Implementation of the European Research Area (ERA) in the Western Balkans

Webinar

25 June 2024

Funded by the European Union

Welcome and Introduction

POLICY ANSWERS

WP2 MONITORING FOR AGENDA SETTING

Time	Agenda point
10:00-10:05	Welcome and introduction
10:05-10:15	ERA Monitoring and the ERA Policy Agenda
10:15-10:40	Selected results of the WB ERA Country Reports
10:40-11:00	Discussion and Q&A

ERA Monitoring and the ERA Policy Agenda

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What are ERA and ERA Monitoring?

- *"ERA is the ambition to create a single, borderless market for research, innovation and technology across the EU."*
- ERA is based on excellence and
  - prioritises investments and reforms in research and innovation
  - boosts market uptake
  - strengthens mobility of researchers and free flow of knowledge and technology
  - improves access to excellence
- The European Commission (EC) has published a new ERA communication in 2020
- The ERA policy framework is based on
  - the ERA governance, including the ERA Forum, ERAC and the Council;
  - the Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe;
  - an ERA Policy Agenda with concrete actions.
- The Pact for R&I and the ERA Policy Agenda are the most important instruments for the ERA monitoring
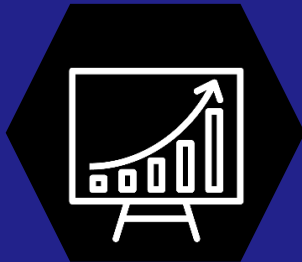
The Pact for R&Innovation

- Pact for R&I is the key instrument for the implementation of the ERA Monitoring Mechanism (EMM)
- It is supposed to ensure a proper basis for evidence-informed policy making in the ERA and to support and facilitate the implementation of the ERA Policy Agenda at both European and national levels
- According to the Pact for R&I, the EMM should encompass the following elements ...

A Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe

Framework of the ERA monitoring mechanism

Scoreboard

Dashboard

EU-level Report

ERA Country Reports

ERA Policy Platform https://european-research-area.ec.europa.eu

Principles of the ERA monitoring mechanism

✓ The new ERA monitoring mechanism (EMM) collects and analyses both quantitative and qualitative information related to the progress in realising the ERA priority areas and the implementation of the agreed joint actions

✓ The EMM monitors progress along the 16 priority areas for joint action (ERA priorities) as set out in the Pact for R&I

✓ The ERA Scoreboard focuses on 18 quantitative indicators for the priority areas for joint action

✓ The ERA Dashboard covers a broader substance through a larger number of indicators, plus qualitative contextual information at national level

Structure of the ERA Policy Agenda

- The ERA Policy Agenda is the operationalisation tool of the EMM and designed to contribute to the priority areas of the Pact for R&I
- It sets out the (current) 20 voluntary ERA actions which are defined and coordinated at EU level.
- The current ERA Policy Agenda is valid for the time period 2022-2024
- The ERA Policy Agenda 2023-2025 has already been discussed and actions have been proposed

European Research Area Policy Agenda

Overview of actions for the period 2022-2024

ERA Policy Agenda 2022-2024: four priority areas and 20 actions

DEEPENING A TRULY FUNCTIONING INTERNAL MARKET FOR KNOWLEDGE

1. Open sharing of knowledge, incl. EOSC
2. Data legislation fit for research
3. Reform of research assessment
4. Strengthen research careers
5. Gender equality and inclusiveness
6. Protect academic freedom
7. Better knowledge valorisation
8. Research infrastructures
9. International cooperation, reciprocity

TOGETHER FOR TWIN GREEN AND DIGITAL TRANSITION, AND INCREASING SOCIETY'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ERA

10. R&I Missions and Partnerships for ERA
11. Green energy transformation
12. Transition of industrial ecosystems
13. Empower higher education institutions
14. Bring science closer to society

AMPLIFYING ACCESS TO RESEARCH AND INNOVATION EXCELLENCE ACROSS THE UNION

15. Regional and national R&I ecosystems
16. EU-wide access to excellence
17. Strategic capacity of public RPOs

ADVANCING CONCERTED R&I INVESTMENTS AND REFORMS

18. Coordination national support for ERA
19. ERA monitoring mechanism
20. Prioritisation and coordination of R&I investments and reforms

