the (entire) ESF+ program as such.
	Kosovo	No information available	
	Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
<b>197. European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)</b>	Albania	Designated contact point	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Designated contact point	
	Kosovo	Designated contact point	
	Montenegro	Designated contact point	
	North Macedonia	Designated contact point	
	Serbia	Designated contact point	

**198. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**199. European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**200. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND)**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**201. Advisory Committee on Safety and Health at Work**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**202. Social Protection Committee**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**203. Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**204. European network of Public Employment Services**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Observer	Based on the Decision of the PES Network Board of Directors from June 2024, the directors of public employment services (Labour and Employment Agency of BiH) from EU candidate countries have the right to attend meetings without the right to participate in decision-making.
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**205. Social Prerogative and Specific Competencies Lines (SOCPL)**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	



## 206. Expert group of Directors-General for industrial relations

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 207. Commission expert group on “social economy and social enterprises”

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 208. Mutual learning programme (MLP)

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 209. InvestEU Fund

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## Chapter 20 – Enterprise and industrial policy

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>210. European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA)</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	Exploring potential alignment for SME support and innovation initiatives. Not yet submitted a request for cooperation/membership, but interested to join it in the future.
	Montenegro	Participating\ cooperating on the basis of an agreement	Based on the Agreement on Single Market Program, we cooperate with EISMEA as implementing and supervising body for different projects realizations.
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>211. European Battery Alliance</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>212. European Raw Materials Alliance</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

**213. EU network of Entrepreneurship**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Member	Montenegro is part of the Enterprise Europe Network – EEN as of 2008, and will remain being part of it in the next period as well.
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**214. European Travel Commission**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Member	Montenegro is an active full member since 2006, represented by the National Tourism Organisation. The director of the National Tourism Agency of Montenegro has been elected as a Vice-President of the European Commission for Travel in November 2024.
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**215. Data Space for Tourism**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## 216. Advisory Group for Construction Products

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Observer
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 217. Competitiveness Council Configuration

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 218. EUREKA

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 219. Tourism Advisory Committee

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Observer
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**220. Expert Group 'Together for EU Tourism – T4T'**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**221. SME Envoys Network**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**Chapter 25 – Science and research****Area of accelerated integration****Country****Status****Notes****222. Copernicus, European Earth Observation Programme**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 223. Horizon

Albania	Participating on contractual basis	Became a fully associated member of Horizon Europe in January 2021, allowing increased cooperation in research and innovation. The Agreement is also available here: <a href="https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=53720">https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=53720</a>
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on contractual basis	
Kosovo	Associated member	
Montenegro	Participating on contractual basis	
North Macedonia	Participating on contractual basis	
Serbia	Participating on contractual basis	

## 224. European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) and its Knowledge and Innovation Communities

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## Chapter 26 – Education and culture

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>225. Creative Europe, Programme for the cultural and creative sectors</b>	Albania	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Kosovo	Participating on the basis of an agreement	Participates in the Culture strand and partially in the Cross sectorial strand based on the agreement, but is not yet full participant in the Media strand, one of the main reasons for this is the lack of full harmonization with the EU's Audio-visual Media Services Directive.
	Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	North Macedonia	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Serbia	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
<b>226. European University Institute EUI</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available	
	Kosovo	No information available	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

**219. Tourism Advisory Committee**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Observer	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**227. Erasmus+**

Albania	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating in the activities	BiH participates in the Erasmus+ Programme in the activities within the international dimension of the programme, not in the whole programme. Within the Erasmus+ programme, BiH also participates in the educational networks: Eurydice, Europass, Euroguidance, EQF, and eTwinning and EPALE.
Kosovo	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
North Macedonia	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Serbia	Participating on the basis of an agreement	

**228. Working group for early childhood education and care**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	



## 229. Working group for schools, including the subgroups for Pathways to School Success and Education for Environmental Sustainability

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## 230. Working group for higher education

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Kosovo	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## 232. Working group for adult learning - Opening up opportunities for all

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

<b>233. Permanent Group on Indicators and Evaluation Criteria in Education (SGIB)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>234. EU Open Method of Coordination Group – Climate change and cultural heritage</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>235. Portal on Learning Opportunities Throughout the European Space (PLOTEUS)</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

## 236. Working group for equality and values in Education and Training

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## Chapter 29 – Customs union

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
237. Union Customs Code (UCC)	Albania	Participating/ cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating/ cooperating on the basis of an agreement	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
238. Common Transit Convention	Albania	Not a member	Requests that are under negotiations with the EU
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Observer	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

