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***The Western Balkans  
– part of the EU?***

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From the Editors:

We are proud to present the first issue of Analytical, the journal published by Analytica and focused on studying and analyzing the recent and ongoing socio-political and economic developments in the Western Balkans and the wider region. The topic of this first issue is "The Western Balkans – part of the EU?" The main focus of the issue is on the ongoing debate about the progress of EU integration efforts in the states in the Western Balkans as well as their prospects of joining the EU. Despite all other political developments taking place in the region, EU integration remains the most important foreign policy goal of the states in the Western Balkans.

The contributions featured in this issue address various aspects of EU accession efforts of the Western Balkan countries, from a more general discussion over the nature of democratization and Europeanization in the region, to more specific analyses focusing on certain aspects of the political and economic process in certain countries in the region: the political party system and the foreign direct investments. Others investigate the EU approach to the region through the peace-building efforts of the EU and the perspectives offered to the Western Balkans states through the experience of the other South East European states. Overall, the articles present multifaceted and diverse picture of the state of the art in the Western Balkans as related to the EU. Hope you find it an interesting combination and engaging reading.

Finally, in the Interns section, we also include a contribution from one of our interns, who was part of the Summer 2007 internship cycle in Analytica. She wrote an original report comparing the perceptions about EU enlargement in France and Macedonia, which is particularly interesting to read in the face of the upcoming French presidency of the EU. Hope you enjoy reading this first issue of Analytical, and looking forward to many issues in the future.

Sincerely,

Analytical Editorial Committee

# DOES EUROPEANISATION EQUAL DEMOCRATISATION?

## APPLICATION OF THE POLITICAL CONDITIONALITY PRINCIPLE IN THE CASE OF THE MACEDONIAN SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE

Gorica Atanasova

### I. INTRODUCTION

The Western Balkan region has been ravaged by the forces of balkanization for more than a decade since the dissolution of the Yugoslav federation. Although geographically belonging to Europe, the Balkans has been labeled as the 'black hole' of the continent and often treated as the 'constitutive other' to Europe<sup>1</sup> which has remained outside of the Europeanisation projects of the EU. However, more than a decade after the dismantling of Yugoslavia, the present image of the region gives rise to impressions of relative stability and joint commitment of the Western Balkans countries towards the future EU membership. The EU approach, on the other hand, has transformed from a failing foreign policy of conflict prevention towards a strategy for Europeanisation of the region through the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) designed for the 5 countries in the area (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro). The purpose of the SAP process is to achieve stabilization in the region, democratization of these countries as well as to equip them for accession and future membership in the EU.

The case study of Macedonia is used to examine the impact of Europeanisation process and its interrelation with the democratization endeavors of the country. The analysis focuses on the system of governance through political conditionality of the Republic of Macedonia. The paper advances the view that Europeanisation through political conditionality is an integral but not all encompassing factor for fostering genuine democratization as exemplified by the Macedonian system of governance. The paper also argues that a modification of the Europeanisation approach that takes the specificity of the context and the *stateness* issue into account is needed in order to build Macedonia into a future democratic member state of the EU. The case study of Macedonia provides impetus for the Europeanisation process as applied in the countries of the SAP framework and contributes academic debate on democratization in view of the process of European integration.

### II. EUROPEANISATION FRAMEWORK OF THE MACEDONIAN SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE: CRITICAL OVERVIEW

The EU approach in the Western Balkans post communist era has had two dimensions. On the one hand, the EU has affected the developmental path of these countries through its role as '*an active player*' in the mediation and conflict resolution in the region.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the EU acted as a soft arbiter facilitating the gradual move towards association with the EU of the countries of the region.

The other dimension of the EU approach in the region - '*EU as a framework*' - is a long-term perspective because it offers a possibility of participation in decision-making for these countries and equips them with models of governance and policy options.<sup>3</sup> The EU approach has evolved into a stronger commitment towards these countries by offering them a more tangible prospect (e.g. prospect of membership) for the future.

In the case of Macedonia, Europeanisation processes have been introduced through the Stabilization and Association framework for the countries of the Western Balkans. Albeit the process under the SAP, the EU approach towards the Republic of Macedonia has some peculiarities. It is

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<sup>1</sup> Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Gergana Noutcheva., N. Tocci, *et all.* "Europeanization and Secessionist Conflicts: Concepts and Theories." *Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe*. 2004, 8. Available at: <<http://www.ecmi.de/jemie/indexauthor.html>>

<sup>3</sup> *op.cit.* p, 8.

important to note, however, that the relations between the two parties, Macedonia and the EU, have not been of an antagonistic nature due to Macedonia's commitment towards the maintenance of peace and cohabitation and its firm orientation towards European Integration as well as the cooperative approach of the EU. Indeed, the political perspectives for development of the Republic of Macedonia have been completely compatible to the models of governance offered by the EU since the outset of its independence despite the problems that have been encountered.<sup>4</sup>

The EU has become a normative and cognitive frame<sup>5</sup> for the aspirant countries that have undertaken Europeanisation. Europeanisation is the overall frame leading towards external transfer of EU rules and their subsequent adoption by non-member states<sup>6</sup> with the aim of obtaining eventual membership. In the context of "aspiring candidates in transition, Europeanisation can be understood as the conceptual framework that links integration and transition" due to the simultaneity of these processes as well as their overlap.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the EU can be perceived as "a reference model for modernization of the political, economic and social systems) of the aspiring candidates in transition."<sup>8</sup>

Europeanisation extends as a process attempting to tackle and change the 'ways of doing things'<sup>9</sup> in the aspirant countries. The two main mechanisms utilized in the process are the prospect of EU membership and conditionality, as the main tool. In the Europeanisation process of these countries, conditionality encompasses political/democratic and economic requirements and the adoption and implementation of the EU *acquis*.

Political conditionality is indented in the Stabilisation and Association Process and mainly results from the Copenhagen criteria and additional country specific requirements. The SAP is envisaged as a framework designed to accompany the countries from the Western Balkans until accession based on the SAAs and CARDS<sup>10</sup>, which is now evolving in the pre-accession process and the introduction of the new Instrument of pre-accession assistance IPA.

In the case of Macedonia, additional conditions are introduced and include: successful implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, Cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the return of refugees and Regional Cooperation, as incorporated in the Stabilisation and Association Agreement. The main political conditionality as a function of the Europeanisation process in Macedonia includes democracy and rule of law as well as human rights and protection of minorities as promulgated at the Copenhagen European Council in 1993. Furthermore, the signature of the European Partnerships on bilateral basis with the SAP countries has strengthened the commitment of both sides to work for accession towards full membership as opposed to the SAA where the commitment of the sides was asymmetrical in the sense that the EU was generally monitoring the process.<sup>11</sup>

## II. 1 ANALYSIS OF EUROPEANISATION THROUGH POLITICAL CONDITIONALITY IN MACEDONIA

### o Copenhagen Political Criteria: Democracy and Rule of Law

The Democracy and Rule of Law criteria require a short overview of Macedonia's system of governance, in terms of both structure and agents, in order to assess its impact on domestic change.

<sup>4</sup> Sasho Stefkov, Interview with the authors, April 2005.

<sup>5</sup> C. M. Radaelli. "Europeanisation," *op.cit.* p. 26.

<sup>6</sup> Frank Schimmelfennig, & Ulrich Sedelmeier "Governance by Conditionality." *op.cit.* p. 661.

<sup>7</sup> *op.cit.* p.662.

<sup>8</sup> Agh 1998, cited in Leeda Demetropoulou. "Europe and the Balkans: Membership Aspiration, EU Involvement and Europeanization Capacity in South Eastern Europe." *Southeast European Politics* Vol. 3. No.2-3. 2002, 89.

<sup>9</sup> Ioakimides 1998, cited in L. Demetropoulou. "Europe and the Balkans: Membership Aspiration, EU Involvement and Europeanization Capacity in South Eastern Europe." *Southeast European Politics* Vol. 3. No.2-3. 2002, 89.

<sup>10</sup> *op.cit.* p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Etienne De Perrier, Interview with this author, April 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Vladimir Gligorov. "European Partnership with the Balkans," *European Balkan Observer*, Vol. 2, No. 1. 2004, 8.

Democracy and the Rule of Law in the Copenhagen criteria are described to include the holding of fair and free multiparty parliamentary elections<sup>12</sup> and “the functioning of the legislature, the functioning of the judiciary, the functioning of the executive and anti-corruption measures.”<sup>13</sup> The assessment of the functioning of each of these domains constituting the Macedonian system of governance, in view of the process of Europeanisation, is provided through the Annual Reports from the Commission, on the EU side, and through the compatible National strategy, Progress Reports, Action Plans and the National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA) as adopted by the Macedonian government.

A key issue contributing the democratic functioning of states are elections which are “free and fair and are in line with international standards and commitment on democra[cy].”<sup>14</sup> In the case of Macedonia, elections have been evaluated as being generally free despite some problems such as proxy voting, multiple voting, cases of intimidation inside polling stations, etc.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, the consecutive Commission Report has assessed the parliamentary elections on 15 September 2002 bringing the new coalition with a turnout of 74% and the Census operations in November confirmed the broad trend towards greater stability and were praised by the international community.<sup>16</sup> In addition, these elections were manifestly estimated as being in large compliance with international standards albeit some recurrent problems.

The latest parliamentary elections that were conducted on July 5, 2006 and the overall electoral process was observed by OSCE-ODIHR as “conducted generally in a peaceful and orderly manner and largely in accordance with international standards,” albeit the “significant irregularities” that took place on that day.<sup>17</sup> Hence, the Commission finds that the conduct of elections is moving towards a general democratic direction, in the Macedonian context, while recognizing the persistent problems. It has to be noted here though, that the increased monitoring by external actors (e.g the EU) has an impact on the democratization of elections as seen through the “significant efforts to improve the electoral system [...], the comprehensive reform of the electoral code [...] and by ensuring participation of civil servants in electoral administration.”<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, external monitoring has reflected positively upon political behavior in Macedonia. The anchoring of elections as part of the democracy political criterion and their extensive external observance requires changes in practice and political behavior in view of the requirement for institutionalization of international democratic standards and their incorporation in the domestic system of governance.

The above stated brings the issue of political culture of parties into consideration. Bzezinski notes that apart from the conduct of democratic elections as an integral feature of democratic states, democratic governance is a requirement in these countries, as well.<sup>19</sup> The absence of democratic political culture resulting in the absence of genuine democratic behavior of political parties appears as a major impediment to the democratic governance and the rule of law in Macedonia. Indeed, the ethnicisation of political parties coupled with the non-democratic political legacies not only affect the European Integration endeavors in the country but encumber domestic democratic changes and could bring about polarization of inter-ethnic relations. Moreover, another persistent cleavage is the absences

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<sup>12</sup> Hoffmeister 2002, cited in D. Kochenov, “Behind the Copenhagen façade. The meaning and structure of the Copenhagen political criterion of democracy and the rule of law.” *EIOP* Vol. 8. No. 10. 2004. Available from: < <http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2004-010a.htm>>, p, 13.

<sup>13</sup> D. Kochenov, “Behind the Copenhagen façade” *op. cit.* p, 13-14.

<sup>14</sup> *op. cit.* p 14.

<sup>15</sup> Commission of the European Communities. *Commission Staff Working Paper FYROM Stabilisation and Association Report 2002*. 2002. Available from: <[http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/see/sap/rep1/cr\\_fyrom.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/sap/rep1/cr_fyrom.pdf)>, p, 5.

<sup>16</sup> Commission of the European Communities. *Commission Staff Working Paper FYROM Stabilisation and Association Report 2003*. 2003. Available from: <[http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/see/sap/rep2/cr\\_fyrom.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/sap/rep2/cr_fyrom.pdf)>, 2.

<sup>17</sup> Commission of the European Communities *Communication From the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: The Western Balkans and European Integration*, 2006a. Available from: <[http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/see/2006.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/2006.pdf)>, p,6.

<sup>18</sup> Commission of the European Communities *op.cit.* p, 5-6.

<sup>19</sup> Zarko Trajanoski. “Leadership In Crisis: Macedonian Situation.” *Political Thought* Vol. 2, No. 6. 2004. p, 82.

of constructive dialogue between the ruling party and the opposition as well as the party in power and the President of the country that damaged and blocked the acceleration processed for almost one year in 2006-2007. Following the last Progress Report issued by the Commission issued in 2007 and the pending invitation for NATO membership, the political dialogue has improved but needs to be maintained by all political elites.

At present, Europeanisation serves as a uniting factor across political lines regardless of political background or ethnic belonging as evident from their public discourses which accounts for the positive impact of this process and contributes the acceleration of European Integration as the strategic aim for the country's future prosperity. Hence, Europeanisation triggers domestic changes of actors since the process in itself carries conditions that need to be fulfilled in order to obtain the rewards. Although no strict conditions are imposed by the EU on the political parties, the enlargement process demonstrates the trend of political parties trying to derive legitimacy as being the carriers of the entire endeavor.<sup>20</sup>

Respectively, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia has outlined the need of advancing of internal democratization of political parties, the adoption of regulations for their financing, and the incorporation of control mechanisms as important tasks in the National Strategy.<sup>21</sup> Thereof, the increased external monitoring of the 'ways of doing things' on the domestic scene through the process of Europeanisation translates in transformations of the behavior of political parties.

A key feature for the functioning of the system of governance is the inter-relation and coordination of actions among the executive, legislative and judiciary in order to "find solutions to bring the rule of law into line with European standards."<sup>22</sup> In Macedonia, the system of governance is divided among the three branches and it is in principle based on the coordination among the same. However, in reality, the system of governance has been executive centered although efforts for fight against organized crime and corruption and improvement of the independence and efficiency of the judiciary as well as increased transparency are carried out in the past period.