European Research Area Policy Agenda

Overview of actions for the period 2022-2024

European Commission

Towards the next ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027: Proposals for Actions

I. Pact Priority Area: Deepening an internal market for knowledge

- Enabling Open Science
- Equity in Open and Responsible Research
- Research Infrastructures
- Inclusive and intersectional gender equality
- Research Careers
- Research Assessment
- Knowledge Valorisation
- Freedom of Scientific Research
- Fundamental research and scientific leadership
- Establishment of a European Science for Policy ecosystem
- AI in science and research in the EU
- Global Approach to R&I
- Research Security

III. Pact Priority Area: Research and innovation excellence

- Improve EU-wide access to excellence
- An new ERA for Research Management

II. Pact Priority Area: Green and digital transition

- Revamping the SET Plan (merger with Renewable Energy Valleys, tbc)
- Greening Research: first steps towards sustainable research practices
- Non-animal approaches in biomedical research and testing pharmaceuticals
- A harmonised framework to support integrity and ethics in R&I
- Unleashing the full R&I potential of Europe's universities
- Industrial transformation for Europe's competitive sustainability and strategic autonomy
- Citizen Engagement, including trust in science for a stronger and more democratic European society

IV. Pact Priority Area: Investments and reforms

- An R&I foresight community of practice

Selected results of the WB ERA Country Reports

POLICY ANSWERS reports on WB ERA Integration (2022)

- POLICY ANSWERS produces WB ERA Country Reports for reporting years 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025
- 2022 versions are based on methodology of the ERA Monitoring Handbook 2018
- POLICY ANSWERS has prepared reports with the support of external experts for:
  - Albania
  - Bosnia and Herzegovina
  - Kosovo*
  - North Macedonia
  - Montenegro
  - Serbia
- Reports can be accessed here

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

2023 WB ERA Country Reports

- 2023 versions of the reports are based on new guidelines for ERA Country Reports (as for EU-27)
  - Based on new ERA Monitoring Mechanism of the EC
  - Priorities defined in the ERA Policy Agenda 2022-2024
- POLICY ANSWERS has prepared reports with the support of external experts for:
  - Albania
  - Bosnia and Herzegovina
  - Kosovo
  - North Macedonia
- Reports for Montenegro and Serbia prepared by another sub-contractor of the EC
- Reports can be accessed on the ERA Policy Platform of the EC

