"S3 processes in the EU Enlargement Region"

"*Smart Specialisation in EU Enlargement Countries*"
Policy Answers - EUSDR PA7
Online, 13.03.2025

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European Commission - JRC.B3

Outline

- The role of S3 in the EU accession process

- State of play of S3 in EU enlargement economies

- JRC support for S3 processes

Some contextual information

- We refer to **Smart Specialisation** as the capacity of an economic system to generate new specialties through the discovery of new domains of opportunity and the local concentration and agglomeration of resources and competences in these domains (Foray, 2015)

- S3 represents a key **pillar in the EU accession** process, monitored in the chapter 25 of the so called "screening process" that is the analytical examination of the EU acquis (New Enlargement Methodology, 2020)

- The JRC provides the EU Enlargement economies with S3 analytical assistance and has developed **S3 frameworks** adopted on voluntary basis by EU enlargement countries
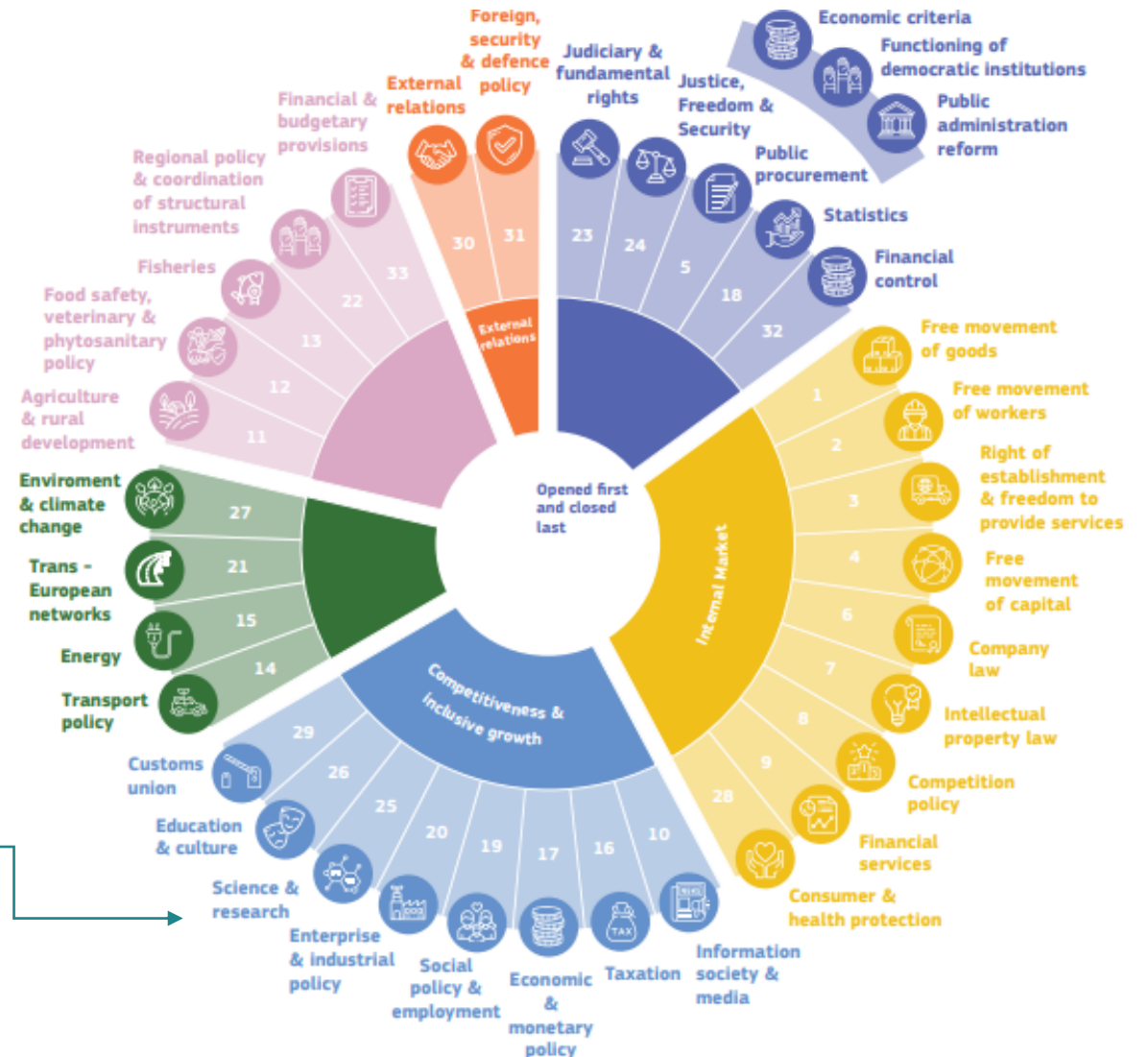
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EU accession and S3