With regard to the role and functioning of the Parliament, several features are needed in order to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria. Kochenov extrapolates the following features as necessary for a Parliament to meet the criteria: satisfactory operation, to have powers which are respected, to have an opposition that participates in activities, as well as to allow representation of minorities.<sup>23</sup> Although the Parliament was primarily assessed as functioning satisfactorily, "the tension between the majority and the opposition" and "the essential [need] for the government to seek consensus on a number of critical reforms, due to the specificities of the country's political model, and in the interest of political stability"<sup>24</sup> are recognized as incumbent to the proper functioning of this institution. The other important role of the Parliament in the Europeanisation process that has been underway is its capacity to contribute the Stabilisation and Association Process through the regular discussions "in the Committee on EU Affairs based on reports by the Deputy Prime Minister, who is in charge of EU integration."<sup>25</sup> As such, the Europeanisation process has acted as a vehicle for the reforms in the Parliament that need to be further improved. Most recently, a National Council for European integration was formed as a body attached to the Parliament, chaired by the leader of the opposition – SDSM which will have a say in the overall policy-making and advancement of the European integration process of the country. Political democratic behavior of MPs in the Parliament needs to be further fostered and exercised.

The EU requirements regarding the institutional system in view of the democratic criterion postulate the balance between the executive and legislature as well as smooth coordination between

<sup>20</sup> Noutcheva 2005, Interview with the authors, April 2005.

<sup>21</sup> Government of the Republic of Macedonia. *National Strategy for the European Integration of the Republic of Macedonia: Executive Summary*, Skopje, The Republic of Macedonia. 2004a. Available from: <www.set.gov.mk>. p. 33-34.

<sup>22</sup> Commission of the European Communities. *Commission Staff Working Paper FYROM Stabilisation and Association Report 2004*. 2004a. Available from:

<[http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/see/sap/rep3/cr\\_fyrom.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/sap/rep3/cr_fyrom.pdf)>. p.9.

<sup>23</sup> D. Kochenov, "Behind the Copenhagen façade" *op. cit.* p. 13-14

<sup>24</sup> Commission of the European Communities 2006. *op.cit.* p. 6-7.

<sup>25</sup> Commission of the European Communities 2006. *op.cit.* 7

the two branches as important. Hence, institution building, as an aspect of the democratic criterion and as an ability to adopt and manage the *acquis*, is the most challenging area where domestic reform needs to be undertaken. In addition, building of institutions in terms of administrative and judicial capacity are crucial areas stemming from the Europeanisation agenda that are necessary to meet the democracy criterion.

Europeanisation as incorporating the institution building aspect has triggered significant reforms and restructuring in both public administration and the judiciary. The public administration in Macedonia has a communist legacy of a rather centralized system with the absence of democratic tradition and standards stemming from the former Yugoslav federation.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, the Yugoslav administration has been seen as having an impartial tradition even under communist rule.<sup>27</sup> Yet, the building of administrative capacity remains a great challenge for the post-communist countries such as Macedonia in particular. The Stabilisation and Association requirements have brought about public administration reform as an indispensable priority that will horizontally anchor all sectoral reforms in the process of European Integration while being an essential factor for their success.<sup>28</sup> Whilst the progress made in implementing the reform on PA, "mechanisms to increase professionalism and accountability and guarantee independence and political neutrality need to be fully implemented"<sup>29</sup> coupled with introduction of a merit system and improvement of salaries of public administration.

Likewise, the establishment of equilibrium between the administrative and political components of government and the creation of a 'political zone' between politics and administration<sup>30</sup> are of crucial importance for the realization of the requirements not only in PAR but also in the democracy and rule of law criterion on the whole. It is important to avoid institutionalization of European norms through Europeanisation by conditionality in a case where major political actors are disunited around the new institution, "so that the new rules have the chance to endure without being immediately contested" in the EU enlargement context.<sup>31</sup>

The judicial system is another segment of Macedonia's system of governance where an overarching reform needs to be undertaken in order to meet the Copenhagen political criteria as well as achieve a system of independent and efficient judiciary. The reforms in this area demonstrate effective implementation and progress towards putting the necessary legal framework into place in line with EU standards. Nonetheless, the 'maintenance of the momentum' and the requirement of a 'broad political consensus' are mentioned as essential for the future progress of the reform processes in the 2006 Report.<sup>32</sup> Accordingly, Europeanisation again acts as the driving force towards internal reforms although as Savo Klimovski, a legal expert and Professor of Law, notes "the independence of the judiciary has been a necessary condition for the structural reforms" in Macedonia.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, Europeanisation through political conditionality and the prospect of membership has mobilized crucial reforms in the third branch of the governance system. However, major challenges of monitoring of implementation of legislation as well as maintaining the commitment for an effective fight against organized crime and corruption remain imperative.

The analysis of the aspects of the Macedonian system of governance demonstrates that Europeanisation has geared substantial reforms towards the fulfillment of the democracy criterion as a

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<sup>26</sup> Sevic Z. & Rabrenovic A. "The Civil Service of Yugoslavia: Tradition vs. Transition," edited by Verheijen, T. Civil Service Systems in Central and Eastern Europe. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar. 1999. p. 47.

<sup>27</sup> Tony Verheijen & Rabrenovic A. "The evolution of Politico-Administrative relations in Post-communist states: Main Directions," edited by Verheijen Tony. Who Rules – Politico-administrative Relations NISPAcee Bratislava. 2003, p, 418.

<sup>28</sup> Government of the Republic of Macedonia 2004a, *op.cit.* p, 227.

<sup>29</sup> Commission of the European Communities 2006. *op.cit.* p, 8

<sup>30</sup> Tony Verheijen & Rabrenovic A. "The evolution of Politico-Administrative relations in Post-communist states," *op.cit.* p, 424.

<sup>31</sup> Anotaneta Dimitrova. "Enlargement, Institution-Building and the EU's Administrative Capacity Requirement." West European Politics Vol. 25. No. 4. 2002, 176.

<sup>32</sup> Commission of the European Communities 2006. *op.cit.* p, 8

<sup>33</sup> Duvnjak, Gordana. "Elections in a Macedonian Way." Utrinski Vesnik March 15, 2005. 2005. Available from: <<http://www.utrinskivesnik.com.mk/>>

crucial segment of the Copenhagen political criteria. With regard to the rule of law aspect, the Commission has identified progress in the judiciary whose operation will "have to be demonstrated by a sustained track record."<sup>34</sup> Concurrently, measures (e.g anti-corruption, etc.) have been taken or envisaged by the Macedonian government in the documents such as the National Programme for the Adoption of the *acquis* which sets the short and medium term measures to be undertaken regarding the combating of these problems and acceleration the country's road towards Europe. Nonetheless, the domestic endeavors towards achieving results need further commitment and results. The 2007 Progress Report did not result with a recommendation for starting accession negotiation with the Republic of Macedonia, which geared up internal political forces to resume reform process and further the process. On the other hand, the rather reserved EU discourse towards Macedonia in the past year has also changed recently and currently translates into a set of benchmarks provided to Macedonia on whose completion the positive avis for starting negotiations will depend in the 2008 Progress Report.

Evidently, Europeanisation through conditionality acts as a process generating domestic reforms in terms of both structure and agency towards the creation of a democratic state governed by the rule of law in Macedonia. Yet, despite the obvious positive impact of the Europeanisation framework, deficiencies can still be spotted.

#### IV. EUROPEANISATION IN LIGHT OF DEMOCRATIZATION IN THE SAP COUNTRIES: WHAT FUTURE FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS?

##### III. 1 DOES EUROPEANISATION EQUAL DEMOCRATIZATION?

The European Union has evolved and is considered as a *sui generis* system of governance that has advanced a unique way of promoting democracy through integration in the last decade.<sup>35</sup> According to Noutcheva and Emerson, the EU has become a gravity democratic model resulting from its "reputational quality and attractiveness of that democracy, its geographic and cultural-historical proximity, and its openness to the periphery" thus attracting third states to converge to the same.<sup>36</sup> This author advances the argument that the approximation of the Macedonia to the EU framework through Europeanisation with political conditionality is a process that positively impacts the democratization but it is not without problems which stem from the formal application of democratization endeavors. This argument could be extended to the countries of the SAP process.

##### IV. 2 WEAKNESSES AND PROBLEMS OF THE EUROPEANISATION FRAMEWORK

- o GENERAL CRITICISM ON THE EUROPEANISATION APPROACH

One can pinpoint several drawbacks stemming from the EU approach applied as the democratization model in the Eastern enlargement context. Grabbe identifies two major intervening variables specific to the process of Europeanisation: "one is the *asymmetry* of the relationship with the European Union, and the other is the *uncertainty* built into the accession process."<sup>37</sup> The asymmetric relationship results from the inability of the countries that are appropriating and institutionalizing the EU models to influence the Europeanisation process and due to the advantaged position of the EU that

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<sup>34</sup> Commission of the European Communities 2006. *op.cit.* p. 11

<sup>35</sup> Antoaneta Dimitrova & Geoffrey Pridham, "International Actors and Democracy Promotion in Central and Eastern Europe: The Integration Model and Its Limits." *Democratization* Vol. 11. No.5. 2004, 94.

<sup>36</sup> Noutcheva G. & Emerson M. "Europeanisation as a Gravity Model of Democratization." *CEPS Working Document*. No. 214. 2004. Available at: <[http://shop.ceps.be/BooksList.php?category\\_id=5&](http://shop.ceps.be/BooksList.php?category_id=5&)>, p. 2.

<sup>37</sup> Heather Grabbe, "Europeanization Goes East: Power and Uncertainty in the EU Accession Process." in: K. Featherstone & C. M. Radaelli, eds. *The Politics of Europeanization*. (Oxford : Oxford University Press). 2002, 13.

allows it "to set the rules of the game in the accession conditionality."<sup>38</sup> The uncertainty variable, as related to the SAP states, refers to the insufficient firmness of the EU commitment towards future enlargement to include these countries.

The *commitment* of the EU currently envisaged as a 'prospect for membership' needs to be strengthened<sup>39</sup> and a new "visionary strategy that will bring the region steadily onto the enlargement track"<sup>40</sup> should be formulated in order to avoid non compliance by domestic actors since the end result of the entire process of Europeanisation is insecure.

The *non negotiable nature of the political conditionality* exerted by the EU upon the aspirant countries accounts for a little possibility or absence for domestic actors "to exercise their veto."<sup>41</sup> A constituting particle of this weakness of the EU enlargement approach is related to *the technocratic feature* of the overall approach. The manner through which the EU operationalizes democracy is mostly focused on institutional structures.<sup>42</sup> Krastev puts forward the argument that the exported models of democratization, such as the one of the EU, have "a strong dash of technocratic thinking"<sup>43</sup> when evaluating "any new democracy mainly on the basis of its level of institutionalization."<sup>44</sup> Alongside, Carothers advances the view that "the programs that democracy promoters have directed at governance have tended to be minor technocratic efforts, such as training ministerial staff or aiding cabinet offices, rather than major efforts at bolstering state capacity."<sup>45</sup>

One of the problems that can be deduced from the technocratic approach is that the EU puts emphasis on *efficiency rather than legitimacy* thus contradicting the democratization efforts included in the process.<sup>46</sup> A problematic outcome of such an approach results from the presumption that the EU can account for its own *democratic deficit* when the aspirant countries become members of the EU.<sup>47</sup> The danger is that only the top layer of state officials will become 'Europeanized' while the prospects for the emergence of a 'pan European' demos will be reduced thus exacerbating the democratic deficit within the enlarged Union.<sup>48</sup>

This argument is reinforced through the way in which this process affects the system of governance in the aspirant states. Grabbe, Dimitrova and Pridham all recognize the existence of an '*executive-bias*' through the privileging of the executive over the legislature and the judiciary in the process of Europeanisation.<sup>49</sup>

These inherent weaknesses are applicable to Macedonia and the countries of the SAP framework.

- o **Europeanisation Deficiencies in the SAP Context –case study of Macedonia**

When assessing Europeanisation through political conditionality in the Western Balkans, a major shortfall in the EU approach comes from the lack of consideration of contextual factors particularly related to the issue of state weakness as a general characteristic of the SAP countries.

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<sup>38</sup> *op. cit.* p, 13.

<sup>39</sup> Anastasakis & Bechev *op. cit.* p.5; Demetropoulou *op. cit.* p. 12; Knaus, G. & Cox, M. "Building Democracy After Conflict: The 'Helsinki Moment' in Southeastern Europe." *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 16. No.1. 2005, 3; Jacques Rupnik. "Eastern Europe: The International Context." *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 11. No. 2. 2000, 29.

<sup>40</sup> Anastasakis & Bechev. *op. cit.* p.5

<sup>41</sup> Anotaneta Dimitrova. "Enlargement, Institution-Building," *op. cit.* p.172

<sup>42</sup> Noutcheva 2005, Interview with the authors, April 2005.

<sup>43</sup> Ivan Krastev. "The Balkans: Democracy Without Choices." *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 13. No. 3. 2002, 44.

<sup>44</sup> *op. cit.* p, 44.

<sup>45</sup> Thomas Carothers. "The End of the Transition Paradigm." *Journal of Democracy*. Vol.13. No.1. 2002, 17.

<sup>46</sup> Heather Grabbe, "Europeanization Goes East: *op. cit.* p, 19.

<sup>47</sup> *op. cit.* p, 18.

<sup>48</sup> Grabbe 2001:1029

<sup>49</sup> Grabbe 2001:1016; Dimitrova & Pridham 2004:108

The historical legacies of the Balkans, combined with the post communist political, economic and social issues in the countries of the region are considered as 'confining conditions' that are of importance and that have impact upon the democratization processes of these states.<sup>50</sup>

The democratization efforts in the early transitional period translated into nation and state building projects which have been counterproductive for the developmental path of the Western Balkans. Following the relative post-conflict stabilization of the Western Balkans and the continuation of democratic efforts - *the weakness of the states*<sup>51</sup> - related to the multifaceted political, economic and social problems as well as to sovereignty concerns is stipulated as the principal problem in the Balkans.