ERA Country Report 2023
Serbia

ERA Country Report 2023
North Macedonia

ERA Country Report 2023
Kosovo*

ERA Country Report 2023
Montenegro

ERA Country Report 2023
Albania

ERA Country Report 2023
Bosnia and Herzegovina

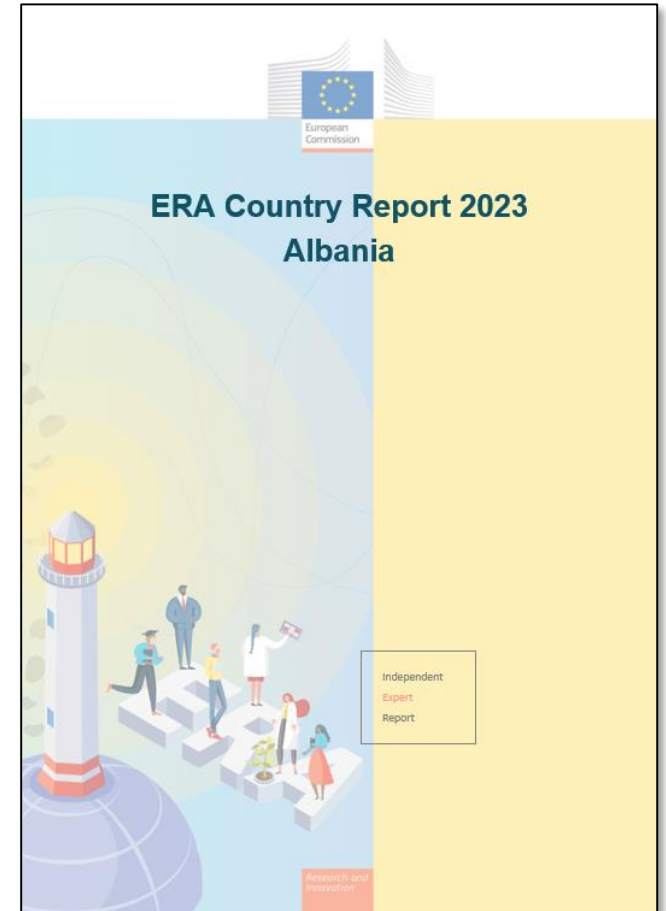# Structure of the ERA Country Reports

Table of contents

Albania's ERA integration – selected drivers

- Albania is progressing towards priorities of the ERA Policy Agenda 2022-2024; no formal commitment to the priorities yet

- Participation in the European Innovation Scoreboard and the She Figures report 2021

- Key initiatives:
  - New Draft Law of Science (not published yet) includes the topics: Open Science, gender equality
  - Opening of the EURAXESS Portal
  - EIT Raw Materials Regional Innovation Centre opened in Elbasan in April 2024

European Commission

European Innovation
Scoreboard 2023
Country profile
Albania

Innovation

Albania's ERA integration – selected barriers

- Prevention of better implementation of strategies, laws, and measures regarding R&I due to lack of R&I funding

- Insufficient professionalisation of research management

- Low participation of Albanian researchers in international projects and the ERA

- Low number of cooperations between academia and the private sector; insufficient support of knowledge valorisation and transfer
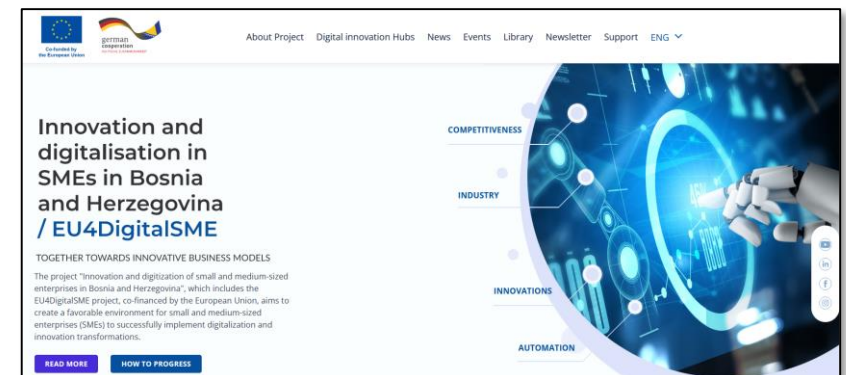
Bosnia and Herzegovina's ERA integration – selected drivers

- Progress regarding the implementation of ERA priorities: Open Science, gender equality, promotion of attractive research careers, international cooperation, research infrastructures

- Increased success in Horizon Europe: University of Sarajevo (UNSA) as project coordinator; University Clinical Centre of the Republic of Srpska partner institution under EU Cancer Mission

- EU4DigitalSME project: increased academia-industry collaboration in the digital sector