### 239. New Computerised Transit System (NCTS)

Albania	Not a member	Requests that are under negotiations with the EU
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Observer	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 240. Customs Program

Albania	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Kosovo	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## CLUSTER 4 – GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY<sup>3</sup>

### Chapter 10 – Digital transformation and media

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>241. Transport Community Treaty</b>	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member	
	Kosovo	Participating in meetings	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>242. Pan-European Corridors</b>	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Kosovo	Member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	Within the Pan-European transport corridors - no corridors through Montenegro were defined.
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

<sup>3</sup> Accelerated integration opportunities within this cluster are interconnected with the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans

<b>243. Trans-European Transport network (TEN-T)</b>	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Kosovo	Member	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>244. European Common Aviation Area (ECAA) Agreement</b>	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member	
	Kosovo	Member	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>245. European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC)</b>	Albania	No information available	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	No information available	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>246. Civil Aviation Agreements (CAA)</b>	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	BiH has a Working Arrangement with EASA
	Kosovo	Member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

## 247. European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)

Albania	Observer	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Observer	
Kosovo	Not a member	Based on the Protocol IX of ECAA agreement, Kosovo shall be involved as an observer in the work of the European Aviation Safety Agency. This did not happen to date. Numerous letters have been addressed to EASA for this purpose without any specific reply. Other WB states have gained the observer status.
Montenegro	Observer	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## 248. European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)

Albania	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Kosovo	Not a member	N/A (Kosovo does not have maritime transport).
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## 249. Working Group on Risk and Threats in the field of Civil Aviation

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**250. Unmanned Aircraft Systems**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**251. European Union Agency For Railways (ERA)**

Albania	Member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Participating in meetings	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**252. Independent Regulators' Group – Rail' (IRG-RAIL)**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating in meetings	
Kosovo	Member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**253. EUROCONTROL**

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	



## 254. SESAR JU, Air Traffic Management modernisation

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## Chapter 15 – ENERGY

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
255. Energy Community Treaty	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member	
	Kosovo	Member	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	Member	
	Serbia	No information available	
256. Central and South Eastern European Connectivity network (CESEC)	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

**257. EUROATOM**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	BiH participates in the European Radiological Data Exchange Platform (EURDEP), and is in the process of ratifying the agreement on the European Community Urgent Radiological Information Exchange (ECURIE)
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**258. European Network of transmission System Operators for Electricity (ENTSOE)**

Albania	Member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member	<a href="https://www.entsoe.eu/about/system-operations/#how-we-are-organized">https://www.entsoe.eu/about/system-operations/#how-we-are-organized</a> The Member company from BiH is NOS BiH- <a href="https://www.entsoe.eu/about/inside-entsoe/members/">https://www.entsoe.eu/about/inside-entsoe/members/</a>
Kosovo	Member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**Chapter 27 – ENVIRONMENT****Area of accelerated integration****259. European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)**

Country	Status	Notes
Albania	Participating on the basis of an agreement	Collaborating and Beneficiary Country
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**260. European Environment Agency (EEA)**  
<https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/countries/cooperating-countries>

Albania	Affiliated member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Affiliated member
Kosovo	Affiliated member
Montenegro	Affiliated member
North Macedonia	Affiliated member
Serbia	Affiliated member

**261. Life Programme, Environment and climate change**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**262. Expert Group on Water and Floods**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating in meetings
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**263. Working Group on Good Environmental Status (WG GES)**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

#### 264. Working group on Programme of Measures, Economic and Social Analysis (WG POMESA)

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

#### 265. Regulatory Committee on the implementation of the European PRTR

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

#### 266. EMAS Committee and Working Group of EMAS Experts

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

#### 267. Industrial Emissions Expert Group

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**268. Working Group on Emissions Trading System (ETS)**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**269. Working Group on Effort Sharing and LULUCF**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**270. Working Group on Climate Adaptation**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	No information available	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**271. Working Group on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## 272. Working Group on Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS)

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## 273. Working Group on International Climate Negotiations

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## 274. Working Group on Low-Carbon Technologies

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## 275. Expert Group on Climate Change Policy

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	No information available	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**276. Expert Group on Biodiversity (EEB Working Groups)**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**277. Ambient Air Quality Expert Group**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**278. Noise expert group**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**279. Committee and Expert Group on Mercury**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## 280. European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA)

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## 281. Climate Change Committee (CCC)

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## 282. EU Forest and Forestry Stakeholder's Platform

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## 283. European Flood Awareness System (EFAS)