Krastev identifies state weakness as a general problem in the Balkan discourse encompassing problems ranging from the unintended side effects of reforms, to the weak capabilities of these states in delivering democratic procedures, and the domination of ruling elites that have 'captured' the state for their own particular interests.<sup>52</sup> Thus, an externally induced model that disregards these contextual factors and that does not attempt to address the issue of state weakness as part of its Europeanisation framework in the SAp context, is likely to have problematic implications in the long term.

In relation to the specific case of Macedonia, it also remains questionable why did the EU refrain from using conditionality to pressure Macedonian governments into democratic reforms to improve minority rights since Macedonia was open to Western conditional assistance since the early 1990s which could have accounted for avoiding of the 2001 crisis.<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, the EU active role in the mediation of conflicts in its Balkan backyard is regarded as significant and problematic in terms of its effectiveness, as it was previously outlined.

An additional strand of criticism on the Europeanisation framework in Macedonia and subsequently the SAp countries evolves from the *ambiguity* in combining the regional approach with the differentiation based on 'own merit' principle for individual country assessment by the EU. On the one hand, the *regional cooperation* among the SAp countries presently constitutes an integral part of their conditionality as introduced with the 1997 Regional Approach in order to achieve stability in the region. Conversely, a strong emphasis is placed on the '*own merit*' *evaluation principle* as the mechanism of differentiating among frontrunners as opposed to the laggards.<sup>54</sup> This combination of the two mechanisms as part of the EU conditionality in the Western Balkans is perceived as rather contradictory because it is insufficiently clear which tool does the EU prefer<sup>55</sup> in addition to regarding the two tools as accounting for the inefficiency of the SAp in the Western Balkans.<sup>56</sup>

Ergo, *a revision of the EU approach* is necessary in order to better accommodate and better equip the future member countries to deal with adaptation pressures as well as to account for genuine democratization. Simultaneously, the importance of domestic political forces and the need for further institutionalization of democratic values in the behavior of political actors remains pivotal.

### Implications of Europeanisation as a mode of democratization and recommendations

The transitional development of the Republic of Macedonia is dominated by the Europeanisation paradigm with the aim of achieving future membership in the EU subject to fulfillment of the designated Copenhagen criteria and additional conditions. The instruments employed by the EU including both financial support and institution and capacity building impact democratization efforts in the country. Albeit the voluntaristic *opt-in* of

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<sup>50</sup> Pridham, Geoffrey. "Democratization in the Balkan countries." in Geoffrey Pridham & T. Gallagher, eds. Experimenting with Democracy: Regime Change in the Balkans. (London and New York: Routledge.) 2000, 11; L. Demetropoulou. "Europe and the Balkans" *op.cit.* p, 90.

<sup>51</sup> Ivan Krastev. "The Balkans: Democracy Without Choices." *op. cit.* p, 39.

<sup>52</sup> *op. cit.* p, 50.

<sup>53</sup> M. A. Vachudova. "Strategies for Democratization and European Integration of the Balkans." in Marise Cremona, ed. The Enlargement of the European Union. Oxford: Oxford UP. 2003, 150.

<sup>54</sup> O. Anastasakis & D. Belchev. "EU Conditionality in South East Europe" *op.cit.* p, 8.

<sup>55</sup> *op.cit.* p, 10.

<sup>56</sup> International Commission on the Balkans. The Balkans in Europe's Future. *Report of the International Commission on the Balkans*. 2005, 14. Available at: <<http://www.balkan-commission.org/>> p, 14.

the Republic of Macedonia in the SAP, the current framework does not fall short of deficiencies centered on formal instead of substantive democratization.

In the Macedonian context, the Europeanisation framework falls short of sufficient context consideration and issues such as state weakness, socio-economic difficulties, corruption and organized crime. The signing of the Ohrid Framework agreement mediated by the EU whose successful implementation constitutes one of the core political criteria on the basis of which progress of the Republic of Macedonia is viewed as “resulting more from externally imposed conditionalities than from domestic dialogue among different interest within a given country.”<sup>57</sup> More importantly, besides having de facto adverse impact, “external conditionalities worsen the relationship between politicians and public [because] governments get elected by making love to the electorate, but they are married to the international donor.”<sup>58</sup> Additionally, externally imposed conditionalities and deficiencies in the EU strategy are sometimes used as justification by domestic political actors for the failure or blockage of certain policies/measures and their underperformances towards the electorate.

Therefore, an adaptation of the EU approach to take into account the Macedonian context is necessary. The following *recommendations* could be considered:

- A stronger commitment coupled with a secure prospect of future membership for the SAP countries and Macedonia
- Greater flexibility<sup>59</sup> in the Europeanisation through conditionality approach directed towards address of contextual factors (e.g. weak states issue, underlying socio-economic problems)
- Strengthening of the relationship between the EU and domestic political actors and diminishing its asymmetric component
- Reconciliation of the ambiguity in the EU approach evolving from the coupling of regional cooperation with the ‘own merit’ principle
- Policy design that fosters the specific pluralist nature that should be cultivated because it is in the diversity and multiplicity of opinions that most viable solutions are achieved
- Assisting a substantive process of democratization that will have a *double dimension*: combination of both bottom up (domestic) and top down (EU) inputs<sup>60</sup> and an amalgamation of ‘grass roots’ (civil society) and ‘high level’ (political elites) critical initiatives.<sup>61</sup>

In terms of substantial steps that need to be taken on the part of the EU with regard to Macedonia (as well as the Western Balkans) to manifestly strengthen the commitment for enlargement several propositions can be forwarded. Most importantly, **liberalization of the visa regime** for Macedonia based on the ‘own-merit’ principle will strengthen the commitment towards enlargement and validate conditionality requirements for Macedonia in particular which fulfills the necessary criteria through the introduction of the biometric passports, the signing of readmission agreements, the reforms in the IBM system. Moreover, contradictory or ambiguous announcements by the EU (clear commitment to opening of visa liberalization dialogue with Serbia as opposed to unclear prospect for Macedonia) could also impede regional cooperation due to the asymmetrical application of conditionality principle towards the countries in the SAP. In such a way, the EU will reiterate its commitment towards Macedonia and the countries of the region and will generate greater popular faith in the overall Europeanisation project.

Hence, rethinking of the EU approach in Macedonia *combined with sincere* domestic effort for democratic consolidation can account for a genuine societal change and trigger more substantive democratization which will concomitantly bring about the incorporation of the country into the European Union in the near future.

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<sup>57</sup> Krastev, 45.

<sup>58</sup> Krastev, 51.

<sup>59</sup> Demetropoulou 2002; Mungui-Pippidi 2004

<sup>60</sup> Dimitrova & Pridham, 93

<sup>61</sup> Youngs, 56.

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## THE FUTURE OF SERBIA IN EUROPE: THE DIVIDING LINE IN SERBIAN POLITICS?

Marlene Spoerri

This had happened before. Months of heated negotiations, countless campaign promises and bitter disagreements amounting, finally, into a temporary solution of only limited affect. In both January and April of this year, Serbia was reminded that regardless of the EU's emphatic proclamations to the contrary, Serbia's path to Europe is still far from certain. On April 29, 2008 the EU opted to invite Serbia to sign the coveted Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA), the first major stepping stone to EU membership. But it added one major caveat: implementation of the Agreement would be contingent upon Serbia's full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Though certainly symbolic of the EU's aspirations for a European Serbia, in practice having signed the SAA will do little to hasten Serbia's path to membership. Indeed, by conditioning SAA implementation on ICTY cooperation, the EU effectively put to rest any hope that Serbia would achieve EU candidacy in the near future. By all accounts, the EU's decision was meant to bolster Serbia's pro-European forces in the run-up to parliamentary elections scheduled for May 11, 2008. But the hesitance with which the agreement was made (Serbia was denied the Agreement in January) reflected mounting frustration with Serbia's perceived lack of commitment to European norms and values, if not the accession process in itself. As Luis Amado, Portugal's Foreign Minister remarked, "there is a division [in Serbia] between those who are in favor and those against Serbia's integration."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, in both foreign and domestic circles, the blame for Serbia's tardy EU trajectory is often placed on Serbia's so-called anti-European bloc. Serbian politics, the common wisdom goes, is polarized between two competing factions: those for and against Serbia's future in Europe. But is this characterization accurate? Not entirely. No significant political party in Serbia consistently opposes EU accession. All claim to support EU membership and have vowed to move Serbia closer to Europe. What distinguishes parties in Serbia is not their position on European integration. Nor is there necessarily a clear distinction between parties' positions on the policies that would enable Serbia's accession. As the following pages demonstrate, Serbia's political scene cannot be reduced to a straightforward dichotomy of good versus evil, pro versus anti-European, appealing though such simplifications may be. The lines which divide political parties in Serbia are far less clear-cut than is often presented and the options before Serbia's voters are thus more complex.

This paper examines the cleavages that distinguish parties in Serbia. It seeks, in particular, to assess whether the issue of European integration is in fact the driving force behind such cleavages, as is often alleged. It shall be demonstrated that this is not the case. To make this argument, the paper is structured as follows: section one presents an overview Serbia's current place in Europe, most notably the EU's position towards the Western Balkan countries and Serbian public opinion regarding European integration. Section two presents an analysis of Serbian political parties and their stated positions towards EU membership. Next, the paper discusses parties' positions on the policies which would enable EU membership to take place. Finally, the paper concludes by defining the genuine sources of contention amongst Serbia's political elite, and argues that these are far less dichotomous than one might expect.

### Serbia and Europe

Since the ouster of Slobodan Milosevic in October 2000, Serbia's place in Europe has come to seem all but inevitable. Beginning in June 2003, when EU member states professed their "unequivocal support to the European perspective of the Western Balkan countries" in Thessaloniki, Greece the EU has undertaken numerous efforts to stress its conviction that Serbia, like the rest of the Western Balkans, belongs in Europe. In June 2005 the European Council reiterated this commitment and in November

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<sup>1</sup> As quoted in "EU offers interim deal, signing on Feb. 7", *Radio and Television B92*, 28 January 2008, available at: [http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2008&mm=01&dd=28&nav\\_id=47275](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php?yyyy=2008&mm=01&dd=28&nav_id=47275).

2007 the European Commission went so far as to state that “the perspective of EU membership is a reality.”<sup>2</sup>

In Serbia, too, support for EU accession is strong, with approximately 68 percent of Serbs consistently favoring European integration.<sup>3</sup> Put in perspective, this number is fairly high: in October 2001 only about 60 percent of citizens in the 13 candidate countries (all of which have since become member states, with the exception of Turkey) expressed their support of EU accession.<sup>4</sup> Yet Serbia’s integration process has all but stalled. By contrast, its neighbors, Croatia and Macedonia, have attained the status of EU candidates and both Albania and Montenegro have signed SAAs and are well on their way towards becoming candidate states themselves. Only for Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia (and potentially Kosovo) has the finalization of the SAA proved elusive. This is surprising, not least because Serbia equals or even outperforms its neighbors in many of arenas deemed vital for EU accession (see Table 1). According to Freedom House, for example, Serbia is actually slightly more democratic than much of the region, including Croatia. As pertains to levels of corruption, only Croatia does better. And although Serbia comes a far second in terms of GDP per capita, it does notably better than Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Macedonia. Despite such achievements however, Serbia lags far behind much of the region in its bid to join the EU.

**Table 1: Comparative Performance of Western Balkan Countries**

| Country            | Democracy Score <sup>5</sup> | Corruption ranking <sup>6</sup> | GDP per capita <sup>7</sup> |
|--------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Albania            | 3.82                         | 105                             | 3,256                       |
| Bosnia-Herzegovina | 4.04                         | 84                              | 3,399                       |
| Croatia            | 3.75                         | 64                              | 11,271                      |
| Macedonia          | 3.82                         | 84                              | 3,573                       |
| Montenegro         | 3.93                         | 84                              | ----- <sup>8</sup>          |
| Serbia             | 3.68                         | 79                              | 5,397                       |

Not surprisingly, the blame for Serbia’s tardy integration process is often placed with Serbia’s so-called anti-European bloc. Analysts often highlight the supposed cleavage between parties’ visions for a

<sup>2</sup> European Commission, “Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2007-2008”, 6 November 2007.

<sup>3</sup> When asked to specify their support for Serbia’s integration in the EU, between 64 and 72 percent of respondents answered positively between September 2006 and June 2007. See: “European orientation of the citizens of Serbia: Trends”, EU Integration Office, 31 June 2007. It should be noted however, that the pro-European orientation of Serbs experienced a marked shift following Kosovo’s declaration of independence on February 17, 2008. In a recent poll conducted by the Center for Free Elections and Democracy (CESID), just 41 percent of respondents expressed their support for Serbia’s European orientation, as compared to 31 percent who opposed it, and 28 percent which were neutral. It remains to be seen whether this shift in public support away from EU accession will remain a constant.

<sup>4</sup> Applicant Countries Eurobarometer, 2001-1, 1-28 October 2001.

<sup>5</sup> Freedom House’s Democracy Scores run from 1 to 7, with a score of 1 reflecting the greatest level of democratic development and a score of 7 the least. The democracy score is an aggregate of ratings pertaining to the state of a country’s: electoral process, civil society, national democratic governance, local democratic governance, judicial framework and independence, and corruption. For more information, see: Freedom House, Nations in Transit 2007, available at: [http://www.freedomhouse.hu/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=84](http://www.freedomhouse.hu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=84).

<sup>6</sup> This data is taken from Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index 2007. Countries are ranked from 1 to 179, with 1 reflecting the least degree of corruption and 179 the most. For more information, see: Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions Index 2007, available at: [http://www.transparency.org/policy\\_research/surveys\\_indices/cpi/2007](http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2007).

<sup>7</sup> All data obtained from the International Monetary Fund’s World Economic Outlook Database, October 2007, available at: <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2007/02/weodata/weoselgr.aspx>.

<sup>8</sup> Data for Montenegro is unavailable.