- Researchers are increasingly interested in EU R&I programmes
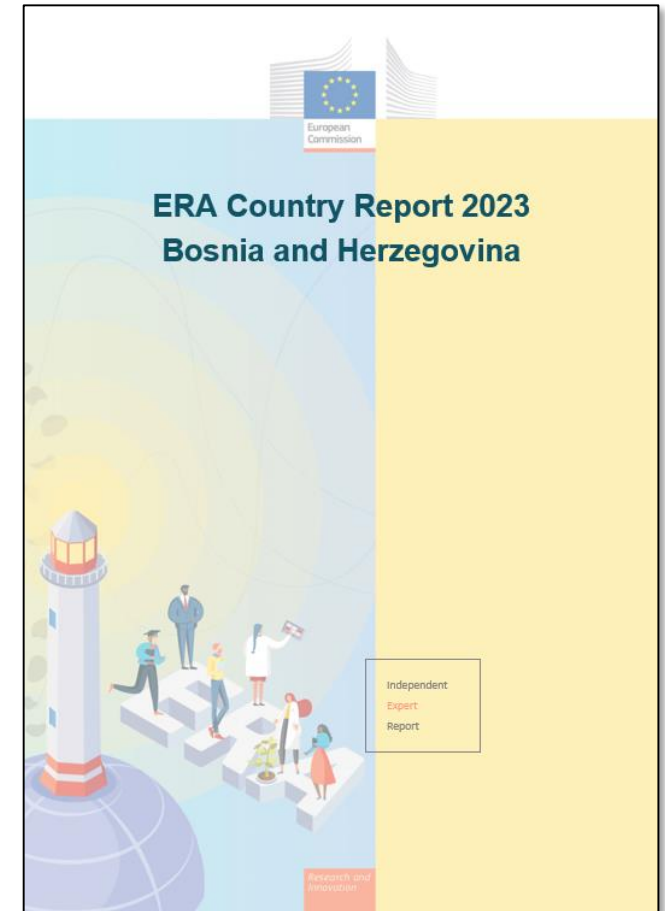

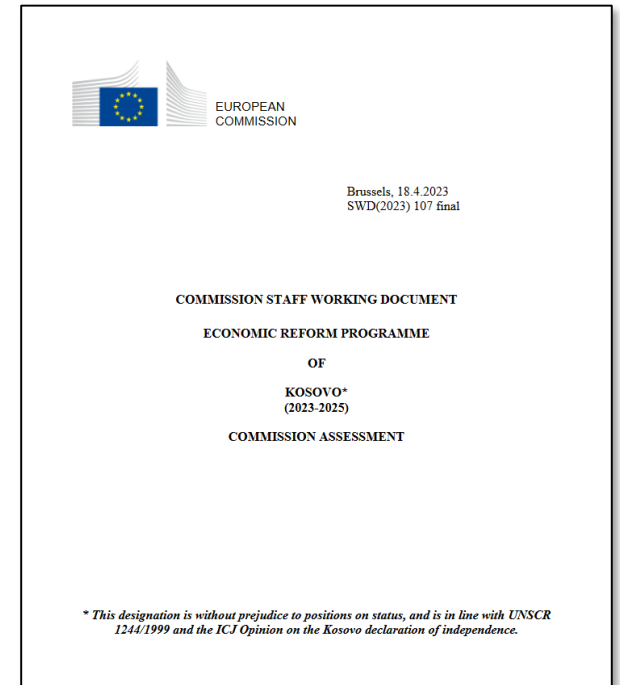Horizon Europe project with UNSA as first project coordinator from BiH

Bosnia and Herzegovina's ERA integration – selected barriers

- Lack of cooperation of industry with research groups; low R&I investments by the private sector