The screening process is the first step in the accession negotiations. It is the analytical examination of the EU acquis.

The "screening" is a process conducted jointly by the European Commission and the candidate country, and concerns 33 chapters of the EU acquis

33 chapters, six thematic clusters, allowing to identify areas for accelerated integration. Chapters "34. Institutions" and "35. Other issues" are handled separately
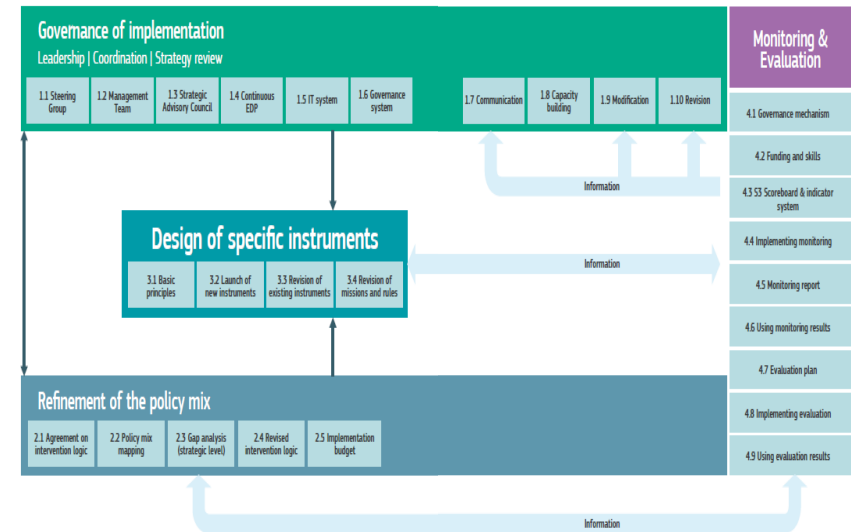
Chapter 25 on Science and Research relates to the existence of the necessary conditions for effective participation in the EU's Framework Programmes.