“pro-European and anti-European Serbia.”<sup>9</sup> Likewise, segments of Serbia’s political elites are keen on highlighting their monopoly over Serbia’s pro-EU trajectory, hence Serbian President Boris Tadic’s repeated claims that a victory for his rivals would place Serbia on an anti-European path. As Tadic stated during a recent televised Presidential debate, the decision before voters was the choice between being “for or against Serbia’s path to Europe.”<sup>10</sup> Tadic even went so far as to name his electoral coalition (which included Tadic’s Democratic Party, the G17 Plus, the League of the Social Democrats of Vojvodina, and the Serbian Renewal Movement) “For a European Serbia”. Brussels, too, has been eager to portray Serbia’s political alternatives as a simple dichotomy of those for and against European integration. As Olli Rehn, EU Commissioner for Enlargement recently stated, “Seldom have citizens had as clear a choice as the Serbs do now, between a nationalist past and a European future.”<sup>11</sup> While such a portrayal is appealing, not least because it reduces the complexity of Serbian politics to a readily understandable scenario, it is inaccurate. Serbia’s parties do not fit neatly into two separate camps; those for and those against European integration. To the contrary, as the following section explains, their positions towards EU membership share much in common.

### Serbia for Europe

If Serbia’s public can be said to favor European integration, then so too can each of its major parties. Since the ouster of Milosevic in 2000, five parties have dominated Serbian politics: President Boris Tadic’s Democratic Party (DS), Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica’s Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS), Mladjan Dinkic’s G17 Plus, Vojislav Seselj’s Serbian Radical Party (SRS), and Ivica Dacic’s Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), formerly lead by Slobodan Milosevic. The DS, DSS, and G17 Plus were all constituent members of the Democratic Opposition of Serbia, the 18-party coalition that brought the Milosevic regime to its knees. By contrast, the SRS and SPS were very much the ‘old guard’, both having served in government during the Milosevic era, and each boasting Presidents indicted by the ICTY for crimes against humanity.

**Table 2: Popular Representation of Serbia’s Political Dichotomy**

| Pro-EU Bloc                |               | Anti-EU Bloc              |               |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Party                      | Share of Vote | Party                     | Share of Vote |
| Democratic Party           | 22.9%         | Serbian Radical Party     | 28,7%         |
| Democratic Party of Serbia | 16.7%         | Socialist Party of Serbia | 5,9%          |
| G17 Plus                   | 6.8%          |                           |               |
| Liberal Democratic Party   | 5.3%          |                           |               |
| <b>Total:</b>              | <b>51.7%</b>  | <b>Total:</b>             | <b>34.6%</b>  |

Like those in many post-communist countries, political parties in Serbia suffer from a lack of ideological coherence.<sup>12</sup> Serbia’s parties defy the classical (Western European) distinction between left-right politics, hence scholars’ need to devise alternative categories through which to make sense of Serbia’s political chaos. The most oft-used distinctions are those of anti-democratic versus pro-

<sup>9</sup> This was highlighted by Zoran Stojiljkovic, Professor of Political Sociology of the University of Belgrade. As quoted in: “Serb Elections to Show Whether Serbs Remain Polls Apart”, *Balkan Investigative Reporting Network*, 19 November 2006.

<sup>10</sup> Boris Tadic, Presidential Debate 2008, Radio and Television Serbia, 30 January 2008.

<sup>11</sup> Olli Rehn, “Balkans on the Mend”, *The Guardian*, 28 January 2008.

<sup>12</sup> See for example: Vladimi Goati (2004), *Partije I Partijski Sistem u Srbiji*, Belgrade/OGI Centar.

democratic blocs and anti-European versus pro-European blocs (see Table 2). This paper examines the second of these two claims. Where then do these parties stand on the issue of European integration?

Across the board, Serbia's parties profess their support of EU membership. The staunchest advocates of European integration are the DS and G17 Plus. Both have made the topic an integral part of their platforms, and regularly posit themselves as the forerunners of Serbia's European future. Hence the DS's presidential slogan "To conquer Europe together!" The DSS, by contrast, has made the EU a less central part of its campaign, but adheres to a similarly pro-EU position. According to the party's program, "the fact that Serbia is a European country directs our state toward close cooperation with European states, participation in the work of European organizations, and the inclusion in European integration processes with the final goal that our country, under equal conditions, become a fully fledged member of the European Union."<sup>13</sup> It was in fact under DSS-leadership that Serbia signed its first official document with the EU, the feasibility study of 2005. Like the DSS, the SPS has declared itself 'for' Europe. In the words of its latest program adopted in 2006, "...the SPS supports the process of joining the EU."<sup>14</sup> In a recent interview, the SPS's candidate for presidential elections in January 2008, Milutin Mrkonjic, stated that "only a crazy person would oppose joining the EU."<sup>15</sup> My own discussions with SPS representatives confirm the party's pro-European orientation. Says Dejan Backovic of the SPS, "We want to be members of the European Union...we call for EU membership and European integration."<sup>16</sup> Perhaps the greatest skeptic of European integration is the SRS. However, while the position of the party with respect to EU membership has not always been clearly defined or necessarily consistent, it too has pledged its support for Serbia's European future. According to SRS Deputy Tomislav Nikolic, the party's Presidential candidate and a self-proclaimed EU skeptic, the SRS "will cooperate with the EU"<sup>17</sup> and is not against European integration. Even in the aftermath of Kosovo's declaration of independence, Nikolic has maintained that the SRS will abide by Serbia's European course, so long as doing so does not compromise Serbia's sovereignty over Kosovo. It thus places Serbia's claims to Kosovo before Serbia's claims to a European future. Yet, as the following pages show, the SRS is not alone in this regard. The DSS for its part has made similar statements, while those of the DS are not too far off. While the practical implications of such policies do not bode equally well for Serbia's European perspective, the fact that no significant party in Serbia blatantly rejects Europe demands that the simple dichotomy between pro- and anti-European parties be re-examined. The following section does just that via an analysis of parties' positions on the key issues facing Serbia on its trek to EU membership.

### Parties' Positions on the Policies that Matter

It goes without saying that there are genuine, substantive differences between political parties in Serbia. Some of these differences would likely impact the time and manner in which Serbia enters the EU. But do these differences amount to a simple polarization between pro- and anti-Europeans? If one examines the positions parties have taken with respect to the policies that would enable European integration, the answer is no (see table 2).

**Table 2: Parties' Position on Issues Pertaining to EU Membership**

| Party | EU | Independence of Kosovo | Consequences of EU Recognition of Kosovar Independence | Consequences of EU's insistence that EU membership be conditioned on | ICTY |
|-------|----|------------------------|--|--|------|
|       |    |                        |  |  |      |

<sup>13</sup> Program Demokratska Stranka Srbije, available at: <http://www.dss.org.yu/pages/program.php?id=65>.

<sup>14</sup> Declaration adopted at the 7<sup>th</sup> Party Congress 2006.

<sup>15</sup> As stated on Utisak Nedelje, 27 January 2008.

<sup>16</sup> Personal interview with author, 9 February 2007.

<sup>17</sup> As quoted in: Dusan Pavlovic and Slobodan Antonic (2007), *Konsolidacija Demokratskih Ustanova u Srbiji Posle 2000 Godine*, Belgrade/Glasnik: 270.

|     |     |         |                                 | Serbia's recognition of Kosovo |         |
|-----|-----|---------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| DSS | For | Against | Suspension of EU integration    | End to EU integration          | For     |
| DS  | For | Against | Unspecified (likely diplomatic) | End to EU integration          | For     |
| G17 | For | Against | Unspecified (likely diplomatic) | Unspecified                    | For     |
| SPS | For | Against | Suspension of EU integration    | End to EU integration          | Against |
| SRS | For | Against | End to EU integration           | End to EU integration          | Against |

If one looks, for example, at the matter of Kosovo, one sees a striking similarity between parties' positions but a diverse range of tactics following Kosovo's declaration of independence. Only one party in Serbia, the Liberal Democratic Party of Cedomir Jovanovic, supports Kosovo's independence. This party boasts just five percent of seats in parliament. By contrast, the vast majority of parties in Serbia—and *all* major parties in parliament—oppose Kosovo's independence. This stance brings with it different repercussions, particularly with respect to the EU. Perhaps understandably, neither the DS nor the G17 Plus has provided much clarity as to the course they would take should the EU, as a whole, recognize Kosovo's claims to independence.<sup>18</sup> It is notable that the DS has refused to submit to DSS demands that it suspend its membership efforts should the EU opt towards recognition. Rather, the DS supported a series of diplomatic measures, including the temporary removal of Serbian Ambassadors from select states. The DSS, by contrast, has been rather clear: it refused to give its backing to the SAA and has thereby supported a suspension of the process of European integration. The SPS position on this account is virtually indistinguishable: it, too, favors suspension should the EU disregard its territorial claims to Kosovo. As Ivica Dacic, SPS President explained, "We are for the European Union, but if America and Europe would force us to choose between the European Union and Kosovo, we would choose Kosovo."<sup>19</sup> Undoubtedly, the SRS takes the most hard-line position here: it advocates an alternative course should the EU recognize Kosovar independence: that of forming closer ties with the Russian Federation. Thus, what we see here is that the simple dichotomy between pro- and anti-European parties, as portrayed in Table 1, does not do justice to parties' varying policy perspectives. The DSS in particular defies classification as a purely pro-European party.

On the matter of ICTY cooperation—perhaps the issue with the greatest ramifications for Serbia's future accession—an equally complex situation comes to light. While here the dichotomy would appear to be most applicable (with the DSS, DS and G17 for cooperation, and the SPS and SRS against), the reality is that despite parties' statements to the contrary, not one party has proven itself capable of achieving full cooperation with the ICTY. Thus, while the DS, DSS, and G17 Plus have all stated their support for the Tribunal, Ratko Mladic remains on the run, despite the fact that these parties have held power since 2000. One might argue, as no doubt many critics have, that such positions are meaningless unless they produce tangible results. In the case of Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic, they have not. For the EU, this is a deal breaker. Serbia's accession to the EU will remain stalled so long as Mladic is not in The Hague. Moreover, it is notable that it was the previous government, which relied on the silent support of the SPS, that enabled the greatest number of extraditions. This does not imply that the party

<sup>18</sup> The EU thus far lacks a united stance towards the question of Kosovar independence. At the time of writing, 19 of the EU's 27 member states have recognized Kosovo's independence. In each of these cases, Serbia has responded by recalling their Ambassadors.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid: 270.

supports cooperation, only that it has not necessarily obstructed the process to the extent that many would have predicted.

In sum, we see that the differences between parties in Serbia are more, and slightly less predictable, than meets the eye. The oft-made distinction made between those for and against European integration is not borne out by reality. Serbia's parties do not fit neatly into two opposing camps, in many respects the DSS is no less 'anti-European' than the SPS. To place it within one camp or another is to commit the sin of conceptual stretching. Analysts should avoid this terminology and instead, focus on the specific policies which define parties and distinguish them from their opponents.

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## FDI performance index of Western Balkan countries

Aleksandar Kostadinov

### INTRODUCTION

Western Balkan is a geopolitical term that refers to countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro. The term Western Balkan, has been used for the first time in the beginning of 1990's and is often explained as Yugoslavia minus Slovenia plus Albania. Western Balkan countries are also in a political and economic context described as a "black hole" of Europe as a result of lacking cooperation with the rest of Europe and slow reform process toward modernization and democratization of their societies.

Western Balkan countries occupy an area of 196,047 km<sup>2</sup>, with population of around 21 and a half million citizens. Despite the bloody wars and conflicts during 1990's and heavy downturn of their economies, WB economies in the last 5-6 years have grown fast and predictions are that they will continue to perform well. In 2005 all WB countries have generated an output of 88,816 million of US\$ with an average growth of 4.7%.

| Country                | Area (km <sup>2</sup> ) | population 2005 | GDP (current 000 US\$) (2005) | GDP growth (annual %)- 2005 | GDP per capita US\$ in 2005 |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Albania                | 28,748                  | 3,129,678       | 8,380,314                     | 5.5                         | 2678                        |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 51,066                  | 3,907,074       | 9,948,769                     | 5                           | 2546                        |
| Croatia                | 56,594                  | 4,443,350       | 38,505,553                    | 4.3                         | 8666                        |
| Macedonia              | 25,713                  | 2,034,060       | 5,766,178                     | 4                           | 2835                        |
| Serbia and Montenegro  | 88,361                  | 8,064,253       | 26,215,215                    | 4.7                         | 3251                        |
| Total                  | 196,047                 | 21,578,415      | 88,816,029                    | 4.7 (average)               | 3995 (average)              |

*Source: own calculations based on World Bank online database and IMF data statistics.*

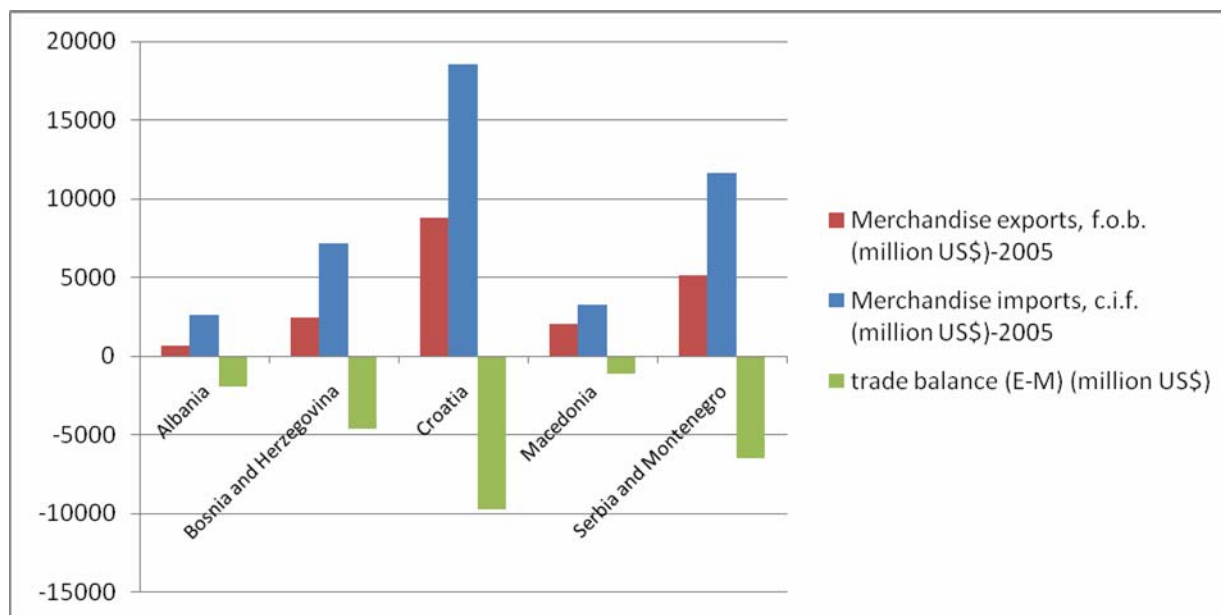
As a result of political stabilization of the region and efforts made by USA and EU, WB countries are attracting more and more FDI every year. During the period of 2002- 2006 stock of FDI has reached 18, 318 million US\$ of which  $\frac{3}{4}$  were located in Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro. Other countries, for example Macedonia, still remain non attractive and have attracted less than 500\$ per capita during the period of 2002-2006. However, WB countries compared to the World share are very attractive for FDI and all have ratios above the average.