- Limited progress of the Smart Specialisation Strategy

- Low support of researchers to participate in European programmes

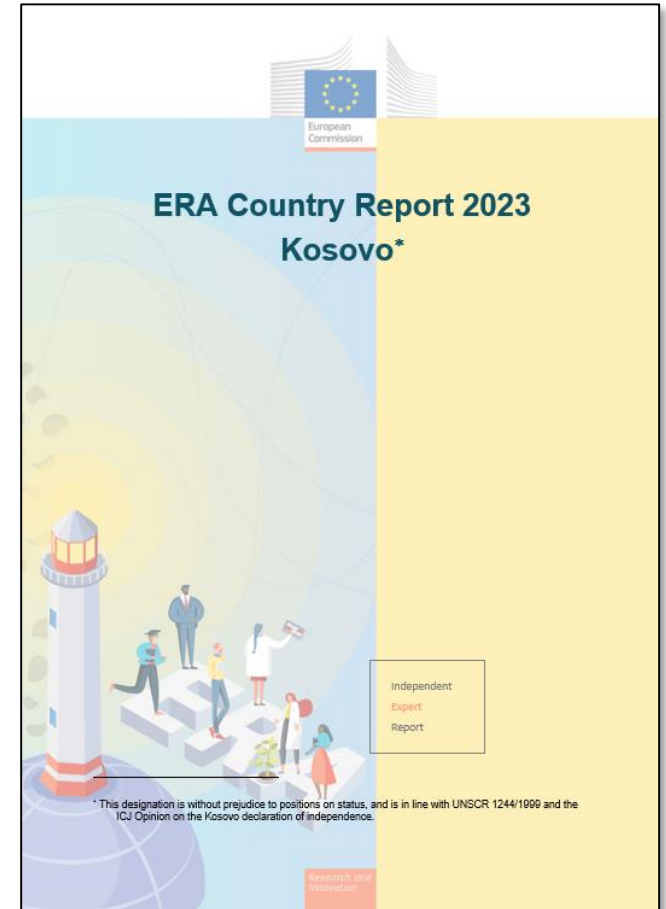- Low level of implementation of priorities of the ERA Policy Agenda

ERA Country Report 2023
Bosnia and Herzegovina

Independent
Expert
Report

Kosovo's ERA integration – selected drivers

- Gradual progress in aligning with the ERA priorities

- Increasing participation of researchers in European R&I programmes

- R&I as key priorities of structural reforms in the Economic Reform Programme 2023-2025

- National Research Programme 2023-2028: new opportunities to foster R&I (research excellence, internationalisation, Open Science)

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 18.4.2023
SWD(2023) 107 final

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

ECONOMIC REFORM PROGRAMME

OF

KOSOVO*
(2023-2025)

COMMISSION ASSESSMENT

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.

Kosovo's ERA integration – selected barriers

- Low level of alignment with ERA Policy Agenda due to fragmented legal and policy R&I framework

- Delay in development of Smart Specialisation Strategy

- Only little incentives for R&I actors for national and international cooperation

- Low level of cooperation between academia and business actors; no initiatives for private sector investment

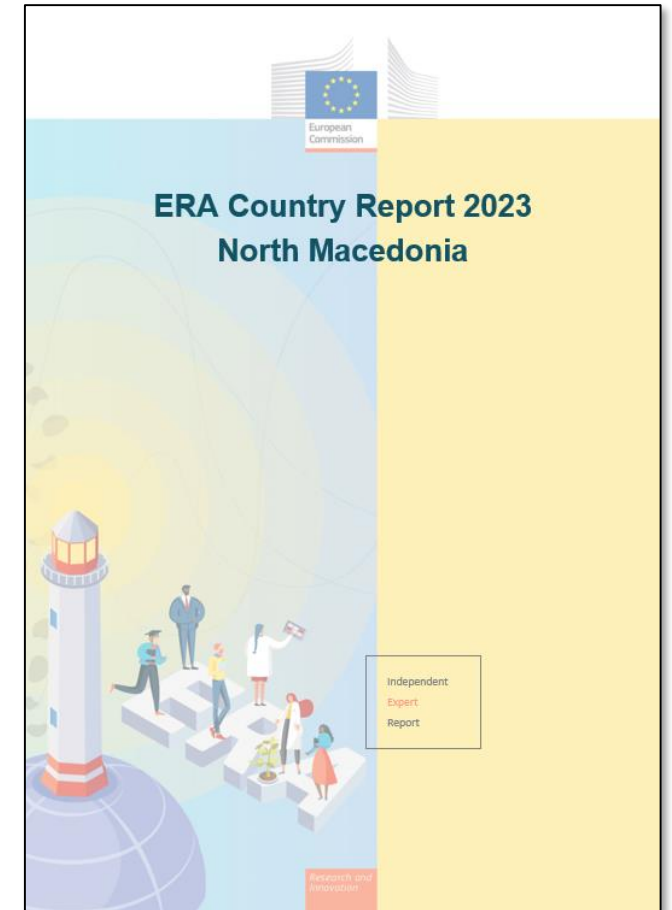- Lack of financing instruments for R&I activities

European Commission

ERA Country Report 2023
Kosovo*

Independent
Expert
Report

* 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.

