

## Education & Skills

July 2025

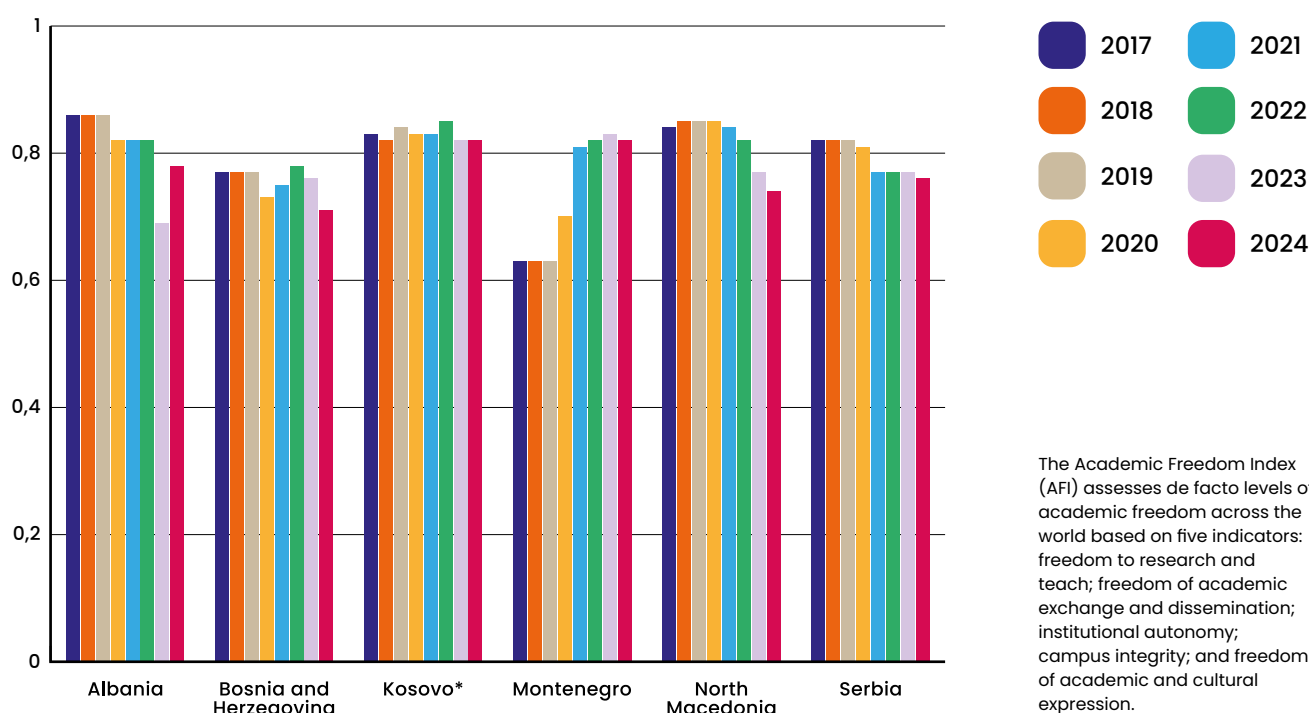
The **Western Balkans Agenda on Innovation, Research, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport** is a long-term strategy from the EU and the Western Balkans (WB) for cooperation with the region. It will contribute to the region's economic and societal development and builds on three main pillars: Political, Thematic, and Regional.

The project POLICY ANSWERS monitors the implementation of the Western Balkans Agenda, and the broader context, progress and achievements are summarised in regular reports. In this Monitoring Card, you find the results of the third round of data collection during 2024 and the first months of 2025 in comparison to the data collected in the previous second monitoring round.

In terms of Education & Skills, the monitoring focuses on the context indicator "Academic Freedom Index" and various achievements outlined in the WB Agenda (see next page).

## Achievements in a wider context of the Western Balkans Agenda

Academic Freedom Index



### Source











































Academic Freedom Index <https://academic-freedom-index.net/> (accessed 1 July 2025)

\* 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.

## Regional Indicators

Western Balkans Steering Platform meetings on Education and Training 	Regional policy dialogue on education and training under the Berlin Process 	Participation in ERA Forum group meetings and workshops 
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## Western Balkans Economy Indicators

Indicator and overall assessment of the region	Integration & stronger participation in EU programmes and initiatives				Fostered capacity building for R&I, education and Vocational Education and Training (VET)	
	Supporting the implementation of the EU acquis 	Stronger participation in VET processes 	Promotion of WB participation under the MSCA (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions) 	WB participation in Erasmus University Alliances 	Encouraging non-research based innovation 	Capacity building in POLICY ANSWERS 
<b>Albania</b>	No Twinning projects & TAIEX missions 	No meetings organised No commitments reported 	Increased number of promotion and info meetings Increased number of MSCA, no new staff exchange (SE) projects 	Increased participation in 3 University Alliances 	No awareness/capacity building events reported Participation in Digital Education Hackathons (DigiEduHack), national DigiEduHack ambassador assigned 	Increased number of capacity building activities and beneficiaries 
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	No Twinning projects & TAIEX missions 	One meeting organised Increased number of commitments reported 	Increased number of promotion and info meetings Increased number of MSCA, no new SE project 	Increased participation in 3 University Alliances 	No new awareness/capacity building events No participation in the DigiEduHack, no national ambassador assigned 	Increased number of capacity building activities and beneficiaries 
<b>Kosovo</b>	No Twinning projects & TAIEX missions 	Information on meetings not provided Increased number of commitments reported 	Increased number of promotion and info meetings Increased number of MSCA, including SE projects 	Increased association to University Alliances 	Increased number of awareness/capacity building events & participants No participation in the DigiEduHack, no national ambassador assigned 	No new capacity building activities reported 
<b>Montenegro</b>	No Twinning projects & TAIEX missions 	One meeting organised Increased number of commitments reported 	No information on promotion and info meetings provided No new MSCA projects reported 	Participation in 1 University Alliance 	No new events reported No participation in the DigiEduHack, national DigiEduHack ambassador assigned 	No new capacity building activities reported 
<b>North Macedonia</b>	No Twinning projects & TAIEX missions 	Increased number of commitments reported 	Increased number of promotion and info meetings Increased number of MSCA, including SE projects 	Increased participation in 3 University Alliances 	No new events reported No participation in the DigiEduHack, national DigiEduHack ambassador assigned 	Increased number of capacity building activities and beneficiaries 
<b>Serbia</b>	No Twinning projects & TAIEX missions 	Increased number of meetings and commitments reported 	Increased number of promotion and info meetings Increased number of MSCA, including SE projects 	Participation in 3 University Alliances 	Increased number of awareness/capacity building events & participants Participation in DigiEduHack, national DigiEduHack ambassador assigned 	Increased number of capacity building activities and beneficiaries 

**Legend:**  On track or maintaining achievement  Moderately improving Challenges remain  Stagnating Significant challenges  Decreasing Major challenges  Information not available

### Highlights

Agreement on Access to Higher Education and Admission to Study in the Western Balkans signed by the Western Balkans leaders at the 10<sup>th</sup> Berlin Process Summit  
Increasing Western Balkans interconnectedness and mobility-driven R&I by successfully piloting the POLICY ANSWERS Western Balkans Mobility Scheme