Trade policies and strategies remain weak point of all WB countries and they all prove high trade deficits in the last decade. Trade deficits range as a share of GDP from 20 to 25 %, except Bosnia and Herzegovina where this share was around 47 %. Trade liberalization and recent signing of CEFTA agreement, probably will increase trade deficits because WB countries had high protective measures of domestic production, especially for agricultural products. Next table demonstrate trade deficits and its share of GDP of the country.

Table 2. Trade balance of Western Balkan countries in 2005

| Country                | Merchandise exports, f.o.b. (million US\$)-2005 | Merchandise imports, c.i.f. (million US\$)-2005 | Trade balance (E-M) (million US\$) | deficit as a share of GDP % |
|------------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Albania                | 658   | 2618  | -1960                              | -23.39                      |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 2405  | 7107  | -4702                              | -47.26                      |
| Croatia                | 8772  | 18560   | -9788                              | -25.42                      |
| Macedonia              | 2041  | 3228  | -1187                              | -20.59                      |
| Serbia and Montenegro  | 5065  | 11 635  | -6570                              | -25.06                      |

Source: own calculations based on World Bank online database



## Definition of Foreign Direct Investments

Foreign direct investments according OECD are defined as: “lasting interest by a resident entity in one economy or an entity resident in an economy other than that of the investor. The lasting interest implies the existence of a long-term relationship between the direct investor and the enterprise and a significant degree of influence on the management of the enterprise”. (OECD,1999).

Due to adoption of neoliberal doctrine in the last few decades, many countries have abandoned Keynesian doctrine of state intervention and started to adopt strategies of the new era of globalization. These strategies are mainly based of free movement of goods, services and capital.

After disintegration of Yugoslavia and fall of communism in Albania, WB countries have partially liberalized their economies and new reforms toward marked based economy have started. FDI still vary from year to year, but shows positive trend during the period of 2002-2006.

**Table 3. Foreign direct investment, net inflows (million US\$) in WB countries**

| Country                                       | 2002         | 2003        | 2004        | 2005        | 2006        | FDI stock (2002-2006) | population 2005 | FDI/per capita (stock 2002-2006) |  |
|---|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Macedonia                                     | 77           | 96          | 157         | 100         | 280         | 710                   | 2034060         | \$349                            |  |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina                        | 267          | 381         | 612         | 299         | 350         | 1909                  | 3907074         | \$489                            |  |
| Croatia                                       | 1123         | 2056        | 1224        | 1761        | 2000        | 8164                  | 4443350         | \$1,837                          |  |
| Serbia and Montenegro                         | 137          | 1360        | 966         | 1481        | 2450        | 6394                  | 8064253         | \$793                            |  |
| Albania                                       | 135          | 178         | 341         | 262         | 225         | 1141                  | 3129678         | \$365                            |  |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>1739</b>  | <b>4071</b> | <b>3300</b> | <b>3903</b> | <b>5305</b> |                       | <b>21578415</b> |                                  |  |
| <b>Total FDI stock 2002-2006 WB countries</b> | <b>18318</b> |             |             |             |             |                       |                 |                                  |  |

Source: own calculations based on World Bank online database and The Vienna institute for International economic studies

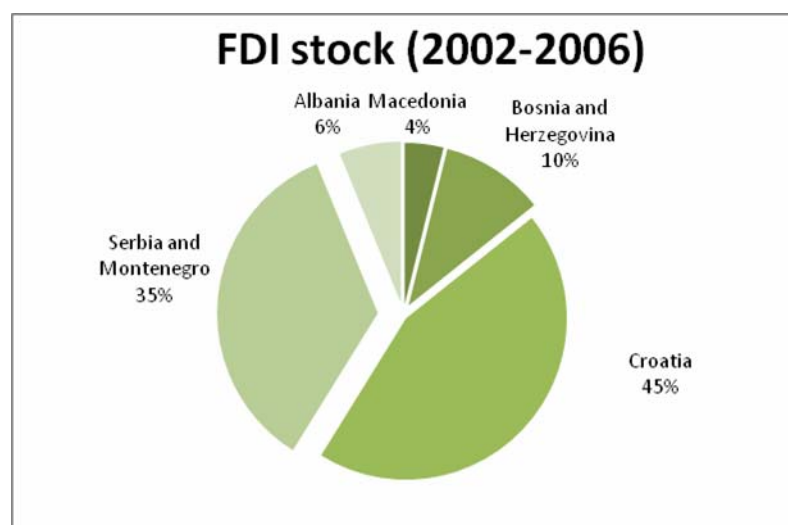
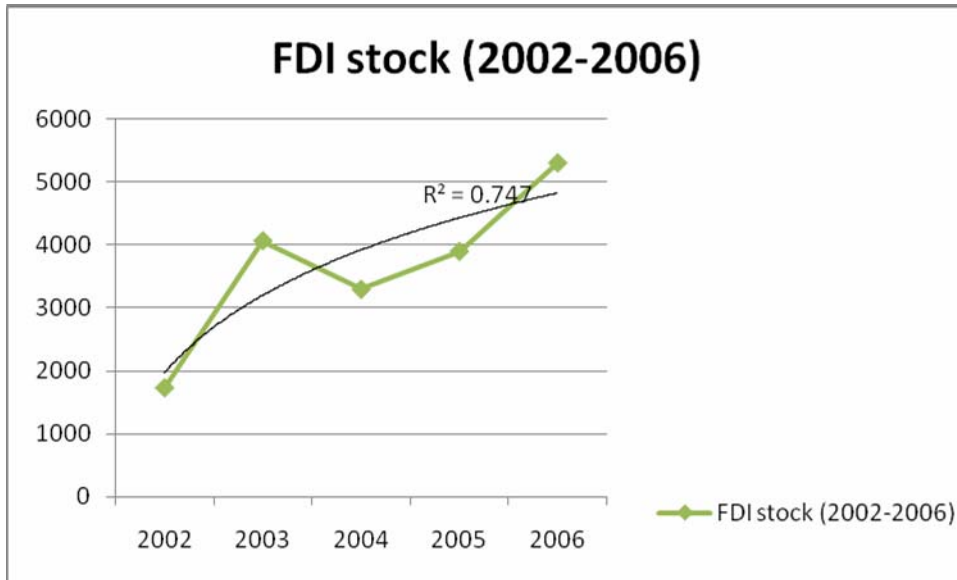


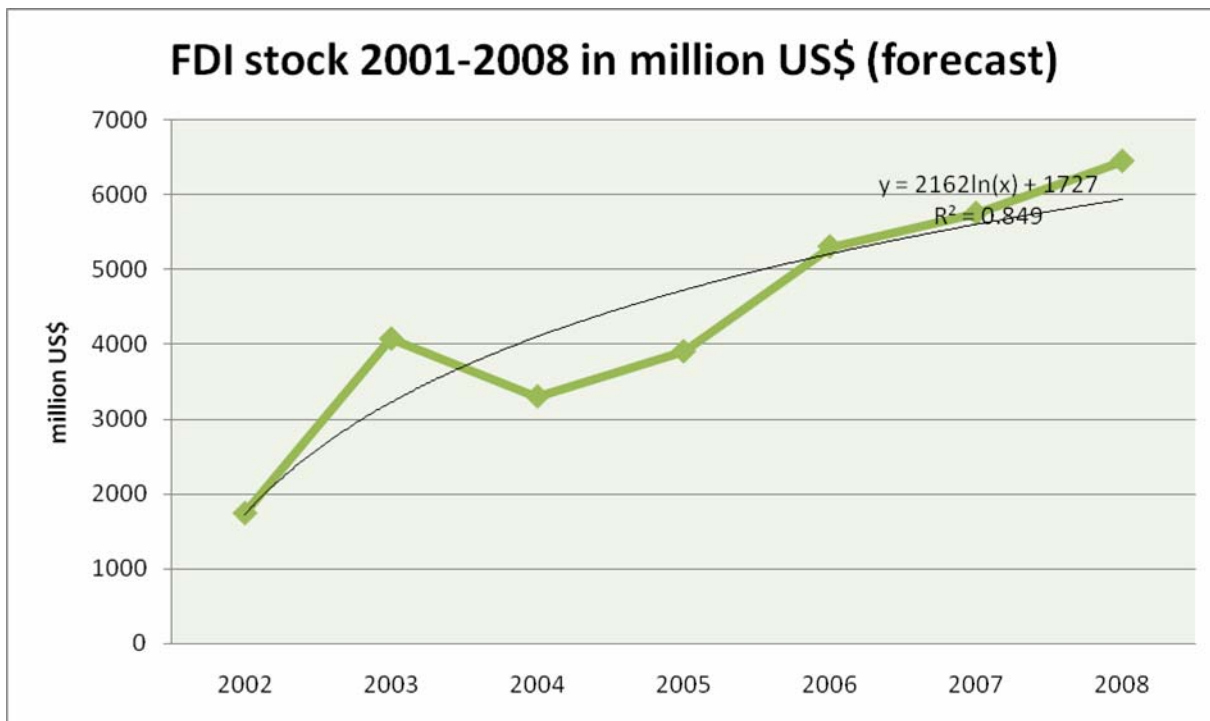
Chart 3: FDI stock (2002-2006) in %

| Year                   | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| FDI stock WB countries | 1739 | 4071 | 3300 | 3903 | 5305 |



By using Excel, forecast of FDI in 2007 and 2008 in WB countries, would have the following figures.

| Year                   | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007* | 2008* |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| FDI stock WB countries | 1739 | 4071 | 3300 | 3903 | 5305 | 5753* | 6449* |



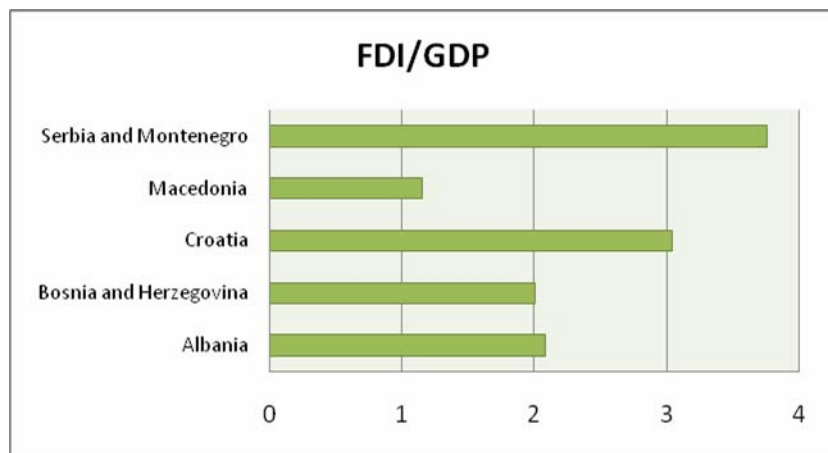
## Performance index of attracting FDI in Western Balkan

Performance index is a simple ratio between country's share of the total world FDI and country's share of total world GDP.

$$\text{Performance index} = \frac{\text{country's share of world FDI}}{\text{country's share of world GDP}}$$

This index can demonstrate three different situations. If the value of the ratio is 1, means the country has no more and no less than world proportion of FDI. If the value is less than 1, means that country can not manage to attract enough FDI proportionally to its share of the world GDP and if the value is bigger than 1, means that country attracts FDI more than the world's average share. In 2005, Macedonia has had the lowest performance index of attracting FDI among WB countries with ratio 1.15. It is interesting that Serbia and Montenegro have attracted FDI almost 4 times more than country's GDP share in the World and rank highest among WB countries.

Almost half of all FDI (2001-2005) in WB countries have been placed in Croatia, but only 6% or 871 million US\$ were invested in Macedonia for the same period. Another interesting figure from the Table 3 is the fact that Macedonia has received half of this sum (441million US\$) only in the year 2001, which is due to privatization of the biggest Macedonian company- Makedonski Telekomunikacii.



**Table 4 FDI/GDP index in 2005**

| Country                | GDP million US\$ (2005) | FDI million US\$ (2005) | country's share of the world GDP | country's share of world FDI | FDI/GDP index |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| Albania                | 8380                    | 262                     | 0.000137362                      | 0.000285940                  | 2.081648211   |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 9948                    | 299                     | 0.000163064                      | 0.000326321                  | 2.00117688    |
| Croatia                | 38505                   | 1761                    | 0.000631161                      | 0.001921908                  | 3.045035031   |
| Macedonia              | 5766                    | 100                     | 0.000094514                      | 0.000109137                  | 1.154716647   |
| Serbia and Montenegro  | 26215                   | 1481                    | 0.000429708                      | 0.001616323                  | 3.761449725   |
| World                  | 61006604                | 916277                  |                                  |                              |               |

Chart 4: FDI performance index of Western Balkan countries

## Conclusions:

FDI plays major role in the western Balkan economies. As far as privatization process has finished and there are less state owned companies, western Balkan governments are facing to run budget deficits that are not sustainable on a mid term. Attracting FDI is top priority to all WB countries not only to finance their budgets, but moreover to improve their economic performance and standard of living.