North Macedonia's ERA integration – selected drivers

- Formal commitment to six ERA Actions under three priority areas of the ERA Policy Agenda in September 2023

- First EIT Innovation Hub launched at the Centre for Technology Transfer and Innovation in Skopje in June 2023

- Adoption of Smart Specialisation Strategy 2024-2027 with action plan 2024-2025 by government in December 2023
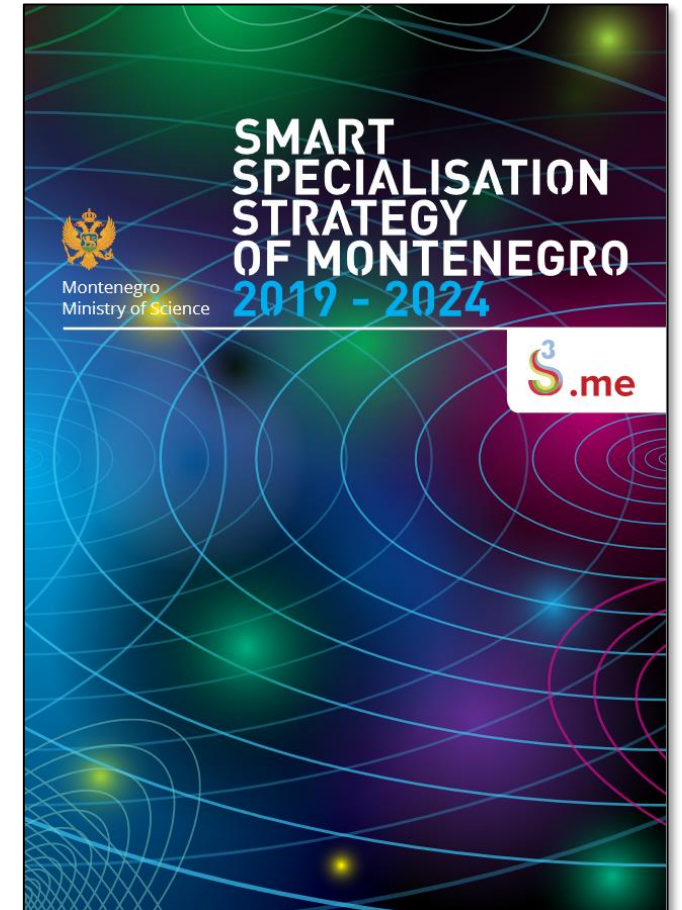
North Macedonia's ERA integration – selected barriers

- Inefficient use of R&I funds due to delay in implementation of key strategies, programmes and priorities
- Unfavourable structures of GERD by sector of performance and funding sources
- Aim of development of a knowledge-based society through Green and Digital Transition is in danger because of low R&I funding from both the public and private sector
- Low support of science and technology parks as obstacle to the development of the full potential of the business sector
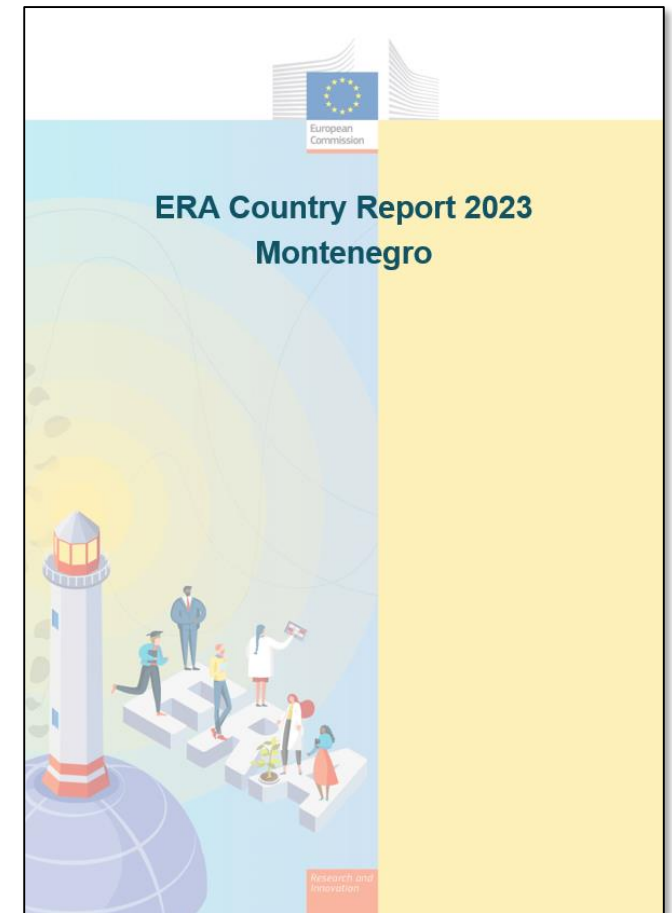-