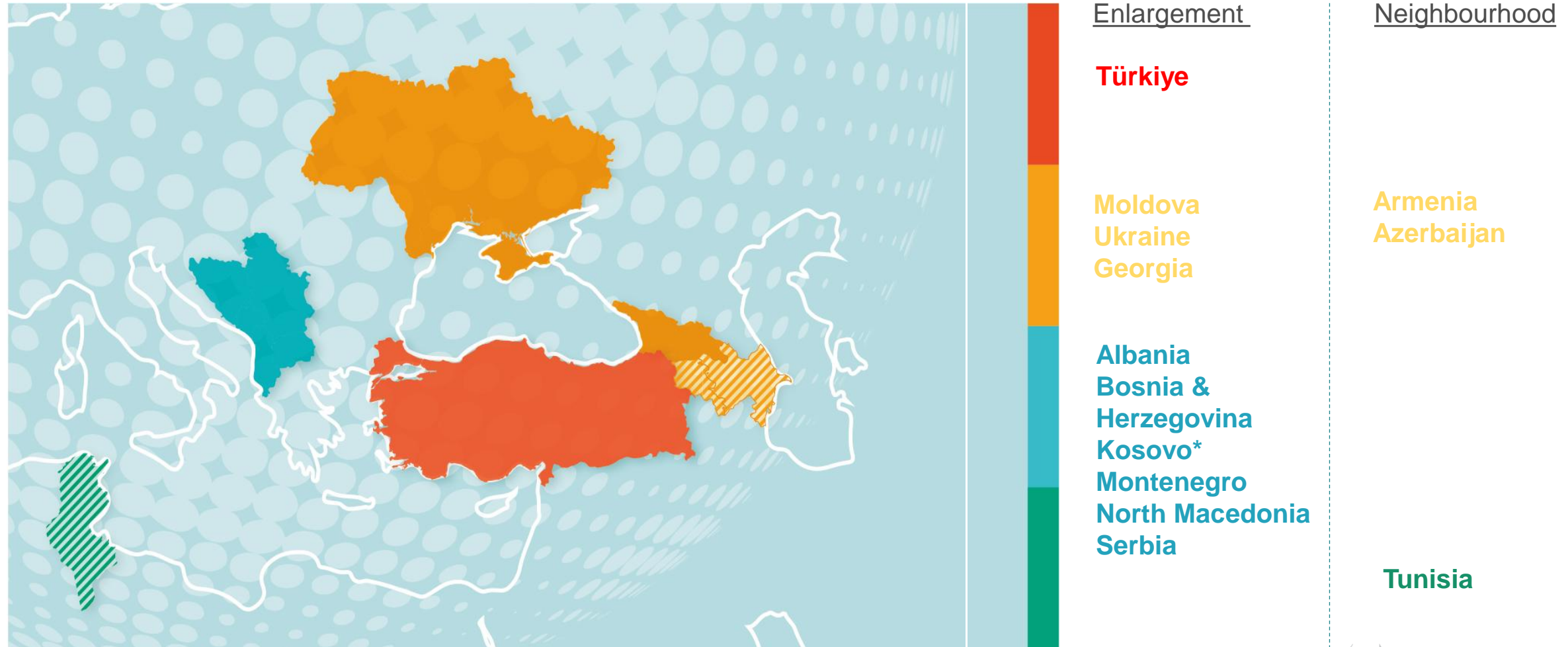# JRC support for S3 processes in the EU enlargement and neighbourhood region