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	



**284. MeteoAlarm (Early Warnings for Europe) <https://meteoalarm.org/en/live/page/meteoalarm-members#list>**

Albania	Member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Member
North Macedonia	Not a member
Serbia	Member

**285. EUMETSAT (European operational satellite agency for monitoring weather, climate and the environment from space)**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**286. EUMETNET (European Multi- services Meteorological Awareness)**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**287. ECMWF (European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts)**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**288. CARACAL (Competent Authorities for REACH and CLP), which coordinates the implementation of the REACH and CLP regulations.**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Observer
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**289. RAC (Risk Assessment Committee), which evaluates the scientific risk associated with chemicals and their impact on human health and the environment.**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Observer
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**290. SEAC (Socio-economic Analysis Committee), which conducts socio-economic analysis regarding the impact of chemicals and related regulations on society and the economy.**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Observer
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

**291. Biocidal Products Committee (BPC)**

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 292. The Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (POPRC)

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 293. Chemical Review Committee (CRC)

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Not a member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## 294. The European Network of Prosecutors for the Environment (ENPE),

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available
Kosovo	No information available
Montenegro	No information available
North Macedonia	Not a member
Serbia	No information available

## 295. The European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of the Environmental Law (IMPEL).

Albania	Member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No information available
Kosovo	No information available
Montenegro	Member
North Macedonia	No information available
Serbia	No information available

## CLUSTER 5 – RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE AND COHESION

### Chapter 11 – Agriculture and rural development

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>296. Committee for the Common Organisation of Agricultural Markets</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>297. Quality Policy Committee for Agricultural Products, Wine and Spirit Drinks</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>298. Committee on Aromatized Wine-based drinks</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

**299. Rural Development Committee**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**300. Pan Euro-Med Convention for Preferential Rules of Origin and Diagonal Cumulation (PEM)**

Albania	Member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**Chapter 12 – FOOD SAFETY, VETERINARY AND PHYTOSANITARY POLICY**

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>301. Sanitary and Phytosanitary Regulations (SPS) WTO</b>	Albania	Member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Member	
	North Macedonia	Member	
	Serbia	No information available	
<b>302. Standing Committee on Zootechnics</b>	Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Observer	
	North Macedonia	No information available	
	Serbia	No information available	

### 303. EU Pest Control Systems

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Observer	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 304. Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Observer	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 305. European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/partnersnetworks/eumembers>

Albania	Observer	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Observer	
Kosovo	Observer	
Montenegro	Observer	
North Macedonia	Observer	
Serbia	Observer	

## Chapter 13 – FISHERIES

#### Area of accelerated integration

### 306. European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

Country	Status	Notes
Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Observer	
North Macedonia	Not a member	
Serbia	Not a member	

### 307. European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)

Albania	Not a member
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member
Kosovo	Not a member
Montenegro	Observer
North Macedonia	Not a member
Serbia	Not a member

## Chapter 22 – REGIONAL POLICY AND COORDINATION OF STRUCTURAL INSTRUMENTS

### Area of accelerated integration

### Country

### Status

### Notes

### 308. European Territorial Cooperation

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Member	Montenegro participates in the following European territorial cooperation programmes: Interreg IPA Programme South Adriatic, Interreg IPA Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro, Interreg IPA ADRIAN, Interreg Danube Region, Interreg Euro-MED, Interreg Europe, URBACT. As an observer in the ESPON.
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 309. REGIO Peer2Peer +

Albania	Not a member	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 310. European Community of Practice on Partnership (ECoPP)

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 311. INFORM EU Network

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 312. Border Focal Point Network

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 313. Simplified Cost Options Network

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	



### 314. Community of Practice: Employment, Education and Skills

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 315. Community of Practice: Results-based Management

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 316. Community of Practice: Social Inclusion

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Observer	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 317. Community of Practice: Social Innovation

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Observer	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 318. Cohesion for Transitions (C4T) Community of Practice

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 319. ESF Transnational Cooperation Platform

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Affiliated member/ associated country	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 320. Just Transition Platform

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**321. Harnessing Talent Platform**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**322. European Committee of Regions**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

## CLUSTER 6 – EXTERNAL RELATIONS

### Chapter 30 – EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>323. European Union Civil Protection Mechanism</b>	Albania	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	North Macedonia	Participating on the basis of an agreement	
	Serbia	Participating on the basis of an agreement	

### Chapter 31 – FOREIGN, SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

Area of accelerated integration	Country	Status	Notes
<b>324. European Defence Agency (EDA)</b>	Albania	Not a member	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
	Kosovo	Not a member	
	Montenegro	Not a member	
	North Macedonia	Not a member	
	Serbia	Not a member	