Montenegro's ERA integration – selected drivers

- Implementation of the ERA Policy Agenda through several initiatives; increased reformation of R&I system through the determination of internal capacities

- Integration of the ERA priorities in the draft National Strategy for Research Activities (2023-2027)

- Smart Specialisation Strategy 2019-2024: role model for the cooperation of different actors and for the strengthening of the academia-business cooperation and knowledge transfer

Montenegro's ERA integration – selected barriers

- Low level of integration into ERA due to lack of domestic and international resources; low sustainability of R&I reforms and less advanced development of the R&I system

- Prevention of better development of science-industry cooperation due to low investments of the public sector into R&I

- No systematic collection of data: data gaps, little progress in monitoring and benchmarking R&I performance

ERA Country Report 2023
Montenegro

Serbia's ERA integration – selected drivers

- Advancements towards the ERA Policy Agenda: Open Science, gender equality; no formal commitment to any ERA actions

- Integration into ERA through institutional funding reforms and introduction of policy measures; creation of a favourable environment for R&I and science-industry cooperation

- Increase in the innovation performance according to the European Innovation Scoreboard

- Establishment of a system for the further development of deep-tech: Law on Digital Assets, tax incentive schemes for high-tech companies, PhD programmes on Artificial Intelligence

European Innovation
Scoreboard **2023**
Country profile
Serbia

Serbia's ERA integration – selected barriers

- Prevention of further implementation of ERA Policy Agenda due to low R&I funding

- No alignment with European Research Infrastructure Consortium Regulation

- Low efficiency in implementation of strategic policy documents and action plans (such as the Smart Specialisation Strategy)

- Lack of digital skills in interaction between academia and business stakeholders; low level of digital transferability

ERA Country Report 2023
Serbia

WB ERA Country Reports and data (un)availability

- Data availability in the WB is limited for (some of) the required ERA Performance Indicators to draft ERA Country Reports
- Only Serbia and Montenegro participate (partially) in providing ERA Performance Indicators
- Data gaps have to be filled with proxy indicators and qualitative information
- Comparability of WB ERA Country Reports with reports of EU Member States and other Associated Countries is low

WB ERA Country Reports and data (un)availability

- Some data gaps can be filled with data from the European Innovation Scoreboard
  - Limited data available for Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia
  - No data for Kosovo available
- Recommendations for future WB ERA Country Reports:
  - Foster exchange about needed data for reports between national statistical offices and Ministries responsible for international cooperation in R&I
  - Collect data aligned to ERA Performance Indicators by national statistical offices and Ministries
  - Participate in collection of policy relevant indicators (UNESCO, Eurostat)

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Webinar Survey and future POLICY ANSWERS webinars

- Webinar Survey
  - POLICY ANSWERS would be happy to have you participate in the webinar survey (approx. 2 minutes)

- Upcoming webinars:
  - Work Package 5: Innovating the Food System: status and future opportunities of European Partnerships for the Western Balkans on 27/06 from 3-4pm
  - Work Package 6: Challenges and opportunities for the mission-oriented implementation of climate adaptation and sustainable cities on 18/07 from 3-4pm
  - More information here

POLICY ANSWERS

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