Good geographic position, free market access to EU, closeness to Mediterranean countries and relatively good infrastructure makes WB countries attractive for FDI. The experience of Central European countries in attracting FDI could be repeated in WB countries if new signed CEFTA agreement would be respected. High inflow of FDI can increase efficiency of the production and introduce new products on the markets, but still depends on the reasons of investment and "target" companies.

Stronger economic cooperation among WB countries would uphold stability in the region, increase trade volume and promote the region as a good and safe place to invest. Promoting deeper cooperation among the countries, (not only trade liberalisation) but building networks among Agencies for promotion of FDI, Business communities and transfer of know how would lead to improved allocation of FDI and possibility for decentralised production sites among the countries.

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## THE EVOLUTION OF REGIONAL ACTORS' PEACE-BUILDING CAPACITY: The European Union and its twin track approach to peace-building in Macedonia

Mejlina Modanu

### Abstract

This paper examines regional actors' capacities for crisis management and peace-building operations, focusing specifically on the European Union (EU) and its role in Macedonia. It focuses on the EU's approach to stabilizing the Balkans, and argues that its involvement in Macedonia is an evolved form of the overall EU policy in the Balkans because it consists of a twin track peace-building approach, where so-called *hard* power measures (such as peacekeeping troops), and *soft* power measures (such as regional integration and the process of EU enlargement) combine to provide an overall carrots-and-sticks approach to peace-building. The paper further compares this approach with that of the US post-World War II involvement in Western Europe, drawing parallels and lessons for regional actors engaging in future conflict prevention and peace-building initiatives.

**Key Words:** peace-building, EU, Macedonia, twin track, regional actors, regional integration, enlargement

### Introduction

This paper examines the evolution of regional actors' capacities for crisis management and peace-building operations, focusing on the European Union (EU) as an active player in the process of stabilizing the Balkans. The paper examines the Union's particular involvement in Macedonia and argues that this form of engagement represents a more evolved approach of the overall EU policy in the Balkans – namely, a twin track model of peace-building, where so-called *hard* power measures (military and/or security measures such as peacekeeping troops), and *soft* power measures (such as regional integration and the EU accession process) combine to provide a carrots-and-sticks approach to long-term peace-building. This approach not only demonstrates the EU's commitment to the region, but it also exhibits a striking parallel with the manner in which the United States had approached the problem of Western Europe's post- World War II reconstruction and stabilization process. The paper concludes with the hypothesis that such an approach, as taken by the EU in Macedonia, while initially an *ad hoc* attempt to manage the complexity of a post-conflict environment, might be turning into an applicable model of long-term peace-building, one that would address the security dilemma in a post-conflict society,<sup>1</sup> as well as provide the economic development and reconstruction required to sustain a peace process and assure peace consolidation.

The structure of the paper is as follows. It briefly examines the evolving role of regional organizations in conflict management activities, particularly after the end of the Cold War and in response to the shifting nature of conflicts in the 1990s. In that context, it focuses on the Balkans in the 1990s and specifically the development of peace-building initiatives in Macedonia and the increased involvement of various actors. The paper then goes on to discuss the role of the European Union in Macedonia and illustrates how the EU is improving its understanding of, and approach to peace-building, by augmenting so-called 'hard power' measures aimed at tackling the security dilemma in the country with a parallel process of supporting political reform through the EU accession process. The paper concludes with a comparative examination between this evolving twin-track model for the EU and post-World War II US initiatives in Western Europe, and suggests that the EU's continued engagement in Macedonia and the Balkans points to the development of a more comprehensive, consistent and coherent model for managing post-conflict situations by a regional organization.

### The growing regionalization of security: regional organizations and conflict

The United Nations has the primary responsibility to ensure the prevention of international conflict according to the UN Charter. Nevertheless, the Charter allows for the creation and involvement of

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<sup>1</sup> See Barbara F. Walter, 'The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement', *International Organization*, 51: 3 (Summer 1997): 335-363

regional organizations in preventing conflict and promoting stability in their respective regions (Chapter VIII on Regional Arrangements).

The end of the Cold War witnessed the proliferation of ethnic conflicts, and the rise of new security threats, such as global terrorism and international trafficking, making it necessary for regional organizations to play a greater role in maintaining peace and stability in their regions. With the increasing global economic integration, there is also a 'world-wide trend towards regionalism'.<sup>2</sup> In contrast to the Cold War era, when regional organizations were subordinated to the larger East-West conflict, the post-Cold War easing of antagonism allowed these organizations to assume a larger role.

The focus on regionalism has increased in importance due to the regionalization of international security, achieved in part by the shift in the interests of major powers.<sup>3</sup> Causes of instability are now more contingent on country and regional dynamics, and changing interests often mean a decrease in desire to resolve conflicts seen as not vital to strategic goals.<sup>4</sup> Countries must look to arrangements which have the greatest interests in stability in that region and the greatest understanding of the causes and dynamics of the conflict. The nature of security challenges also reinforces the trend towards increased regional involvement.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, intrastate conflicts bring into question the relationship between conflict prevention and state sovereignty, especially in cases of failed states, civil wars etc. A regional organization may be more effective in addressing such problems.

These developments underlie the increasing focus on the roles that regional organizations can play in conflict prevention and peace-building. Given the multidimensional aspect of most conflicts today and the level of global economic integration, the UN must act in a coordinated manner with regional and local actors to provide the necessary, and often complex, solutions for ending conflicts. Regional organizations are uniquely placed to affect conflict prevention for a variety of reasons: their greater familiarity and strategic interests in the region, their flexibility due to smaller memberships (compared to the UN), their economic or political links with parties to the conflict, as well as their role in promoting cooperation and development in their respective regions.<sup>6</sup> They can also serve as conduits between international and local actors, support local processes and more importantly, provide financial and military resources to implement effective peacekeeping missions. This was recognized by the UN in the early 1990s when Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar stated that 'for dealing with new kinds of security challenges, regional arrangements ... can render assistance of great value'.<sup>7</sup>

From a UN perspective, regional arrangements are useful for conflict prevention regardless of whether they deem themselves to be regional arrangements under the auspices of Chapter VIII, and whether their objectives purposely aim at conflict prevention.<sup>8</sup> This kind of open-ended view means that even

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<sup>2</sup> Alan K. Henrikson, 'The Growth of Regional Organizations and the Role of the United Nations', in Louise Fawcett and Andrew Hurrell (eds.), *Regionalism in World Politics*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 163

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Hurrell and Louise Fawcett, 'Conclusion: Regionalism and International Order?', in Fawcett and Hurrell, *Regionalism*, 1995: p. 311

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Hurrell and Fawcett would argue that today's challenges arise not so much from strength and military power but weakness: weak states, weak governmental institutions, weak economies etc. (Ibid., p. 312)

<sup>6</sup> 'Sharing Best Practices on Conflict Prevention: The UN, Regional and Subregional Organizations, National and Local Actors', *IPA Workshop Report*, 2002, p. 3

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Henrikson, *Regionalism*, 1995: p. 123

<sup>8</sup> In fact, he gives the example of NATO which proclaims to be a collective self-defense alliance and not a regional organization (Gary Wilson, 'UN Authorized Enforcement: Regional Organizations versus Coalitions of the Willing', *International Peacekeeping*, 10: 2 (Summer 2003), p. 96

the European Union, a regional entity, could be considered a regional organization for the purposes of conflict prevention.<sup>9</sup>

While it is thought that regional organizations would be more effective actors due to more flexible frameworks, Gary Wilson argues that for the most part the intergovernmental nature of such arrangements suggests that the capabilities they wield depend very much on the agreement and willingness of its actors to use them.<sup>10</sup> The operational problems that arise in UN-led multi-actor conflict prevention and peace-building operations are just as likely to occur under a NATO-led mission. In Europe, it is NATO that has played a significant role in conducting military enforcement operations in the context of peace agreement negotiations.<sup>11</sup> However, this does not mean that NATO is eager to intervene in every dispute on European soil, and indeed the EU has increasingly begun to develop its security and military agenda. Some would argue that EU members are recognizing the need to develop a regional capability to take collective action in response to a crisis,<sup>12</sup> or at the very least, to contribute to peace-building processes in what is considered the EU's own backyard.

Modern peacekeeping is essentially a multidimensional task carried out by many actors, and military alliances such as NATO are ill-suited to handle the civilian tasks of the operation.<sup>13</sup> Regional organizations can facilitate such tasks, namely prevent conflict through community building, developing dialogue and facilitating regional economic integration and through such measures 'promoting the formation of shared stakes in peace and stability'.<sup>14</sup> International actors are facing continuous challenges of coordinating their approaches to implementing peace agreements and sustaining a peace-building process.<sup>15</sup> The importance of continuity in maintaining a consistent strategy between different phases of the conflict is paramount for the success of the peace-building process. With the explosion of actors involved in different phases of a conflict, coordination between them will become an even bigger problem.<sup>16</sup> One solution would be allowing a single actor, with adequate capacities, to take charge of the situation. Keeping the above in mind, one can argue that to ensure success of the peace-building process in Macedonia, and stability in the Balkans overall, the EU is well placed, and should take the lead, as it is closely engaged with the region, can avoid coordination problems typical in large, multi-national coalitions, and given recent developments in Macedonia, it is able to tackle both the 'hard' and 'soft' aspects of peace-building.

### **Regional actors in Macedonia: from the UN to NATO to the EU**

Many analysts argue that Macedonia is essential to the European security structure.<sup>17</sup> Due to its history and its position, stability in Macedonia means stability for the Balkans and it is believed that a conflict in

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<sup>9</sup> Such a view could allow a regional entity to claim the right to intervene in local conflicts despite the dubiousness of its organizational character. In the case of the European Union, the debate regarding its nature and character is still on-going. However, due to the intergovernmental framework under which its foreign and defence policies are placed (pillar 2 of the Maastricht Treaty), in this paper I will treat the European Union as a regional unitary actor, akin to a regional organization, regarding matters which fall under the above-mentioned policies.

<sup>10</sup> See *supra* 8.

<sup>11</sup> An example are the air strikes in Bosnia in the 1990s, followed by its active role through IFOR and SFOR and its air strikes against Yugoslavia in 1999 (*ibid.*, p. 97)

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98

<sup>13</sup> Walter Dorn, 'Regional Peacekeeping is Not the Way', *Peacekeeping & International Relations*, 27: 3-4 (July-October 1998), p. 3

<sup>14</sup> *IPA Workshop Report*, p. 5

<sup>15</sup> Bruce D. Jones, 'The Challenges of Strategic Communication', in Stephen John Stedman, Donald Rothchild and Elizabeth M. Cousens, (eds.), *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements*, Lynne Reiner, 2002, p. 89

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102

<sup>17</sup> P.H. Liotta and Cindy R. Jebb, 'Cry, the Imagined Country: Legitimacy and the Fate of Macedonia', *European Security*, 11:1 (Spring 2002), p. 50

Macedonia would engulf neighbouring countries.<sup>18</sup> There is a commonly acknowledged opinion that the UN peace operation deployed in Macedonia in the early 1990s was the first preventive diplomacy operation in the history of the United Nations.<sup>19</sup>

In December 1992, the UNPROFOR peacekeeping mission was sent to Macedonia and deployed along its borders with Serbia and Albania, with the purpose of deterring external threats.<sup>20</sup> Security Council Resolution 983(1995) of 31 March 1995, replaced UNPROFOR by three separate but interlinked peacekeeping operations, one of which was UNPREDEP in Macedonia.<sup>21</sup> The United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) became an independent mission in 1996. It ended on February 28, 1999 as a result of a Chinese veto in the UN Security Council in response to Macedonia's establishment of diplomatic relations with Taiwan.<sup>22</sup> The operation was welcomed both by Macedonian authorities and the wider international community as a very encouraging and prospective precedent.<sup>23</sup> It also served as an early warning mechanism and performed this function well as it was able to call attention to the unstable internal situation as well.<sup>24</sup> Consequently, the Security Council extended the repertoire of prevention techniques and the mission focused on three main pillars of its mandate: political action and good offices (political dimension), troop deployment (military dimension), and the socio-economic component.<sup>25</sup> The mission was recognized as a significant instrument for facilitating dialogue between different segments of society. Some analysts began to pose the question 'whether the operation had turned into [a] ... peace-building/development role, rather than a defensive hedge against spillover effects from neighboring states'.<sup>26</sup>

Growing recognition followed the end of the UN mission that some international presence in Macedonia was required to off-set the potential spillover from the conflict in Kosovo. The European Parliament (EP) recognized the mission's contribution to the peace and stability of the country and urged greater international involvement in order to prevent spillover of the Kosovo conflict.<sup>27</sup> It is interesting to note that the EP argued for the European Union to take over the mandate of UNPREDEP, in cooperation with NATO, WEU and the OSCE, if the UN was unable to act.<sup>28</sup> NATO took over the mission immediately and the force simply changed insignia and continued with the same mandate.<sup>29</sup>

The failure of NATO forces to seal Kosovo's borders allowed the KLA to move fighters into Macedonia and foment discontent between the country's two major ethnic groups, the Macedonians and the Albanians. In March 2001, the National Liberation Army (NLA) clashed with the Macedonian army in a

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Biljana Vankovska-Cvetkovska, 'UNPREDEP in Macedonia: New Approach to the Concept of Modern Diplomacy?', *Online Journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution*, 2:1 (March 1998), available at [http://www.trinstitute.org/ojpcr/2\\_1vankov.htm](http://www.trinstitute.org/ojpcr/2_1vankov.htm)

<sup>20</sup> Richard J. Crampton, *The Balkans since the Second World War*, (London: Pearson, 2002), p. 133

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Miroslav Baros, 'Macedonian Conflict and International Law: Self-determination or Self-Defence', *International Peacekeeping*, 10:3 (Autumn 2003), p. 62

<sup>23</sup> At the time, Macedonia was in a very delicate political, economic, social and security situation. It lacked an effective army and defense system, and was unable to create one due to the arms embargo against all the former republics of Yugoslavia. The regional situation was very unstable due to the war and became even more so with the internal collapse of Albania in 1997. The international community did not recognize Macedonia but the presence of UN troops was perceived as a *de facto* recognition of its existence (See Vankovska-Cvetkovska, 1998).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> See Shashi Tharoor, 'The Concept of Preventive Deployment in the 1990's', paper presented at the Workshop on An Agenda for Preventive Diplomacy: Theory and Practice, Skopje, October 16, 1996, p. 12

<sup>27</sup> European Parliament, 'Resolution on the failure to extend the mandate of UNPREDEP', B4-0235, 0256, 0271, 0284 and 0297/99, available at [http://www.radicalparty.org/humanrights/mac\\_re7.htm](http://www.radicalparty.org/humanrights/mac_re7.htm)

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Baros, 'Macedonian Conflict', 2003: 62

border town in north-west Macedonia, sparking an extended crisis with over 60,000 refugees fleeing the area. This prompted frantic diplomacy by the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) Representative, Javier Solana, accompanied by Lord George Robertson, NATO's Secretary-General at the time. The speed and unity with which the EU acted, even signing a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with Macedonia during this period, led many observers to argue that the EU has finally come of age as a regional power.<sup>30</sup> The intense diplomacy culminated in the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement by the key political parties in Macedonia in August 2001. The agreement was designed to introduce changes to the constitutional framework that would improve the status of ethnic Albanians in the country. NATO launched *Operation Essential Harvest* in August 2001 to assist in demilitarizing the NLA, as part of the peace consolidation process.<sup>31</sup> Some 3500 NATO troops were deployed; to be replaced later by a 350 strong European Force (EUFOR) which took over from NATO on 31 March 2003 in what became *Operation Concordia* - the first EU-led military mission.