S3 Design Framework
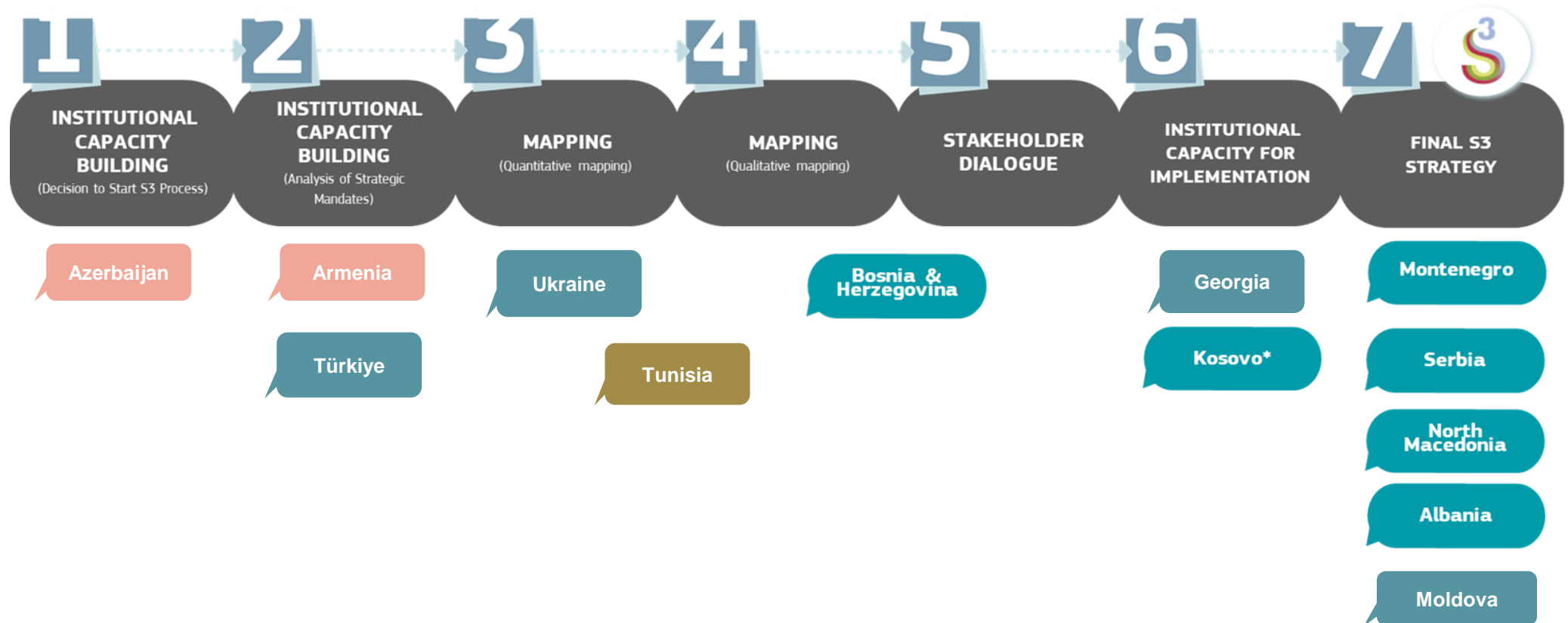

S3 Implementation Framework

The geographical scope of our support

Enlargement

Türkiye

Moldova
Ukraine
Georgia

**Albania
Bosnia &
Herzegovina
Kosovo***
**Montenegro
North Macedonia
Serbia**

Neighbourhood

Armenia
Azerbaijan

Tunisia

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State of play of S3 processes in the EU enlargement and neighbourhood region

