

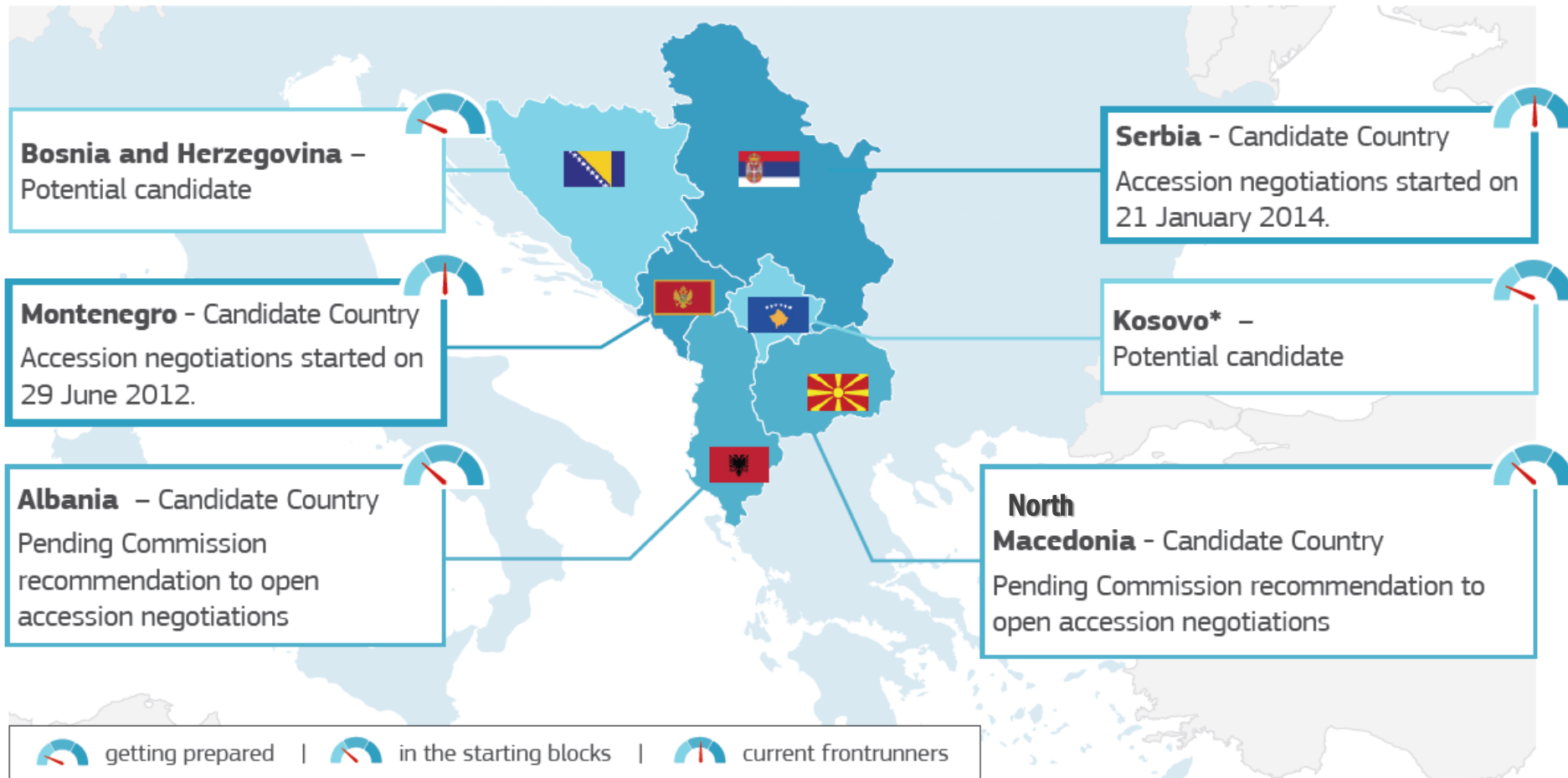


Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans

2019

DG Connect

PROSPECTIVE EUROPEAN UNION MEMBERS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS



Current status "ICT Chapters"