In light of these developments, the lessons for peace-building measures in Macedonia are several. The Operation and the coordinated response by the different representatives of EU and NATO represent an insightful example of the complex role of regional actors in peace-building processes. In addition, the deployment of the EU force signaled its commitment to maintaining peace in Macedonia, illustrating a unified EU foreign policy response to events in the country.<sup>32</sup> The EU has moved away from an *ad hoc* and often inconsistent approach that characterized the early days of its Common Foreign and Security Policy, to a more sustained engagement on all levels with the country and the wider region. The EU has recognized the implications of instability in the region, not only for the Balkans but also for its own integration project, and in light of American views on the future direction and engagement of NATO, it is eager to finally assume responsibility for its own backyard.

### **The EU's evolving role in Macedonia: a twin track approach to peace-building** *The military/hard power track*

September 11 accelerated the trend of US withdrawal from peacekeeping activities in Europe and specifically the Balkans, leading to increased talk of transferring NATO's peace and security responsibilities in the region to the EU.<sup>33</sup> As NATO moves on to 'bigger things' in terms of its security role, the EU is likely to increase *its* role and its responsibility for stability on the European continent. In 1991, the European countries had embarked on a process designed to provide a European military capability. NATO Foreign and Defence Ministers decided that the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) should be built within NATO. In 1998, the St. Malo meeting led to an agreement that the European Union 'must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises'.<sup>34</sup> During the following years significant developments took place, most notably, the EU governments'

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<sup>30</sup> See John Peterson, 'US and EU in the Balkans: 'America fights the wars, Europe does the dishes?', *EUI Working Papers*, RSC No. 2001/49, European University Institute. For more information on the conflict, see Baros, 'Macedonian conflict', 2003; pp. 60-78. For a brief outline of the causes of the conflict and the role of the EU in mediating the peace agreement, see Justin L.C. Eldridge, 'Playing at Peace: Western Politics, Diplomacy and the Stabilization of Macedonia' *European Security*, 11:3 (Autumn 2002), pp. 46-90

<sup>31</sup> Baros, 2003: 71

<sup>32</sup> Since its independence, it was Macedonia's position in the Balkans and in particular its rocky relationship with Greece that provided the framework for EU policies towards the country. The political difficulty with the name and the Greek Presidency of the EU at the time of Macedonia's independence put a strain on intra-EU relations causing incoherent and contradictory policies vis-à-vis the country (See Dimitrios Kavakas, *Greece and Spain in European Foreign Policy*, [Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001]).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* p. 107

<sup>34</sup> NATO Handbook Official Website at <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb0403.htm>

decision that responsibility for the future development of ESDI and corresponding structures would be assumed by the EU itself.

The EU has taken the lead in the Balkans although it has opened itself up to cooperation with other players, namely Russia, in crisis management and conflict prevention in Europe.<sup>35</sup> According to the research group *Stratfor*, 'the only spot in the continent that requires forces is the Balkans ... and this is child's play compared to the tasks of NATO's past'.<sup>36</sup> This would explain much of the reasoning behind NATO's willingness to concede authority over peace-building operations to the EU, as was the case in Macedonia and Bosnia. The problem with this view is that it tends to underestimate the effects of a failed peace-building operation, both in terms of the regional impact and the impact on the EU's security and consolidation process. However, the EU's willingness to engage in a sustained and comprehensive manner shows that it is very aware of these potential impacts, having borne much of the fallout of the Yugoslav wars in terms of refugees, trafficking of drugs and people, etc. It has contributed to a growing involvement by the EU in Macedonia and further in the Balkans, and the development of an increasingly viable EU military force, with simultaneous disengagement of NATO partly due to the extension of its role in out-of-area conflicts.

The EUFOR Commander had argued that *Operation Concordia* was a milestone in the EU's ESDP, stating that the force 'under EU order, will hold up international stability in a region which has become a sort of critical test for the future [ESDP]. Success ... could mean a larger EU military engagement in the Balkan[s]'.<sup>37</sup> *Operation Concordia* continued NATO's work in providing support for international monitors and a visible presence on the ground. Its primary objective was to contribute to stabilizing the situation in Macedonia as a basic prerequisite for the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement signed in 2001.<sup>38</sup> The EU's goal was to establish a secure environment in Macedonia. It aimed at addressing the security dilemma,<sup>39</sup> especially in the former crisis area and in the aftermath of the NATO-led disarmament of the rebels. The mandate of the operation was initially granted until 30 September 2003; nevertheless it was later extended until December 2003. The military mission then made way for *Proxima*, the EU police mission. *Proxima* was deployed in Macedonia from December 2003, with the broader purpose of reinforcing the rule of law. With some 180 units, the objective of *Proxima* was to support the development of a professional and effective police force and promote European policing standards. These developments attest to the increasing utilization of the EU's hard power (albeit still dependent on NATO for certain resources) to minimize the security dilemma in Macedonia. The mission rested on the same premises as UNPREDEP, namely that the presence of the international community (or in this case the EU) was a clear signal of their commitment to the stability of the country.

#### *The civilian/soft power track*

The European Union's establishment of cooperation networks in the Balkans has had the avowed objective of transforming potential conflicts and fostering long-term peace-building and

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<sup>35</sup> The EU has worked out modalities for Russian forces' participation in EU crisis management operations, where Russia will be fully informed and consulted if it is a troop-contributor. An example of this new form of cooperation was the EU police mission in Bosnia, launched in January 2003, where Russia contributed several officers. This was the first EU crisis management operation, and the first one to include Russian troops working in the Balkans under EU command (Lynch, 'Russia's Strategic Partnership with Europe', 2004, p. 109)

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> EUFOR Official Website at [http://www.eurofor.it/Mission\\_CONCORDIA\\_03%20INDEX.htm](http://www.eurofor.it/Mission_CONCORDIA_03%20INDEX.htm)

<sup>38</sup> The European Commission delegation to the FYROM Official Website at <http://www.delmkd.cec.eu.int/en/concordia/main.htm>

<sup>39</sup> See Barbara F. Walter, 'The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement', *International Organization*, 51: 3 (Summer 1997): 335-363

consolidation.<sup>40</sup> The European Union has arguably represented a 'symbol of structural peace and reconciliation among ancient enemies'.<sup>41</sup> The EU sees itself as a model for regional integration, which has underpinned its involvement in regional issues, as well as its conflict management policies and participation in the peace processes in the Balkans.<sup>42</sup>

There is a close relationship between regional integration agreements and security in the sense that they act as alliances of sort against external or domestic threats.<sup>43</sup> Security threats among neighbouring countries can further stimulate the creation of regional integration schemes as the creation of the ECSC illustrates, where the underlying rationale was that it would reduce the threat of war.<sup>44</sup> Closer regional integration, especially in the area of trade, can reduce security tensions among neighbours and promote stability.

During the 1990s, a number of initiatives, supported by the European Union, were introduced in the Balkans to stimulate regional cooperation.<sup>45</sup> Most of these, particularly the Stability Pact, provide the prospect of EU membership for the Balkan states. They came as an attempt to 'Europeanize' the Balkans to the point where 'war becomes unthinkable'.<sup>46</sup> The Stability Pact has made clear that regional cooperation is a precondition for integration into the EU-Atlantic structures. Enlargement Commissioner Verheugen stressed this at the time: 'if countries want to join the European Union then they must prove that they can develop regional cooperation and resolve their problems in cooperation with their neighbours'.<sup>47</sup> Regional cooperation is thus seen as a catalyst for peace-building and stabilization. The proliferation of such arrangements have helped increase security in Europe by promoting confidence among states, reinforcing mutual dependence, reducing economic differences, and promoting development and further integration.<sup>48</sup>

Political stability in Macedonia and the Balkans cannot be achieved without an adequate level of economic security and growth. Intensifying trade and other economic links among Balkan countries can contribute to economic recovery, while faster development is crucial for the region's political and economic stability. Improved regional integration leads to economic development and increased trade and investment flows.<sup>49</sup> The *inclusivist* school of thinking argues that development underlies the philosophy of peace-building, and the two are mutually reinforcing.<sup>50</sup> Jelena Smoljan points out that post-conflict reintegration, as a critical aspect of a peace-building process requires economic assistance

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<sup>40</sup> Reinhardt Rummel, 'The European Union's Politico-Diplomatic Contribution to the Prevention of Ethno-national conflict', in Abram Chayes and Antonia Handler Chayes (eds.), *Preventing Conflict in the Post-Communist World*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1996), p. 212

<sup>41</sup> Ginsberg, cited in Lily Gardner Feldman, 'Reconciliation and legitimacy: Foreign Relations and the Enlargement of the EU', in Thomas Banchoff and Mitchell P. Smith (eds.), *Legitimacy and the EU, the contested Polity*, (New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 78

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79

<sup>43</sup> Maurice Schiff and L. Alan Winters, 'Regional Integration as Diplomacy', *Policy Research Working Paper 1801*, (Washington: The World Bank Development Research Group, August 1997), p. 2-3

<sup>44</sup> This was also noted by Jean Monnet in his statement on European integration (Cited in Schiff and Winters, 'Regional Integration as Diplomacy', p. 1).

<sup>45</sup> Some of these initiatives are the South East Europe Cooperation Initiative, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (compared by some authors to the Marshall Plan), the South Eastern Europe Cooperation Process etc (See Andrew J. Pierre, 'De-Balkanizing the Balkans - Security and Stability in Southeastern Europe', *USIP Special Report*, United States Institute of Peace, 20 September 1999 available at <http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr990920.html>)

<sup>46</sup> See Srdjan Vucetic, 'The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe as a Security Community-Building Institution', *Southeast European Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (October 2001), pg. 109-134

<sup>47</sup> Franz Lothar-Altmann, 'Schemes of regional cooperation in South East Europe', *Journal of Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 3:1 (January 2003), p. 142

<sup>48</sup> Anders Bjurner, 'Reflections on Subregionalism and Wider European Security', in Renata Dwan (ed), *Building Security in Europe's New Borderlands*, (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), p. 11-12

<sup>49</sup> I. Sers, 'Regional integration for economic development and growth', *Regional Integration and Transition Economies: The Case of the Baltic Rim*, (France: OECD proceedings, 1996), p. 181

<sup>50</sup> Jelena Smoljan, 'The relationship between peace-building and development', *Conflict, Security & Development*, 3:2 (August 2003), p. 234

and development in order to succeed.<sup>51</sup> In fact, the synthesis of peace-building and development is a better method of creating peace in societies that had undergone internal conflict.<sup>52</sup> EU trade policy towards the Balkans is therefore of vital importance, because expanded trade with the Union is crucial for economic recovery.<sup>53</sup> The EU has set up instruments and a policy framework for fostering closer economic and trade links with the Balkans. Until 2000, these countries were beneficiaries of the pre-accession financial instrument PHARE; however in 2001, the EU introduced the CARDS programme (Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stability in the Balkans) which fell within the scope of the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP).<sup>54</sup> As of 2007, CARDS and PHARE were replaced by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), which aims to channel EU assistance to candidate and potential candidate countries in the Balkans through a single unified instrument.

The EU argued that accession is determined by appropriate behaviour, provided the Western Balkan countries 'establish normal relationships between themselves.'<sup>55</sup> Leeda Demetropoulou has shown how aspirations for EU membership can bear significant EU-oriented transformations and adaptations in the Balkan countries domestic political scenes.<sup>56</sup> She examined the accession effect on Macedonia, and argued that despite past limited EU support and lack of candidate country for accession status until 2005, the country has still proceeded towards a certain policy and institutional levels of adjustment in compatibility with EU norms.

The EU was also paramount in forcing Macedonia's leadership to come to an agreement with the NLA to end the conflict. Their 'strong arm-twisting' was coupled with a Stabilization and Association Agreement that promised a \$30 million aid package for Macedonia and made it a 'potential candidate' for EU membership.<sup>57</sup> This agreement and the EU's continued support for Macedonia's integration into the Union were made contingent on the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement and the continued dialogue between the two ethnic groups.