**325. European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS)**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**326. Computer Emergency Response Team of EU Institutions (CERT-EU)**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**327. European Cybersecurity Competence Centre (ECCC)**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

**328. Group of Experts on Restrictive Measures of the Union and Extraterritoriality**

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 329. Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 330. European Peace Fund (EPF)

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Participating on the basis of an agreement	Ministry of Defence of BiH is a beneficiary of the EPF project for the second time. The First Project was realised from 2021-2023 as Support to the BiH Armed Forces demining battalion, amounting to 10 million Euro. The second EPF Project 2023-2026 is ongoing and it provides tactical support to the Armed Forces of BiH, with a value amounting to 10 million Euro. They are now in the process of negotiation for the third potential Project with the EEAS Representative
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 331. European Army Interoperability Centre (FINABEL)

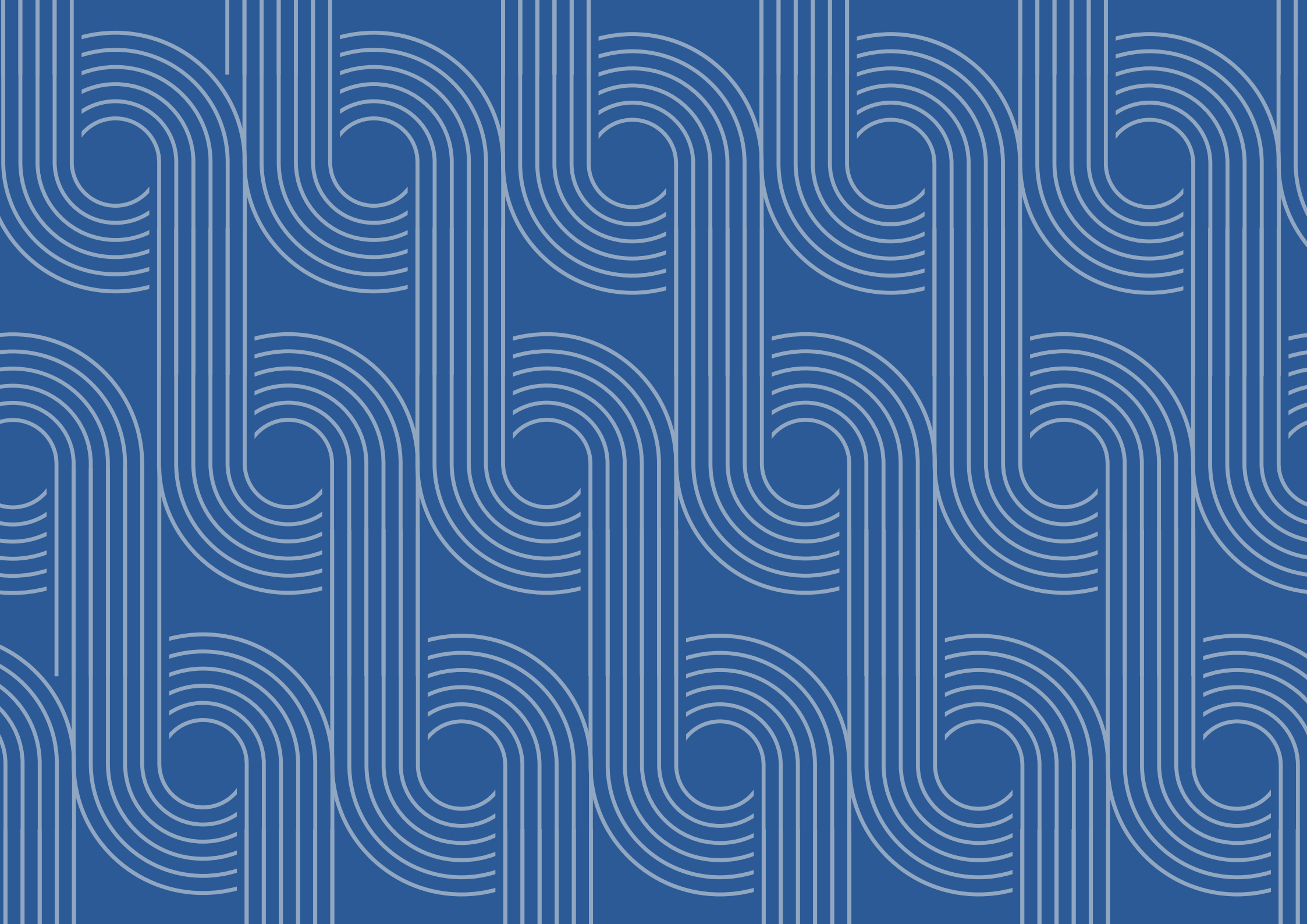
Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 332. European External Action Service Network on Conflict Prevention