1 INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING (Decision to Start S3 Process)

2 INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING (Analysis of Strategic Mandates)

3 MAPPING (Quantitative mapping)

4 MAPPING (Qualitative mapping)

5 STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE

6 INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

7 FINAL S3 STRATEGY

- 1: Azerbaijan
- 2: Armenia, Türkiye
- 3: Ukraine, Tunisia
- 4: Bosnia & Herzegovina
- 6: Georgia, Kosovo*
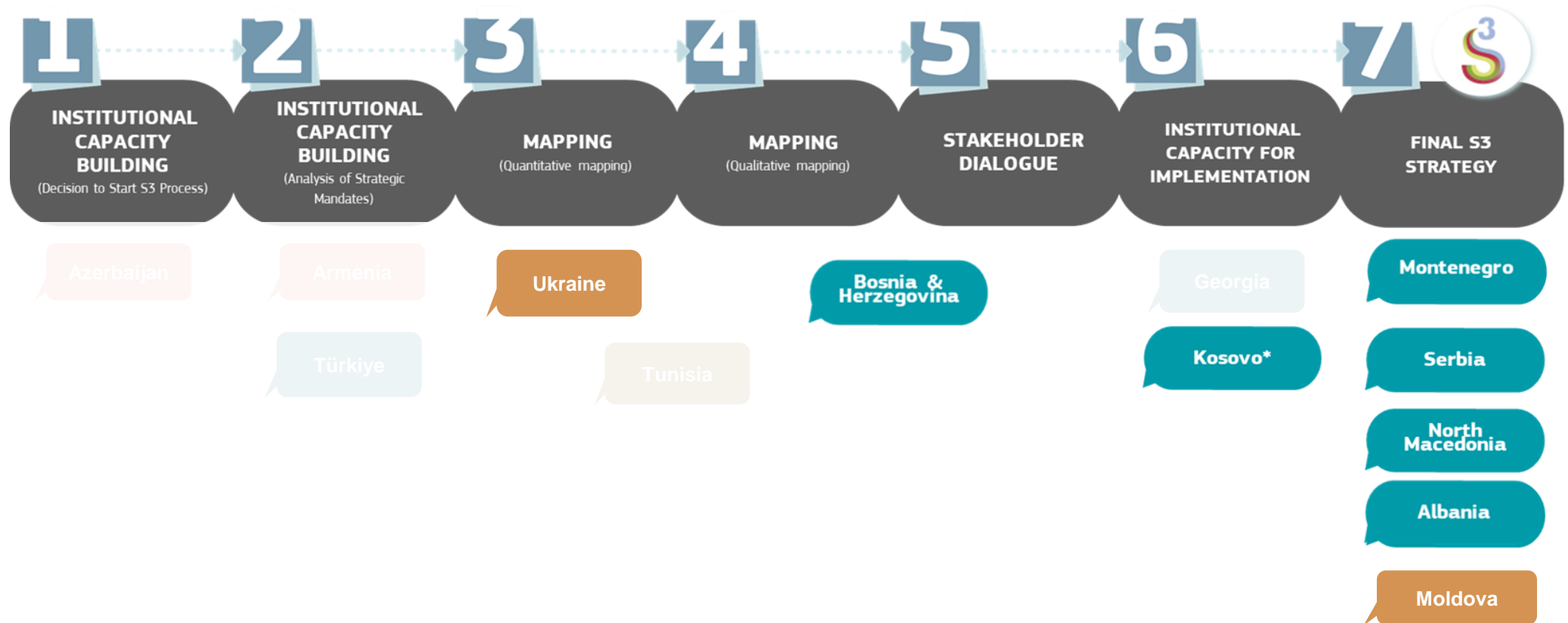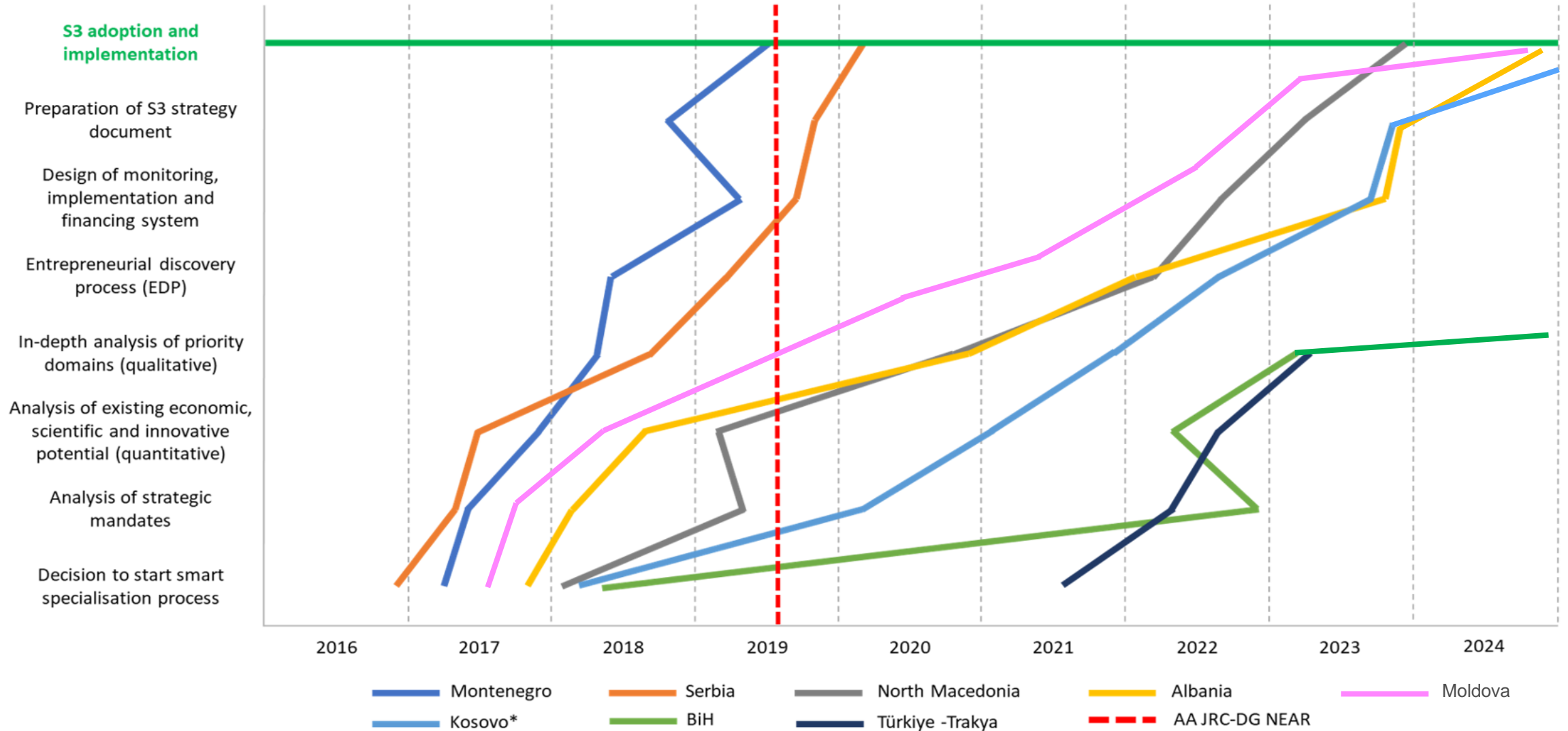- 7: Montenegro, Serbia, North Macedonia, Albania, Moldova

* 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.

