

The economy and citizens of Serbia, Albania and Northern Macedonia will soon be able to trade, travel, employ scarce staff and integrate faster economically within the Open Balkans initiative launched by the leaders of the three countries.

The Open Balkans initiative, formerly called Mini Schengen, is not a substitute for European integration, although the process has been very slow in recent years, and was launched by Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic and Albanian and Northern Macedonian Prime Ministers Edi Rama and Zoran Zaev.

At the summit of the three leaders in Tirana, six trilateral and bilateral agreements were signed, the implementation of which should improve business in the region and speed up the flow of people, capital, services and goods.

The President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić, says that the Open Balkans initiative is a way for the signatory states to better regulate their common future.

“This is not about a greater Serbia, nor about a greater Albania, and I don’t know what kind of Macedonia. This is about not getting lost in the debates between the past and the present and losing our future. This is about how we can regulate our common future in an incomparably better way, how we can live and work together, how our farmers, industrial producers and all ordinary citizens can live incomparably better in the future with no borders between us, so that our companies can work better, work more, so that we can attract more investors in different areas,” said Vucic.

In accordance with the signed agreements, the common labor market of Serbia, Albania and Northern Macedonia and the single work permit will come to life in the next three months. Phytosanitary, veterinary and other certificates in the field of agriculture have been harmonized, which will reduce business costs between the three countries and improve the competitiveness of companies.

Unlike the previous period, when on the one hand the phytosanitary inspection worked 24 hours a day, and on the other hand it did not, all procedures were harmonized by harmonizing the certificates, said the Minister of Agriculture Branislav Nedimović.

“Everyone works 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All laboratory analyzes are harmonized, what is sampled in Skopje is valid in Belgrade and Elbasan, anywhere else,” Nedimović emphasized.

The initiators of the Open Balkans initiative do not miss the opportunity to invite Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo to join it, but so far there is no positive response, eKapija reports.