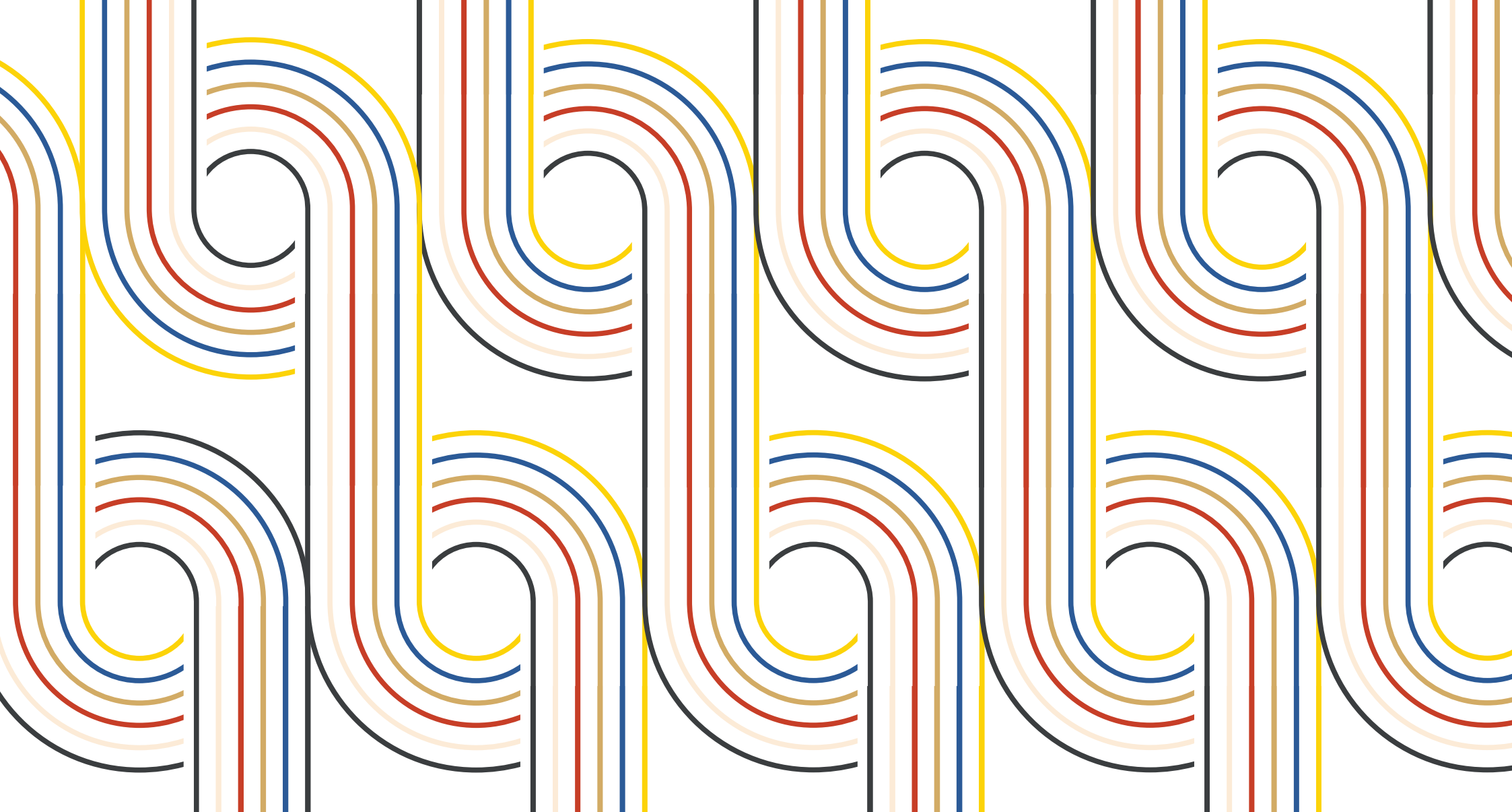
Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	

### 333. Strategic Information Exchange and Reporting IT Tool (SIER IT Tool)

Albania	Not a member	Considering a possible request.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Not a member	
Kosovo	Not a member	
Montenegro	Not a member	
North Macedonia	No information available	
Serbia	No information available	







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