Chapter 7: Intellectual property law
Chapter 10: Information society and media
Chapter 23: Judiciary and fundamental rights

Country	Status	Membership negotiations
Albania	Candidate country	no chapters opened
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Potential candidate	no chapters opened
Kosovo*	Potential candidate	no chapters opened
North Macedonia	Candidate country	no chapters opened
Montenegro	Candidate country	Chapter 7 opened on 31 March 2014 Chapter 10 opened on 31 March 2014 Chapter 23 opened on 18 December 2013
Serbia	Candidate country	Chapter 10 opens soon Chapter 23 opened on 18 July 2016

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Digital Agenda - Key milestones

- **July 2017** - At the Trieste Summit Western Balkans leaders endorsed for the first time digital integration as one of the components of the Multiannual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area.
- **February 2018** – The EU strategy for the Western Balkans was presented - one of the six flagship initiatives was the Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans (DAWB).
- **April 2018** - The Western Balkans governments declared their support for the Digital Agenda.
- **June 2018** - The European Commission launched the Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans at the Digital Assembly in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans

- *In the Western Balkans strategy, the flagship "Digital agenda for the Western Balkans" identified 5 main priorities:*
 - Lowering the cost of roaming
 - Support the deployment of broadband
 - Strengthening the digital economy and society
 - Capacity building in digital trust and security, digitalisation of industries
 - Adoption, implementation and enforcement of the EU acquis
- *Work is done in close cooperation with the governments in the region and with the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC).*

Roaming

- *2 aspects:*
 - Roaming within the region
 - Roaming between EU and WB
- *Regional roaming*
 - New agreement planned to be signed by all six at the Digital Summit in Belgrade on 4-5 April 2019.
 - Extension of existing roaming agreement from 4 to 6 (adding Albania and Kosovo*).
 - Progressively lowering of tariffs down to Roam Like At Home by 2021.
- *EU – WB roaming*
 - No legal basis for an agreement and enforcement (until joining the EU).
 - It has to be voluntary, commercial agreements between operators.
 - A need to address the economic environment of the telecom operators
 - Equal and fair treatment (no preference to incumbents).
 - Rule of law, enforcement of existing rules.
 - Market based fees for frequencies and building permissions, etc.

Deployment of broadband

- *A large digital gap between Western Balkans and the EU.*
- *Remote areas not well connected and in general low average speed.*
- *The EU has now made €30M available for Technical Assistance for broadband rollout under the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF).*

Strengthening the digital economy and society

Alignment with the EU in relevant areas and Increased cooperation

- eGovernment action plan
- eProcurement
- eHealth network

Digital Skills

- Code Week (3 times more participants in 2018 vs 2017), bringing coding skills and digital literacy to the region
- Digital Opportunity Traineeships for students in WB
- Startup Europe Summit 2018 in Sofia, enabling regional startups to connect and network with major European hubs

Cybersecurity & trust and digitalisation of industry

- *The EU and the Western Balkan region have a common objective to improve online security and trust.*
- *The Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans supports capacity building in trust and security.*
- *A Regional CyberSecurity Programme is being developed and will be presented in July 2019.*
- Digital Innovation Hubs - act as one-stop-shops where companies — especially SMEs and startups — get access to technology-testing, financing advice, market intelligence and networking opportunities.



Enlargement & EU acquis

- *In order to incorporate the region in existing EU networks:*
 - The Region is now observers in the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) to support telecom regulators.
 - The EU has opened the Broadband Competent Offices (BCO) network to the region to share the experiences from the EU Member States. – Important for Broadband.
 - Code Week – WB participation up with 300%
 - Startup Europe Network
 - Digital Innovation Hubs
 - European Artificial Intelligence Alliance
 - EU Blockchain Observatory & Forum

Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans

Next steps:

- WB Digital Summit in Belgrade & Regional Roaming Agreement – 4-5 April 2019
- WB CyberSecurity Programme – July 2019
- Connection of Kosovo to GEANT research network (2019 – 2020)
- Endorsement of the eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020 & Ministerial Declaration on eGovernment - 2019