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State of play of S3 processes in the WBs, UA and MD

Smart Specialisation progress in the EU enlargement and neighbourhood (Dec 2024)

(*)The designation is without prejudice on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

"Smart Specialisation in the Western Balkans and Türkiye - Lessons learned" (Radovanovic and Bole, 2024)

Purpose: Map country progress, analyse the process and improve S3 methodology

Methodology: following S3 design and implementation frameworks

1 **Data collection**: Public data and comprehensive survey with 15 key S3 actors

2 **Data analysis**: basic statistics and correlations
- Country progress, characteristics and best practices
- Cross-cutting analysis for evidence-based lessons learned

3 **Recommendations:**
- Recommendations on the implementation of S3 processes
- Recommendations on the existing methodology and tools
- Recommendations on supporting the S3 process

Radovanovic, N., Bole, D
2024

Smart Specialisation in the
Western Balkans and Türkiye
– Lessons learned

Duration of the S3 process in particular stages
(dated Dec 2023)

	Montenegro	Serbia	North Macedonia	Albania	Kosovo*	BiH	Türkiye - Trakya	Average
Decision to start smart specialisation process	2	2	2	3	5	30	3	7
Analysis of strategic mandates	3	1	4	1	3	1	3	2
Analysis of existing economic, scientific and innovative potential (quantitative)	3	5	9	27	6	8	5	9
In-depth analysis of priority domains (qualitative)	1	6	7	12	7	7	6	7
EDP - Entrepreneurial discovery process	11	3	5	21	8			10
Design of monitoring, implementation and financing system	2	4	1	1	2			2
Preparation of S3 strategy document	8	4	8					7
DESIGN PHASE duration including pauses	**27**	**39**	**70**	**69**	**67**	**65**	**27**	**52**
Setup of Governance system	30	5						17,5
Setup of Monitoring & evaluation	21	21						21
Setup of Continuous EDP	12	12						12
IMPLEMENTATION PHASE setup duration including pasuses	**30**	**27**						**28,5**

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Main lessons learned and recommendations

- **S3 processes have been lengthy** mainly **because of the pauses** between the stages > Develop precise, tailored action plans already for the S3 design stages

- The most important factor affecting fluidity and causing pauses is **lack of knowledge and experience** > Appoint adequate human resources to lead and implement the S3

- **EDP is the main source of benefit** > Constantly promote S3 results and raise awareness. Develop a comprehensive targeted communication strategy from the outset

- **Economies with low government commitment struggle the most** > Secure government commitment and a strategic mandate of S3

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"Guidelines for S3 implementation"

(Ongoing)

Main goal: *Development of the main operational methods, processes and instruments for an effective and efficient implementation of S3*

Activities currently in place

- determine key enabling factors (prerequisites),

- develop general recommendations for each building block

- select most suitable operational methods, processes and the main relevant templates used in design preparation, capacity building, and execution for each stage of the four building blocks

- determine key success factors for each building blocks.

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Ongoing analyses on S3 in the WBs

- Regional potential for **R&D collaboration** in the WBs in the context of Smart Specialisation

- Potential for **interregional cooperation** in the WBs in the context of Smart Specialisation

- Analysis of **FDIs** in the WBs and S3 regional **positioning in the GVCs**

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Final remarks

- *"Why it matters…"*

  - A place-based response to complexity and uncertainty

  - Transformational perspective into the decision making

- *"Challenges and opportunities…"*

  - Commitment & Consistency, inter-ministerial coordination, adequate resources

  - Mutual learning and interregional knowledge-based partnerships

- *"What comes next…"*

  - Better integration into the national programming activity (e.g. Reform Agendas)

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INNO NEAR Knowledge Hub

Thanks for listening!

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