Long term economic support, an extended military presence, regional economic integration and the creation of regional security structures can contribute to stability of both Macedonia and the Balkans.<sup>58</sup>

Liotta and Jebb call this Europeanization:

The Balkans need the leverage that can be achieved only by satisfying the region's single common aspiration: Europeanization...extending the cross-border monetary [and] trade arrangements that already operate within the EU...This New Deal should apply to all states in the region...<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 248

<sup>53</sup> Daskalov and Mladenov propose a radical plan which comprises asymmetric liberalization of EU trade policies towards the Western Balkans, removal of trade barriers with the EU, followed by gradual inclusion of the Western Balkans into CEFTA as a means of liberalizing intra-regional trade (See Stanislav Daskalov and Nickolay E. Mladenov, with Daniel Gros, Paul Brenton, Michael Emerson and Nicholas Whyte, 'A Comprehensive Trade Policy Plan for the Western Balkans: A Bold Initiative to Bring More Stability and Prosperity to South Eastern Europe', *CEPS Working Document* 146, part 2, (Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 2000), available at [http://www.ceps.be/Article.php?article\\_id=23](http://www.ceps.be/Article.php?article_id=23))

<sup>54</sup> The SAP is a process modeled on the Europe Agreements with Central Europe, whose goal is to improve trade links and cooperation between the Balkans and the EU and to prepare the Balkan countries for accession to the Union.

<sup>55</sup> Eric Herring, 'International security and democratization in Eastern Europe', in Geoffrey Pridham, Eric Herring and George Sanford (eds.), *Building Democracy? The International Dimension of Democratization in Eastern Europe*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), p. 204

<sup>56</sup> See Leeda Demetropoulou, 'Europe and the Balkans: Membership Aspiration, EU Involvement and Europeanization Capacity in South Eastern Europe', *Southeast European Politics*, 3: 2-3 (November 2002), pp. 87-106 (my emphasis)

<sup>57</sup> Eldridge, 2002: p. 62

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, p. 64

<sup>59</sup> Isaiah Berlin, cited in P.H. Liotta and Cindy R. Jebb, 2002: p. 74

An analysis of the different measures and policy instruments which the EU has created to manage the consolidation of stability (both political and economic) in the Balkans, evokes familiarity to historians focusing on US involvement in Western Europe after World War II. A Marshall Plan coupled with an integration process into a stable security community would address many of the problems in the region. The US approach to Western Europe rested on similar considerations, and some historians have argued that 'the Marshall Plan was designed predominantly for political objectives, albeit its mechanisms were almost entirely economic'.<sup>60</sup> The organization created to coordinate the Plan was the precursor of what later became the European Coal and Steel Community. Historians have further argued that American aid served to integrate Western Europe economically and politically as an area of liberal democracies. Instead of a complex peace settlement after the end of the war, an institutionalized pattern of economic interdependence was developed as the basis for European economic and political existence and stability.<sup>61</sup> European integration would serve to increase productivity, help the reconstruction of society and provide stability both domestically and regionally. While initially the US questioned the desirability of an integrated Europe, which could be a competitor in the global economy, the onset of the Cold War modified its thinking.<sup>62</sup> The Marshall Plan stipulated security integration as well, and new integrative institution-building that would ensure security was prompted with the eruption of the Korean War and the rise in tensions between the East and the West.<sup>63</sup> The traditional enmities within the region were also drastically reduced under the American security umbrella.<sup>64</sup> As Anthony Eden declared, 'it was the military threat to the West... which brought NATO into being'.<sup>65</sup>

The EU's engagement in the Balkans has been based on a similar approach. It is a case of the students becoming the teachers, and it is regularly pointed out by the EU that its own integration process and subsequent rise as a powerful entity are 'one of the greatest success stories of peace-building in history'.<sup>66</sup> What had been an evolving response to an economically shattered Europe and a rapidly shifting international political scene after the war, became a model for consolidating the Balkans after the conflicts of the 1990s. In fact, the European Commission openly states that,

The European Union (EU) has a special interest and responsibility towards the stabilization and development of the southeastern European region. The EU strategy for the five countries ... is based, on the one hand, on the model used to rebuild Western Europe after the Second World War, and on the other hand on policies adopted by the then European Community towards the countries of central and eastern Europe following the collapse of communism there in 1989.<sup>67</sup>

This model echoes the American approach in terms of security. The security threats in the region, while not on a global scale nor expressed in terms of bipolarity as during the Cold War, are nevertheless destabilizing factors for these nascent democracies. The trafficking of people, drugs and weapons, organized crime, refugee flows etc., can cause instability in Western Europe and along its borders – increasingly so as the enlargement process continues to include wider areas of Europe. Many of the Balkan regional cooperation initiatives can be seen in this light.<sup>68</sup> Srdjan Vucetic has argued that the

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<sup>60</sup> Alan S. Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe 1945-51*, (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1984), p. 5

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p.463

<sup>62</sup> Peter van Ham, *The EC, Eastern Europe and European Unity*, (New York: Pinter Publishers, 1993), p. 21

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31

<sup>64</sup> Benjamin Miller, 'The Sources of Regional War and Peace: Integrating the Effects of Nationalism, Liberalism and the International System', pg. 57-59, available at [www.yale.edu/irspeakers/Miller.doc](http://www.yale.edu/irspeakers/Miller.doc)

<sup>65</sup> The Cold War environment also determined which actors could join the European integration project (*Ibid.*)

<sup>66</sup> The EU's relations with South Eastern Europe (Western Balkans) – Regional Approach, European Commission Official Website at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/see/region/europe\\_integration.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/region/europe_integration.pdf)

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Srdjan Vucetic, 'The Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe as a Security Community-Building Institution', *Southeast European Politics*, 2: 2 (October 2001), pp. 109-134

Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe created a nascent security community in the region and is thus an example of the success of regional integration in terms of providing stability. However, since the Pact was constructed by an outside party - the EU - rather than through local initiatives, it will require a sustained engagement by that party to ensure regional security. The EU governments have recognized this and urged greater regional ownership of the process. The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) was therefore created, which is set to succeed the Stability Pact and further anchor the Balkan countries' commitment to an effective and sustainable regional integration and cooperation process.

What these developments in the Balkans have shown is a consistent and systemically oriented application of a successful framework for long-term peace-building, which has improved through continued learning and adaptation to local needs and challenges. At its foundation, this framework aims at political and economic progress, coupled with security and stability guarantees. The inclusion of Macedonia into the integration process - both regional and EU - and the reduction of the security dilemma through the presence of EU military troops and police support units, are one example of a micro-level application of a twin track peace-building model which incorporates both traditional and contemporary understandings of human security.

## Conclusion

Promoting the concept of 'peacekeeping with teeth', without attendant social and economic development strategies, may result in severely undersupplied peace operations aimed at influencing the political incentives of parties to a conflict.<sup>69</sup> However, an actor that is able to act both as a 'peacekeeper with teeth' and a 'peacekeeper with a carrot' would be more effective in maintaining a holistic peace operation with greater chances of long-term success. The present EU policy instruments for the Balkans have been built around the goal of post-conflict peace-building and stabilization and the UN recognizes the valuable role that the EU played in resolving the conflict in Macedonia in 2001.<sup>70</sup>

Some authors argue it would be difficult to see the EU taking on large scale operations without the US, although certain peacekeeping and crisis management operations would be feasible.<sup>71</sup> Much depends on the different perceptions within the EU of what ESDI's goals are and this disagreement affects the EU's role and capability to act.<sup>72</sup> There has been skepticism that EU governments would be able to agree on a common policy on EU-led operations, due to the diverse interests and mistrust among the states.<sup>73</sup> However, the engagement in Macedonia shows that the EU can have a united policy and when it does, it can also utilize its growing military capabilities to address 'hard security' issues.<sup>74</sup> The EU has further learned how to use the powerful symbolism of European unity as a diplomatic tool, supported by its economic power.<sup>75</sup> In this manner, the EU is evolving its ability to act as a regional peace-builder not only using its wallet but also its stick. The growing disengagement of NATO from the region leaves greater room for the EU to finally be responsible for the security and stability of the Balkans. Given the

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<sup>69</sup> Joseph Lepgold, 'NATO's Post-Cold War Collective Action Problem', in Paul F. Diehl (ed.), *The Politics of Global Governance - International Organizations in an Interdependent World*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), p. 229

<sup>70</sup> United Nations Resolution 1345 (2001), S/RES/1345 (2001), 21 March 2001, available at <http://www.hri.ca/fortherecord2001/documentation/security/s-res-1345.htm>

<sup>71</sup> Gale A. Mattox and Daniel Whiteneck, 'The ESDI, NATO and the new European security environment', in James Sperling (ed.), *Two Tiers or Two Speeds? The European security order and the enlargement of the European Union and NATO*, (New York: Manchester University Press, 1999), p.131

<sup>72</sup> The French for example would like ESDI to be used for EU operations of a defence nature whereas the more Atlanticists of the EU member states would like to keep it as a sort of 'working group' under the umbrella of NATO (Ibid. p. 124)

<sup>73</sup> Emil Kirchner, 'Second pillar and eastern enlargement: the prospects for a European Security and Defence Identity', in Sperling (ed.), 1999: p.59

<sup>74</sup> John Peterson, 'US and EU in the Balkans: 'America fights the wars, Europe does the dishes?', *EUI Working Papers*, RSC No. 2001/49, European University Institute, p.12

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

enlargement process and the future accession of Turkey, which would bring the EU's borders into the Middle East, such an approach will prove quite useful.

A twin-track peace-building framework of economic incentives and integration, as well as peacekeeping troops and police support, is a more effective model for sustaining a long term peace-building process. It approaches conflict prevention, post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building in a more streamlined manner, recognizing the need to address both hard and soft security issues. Having a single actor is also more cost effective as it minimizes the potential for disagreement and inconsistency, and it reduces the possibility of external manipulation. While Claire Piana argues that using the 'soft power' instrument of enlargement only applies to the Balkans, and is the only example of a *true* EU foreign policy,<sup>76</sup> the EU's military operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), paired with its humanitarian aid, shows that the twin track approach can also be used outside of the European arena.

The EU's development as a full regional actor, united in its objectives and its means is a significant development from the intergovernmental entity that was faced with the Yugoslav crisis and an inability to maintain policy coherence. It was the series of crisis in the Balkans in the 1990s that persuaded the EU of the need to supplement its soft power with military attributes, especially given that its economic 'carrot' failed to stop the conflict in Yugoslavia.<sup>77</sup> Military capacity proved to be critical for stabilizing and resolving the conflicts in both Kosovo and Macedonia, and such a capacity would also make the EU less dependent and more autonomous from the US.

Therefore, the EU is aiming to make itself a 'one-stop shop' for security.<sup>78</sup> This would further augment its international presence and the EU's international identity as a civilian actor will increasingly shift. There have also been indications that the EU may consider any action taken under ESDP not necessarily requiring UN approval.<sup>79</sup> While the involvement of the EU in Macedonia and the wider region can be viewed as a useful framework for other regional organizations engaged in peace-building initiatives (for, example the African Union), it is also an indication of how far the European Union has come in developing a policy coherent approach to its engagement in the Balkans after the initial responses in the 1990s.

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<sup>76</sup> Claire Piana, 'The EU's Decision-Making Process in the Common Foreign and Security Policy: The Case of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 7 (2002), p. 216 (emphasis in the original)

<sup>77</sup> Adrian Treacher, 'From Civilian Power to Military Actor: The EU's Resistable Transformation', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 9 (2004), p. 55-56

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65

<sup>79</sup> Lynch, 'Russia's Strategic Partnership with Europe', 2004, p.111

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## I. Introduction

South-East-Europe has faced remarkable historical changes. At the beginning of the year 2007 Romania and Bulgaria became the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> member states of the European Union and can now benefit from being part of the world's largest common market. With approximately 500 million consumers the European Union is one of the leading economic powers and may also play an active and influential role in world politics. Facing the promising perspectives of Romania and Bulgaria, some other nations of the Western Balkans are interested in joining the EU.

However, a closer look at the map reveals a culturally, politically and economically most heterogeneous region, which makes generalizations exceedingly difficult. Whereas the most auspicious states of the Western Balkans, Croatia and Macedonia, already achieved official candidate status and paved the way towards full EU membership, countries like Kosovo or Bosnia and Herzegovina still face severe problems and are far from meeting the criteria of Copenhagen. However, in spite of the strong economic and political distinctions, the European Union is determined to involve the whole region in accession negotiations respectively the pre-accession process.

Concerning the advanced integration process in the Western Balkans the Enlargement Strategy of the Union states, that "the Stabilization and Association Agreements, linking partners in the region more closely to the EU, with a view to accession, are expected in near completion."<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, the European Union provides focussed pre-accession financial aid to the candidate countries like Croatia and Macedonia and to the potential candidates such as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo with the total amount of 3,5 billion Euro between 2007 to 2011 in order to implement and support the necessary reforms in line with EU standards.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the Union accommodates the rising importance of the Western Balkans in geopolitics, energy politics and economy. Linking the region to `Western` Europe would be a win-win situation for both sides. Minding this backdrop, this contribution examines the perspectives and problems of the Western Balkans countries.

## II. Croatia and Macedonia

Following Slovenia, **Croatia** recovered best from the break-up of former Yugoslavia and was consequently already granted EU candidate status in 2004. The following years were marked by political stability and permanent economic growth. Regarding certain macroeconomic data, Croatia performs even better than EU-members like Bulgaria or Lithuania. For example, GDP per capita in Croatia was in 2006 considerably higher than in these two countries.<sup>3</sup> Subsequently to the admission as EU candidate state Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was increasing further more. Even if the development slightly deteriorated at the beginning of 2008, the economy still performs very well.

Concerning politics, Croatia meets the criteria of the EU. Democracy and rule of law are considered to be consolidated. Government and Parliament are working without noteworthy problems. The judicial system considerably improved, even if there are still some shortcomings concerning legal security. Furthermore, public administration faces severe problems, such as political influence or the lack

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<sup>1</sup>[http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2007/nov/strategy\\_paper\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2007/nov/strategy_paper_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup><http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/08/144&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLangu age=en>

<sup>3</sup><http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DATASTATISTICS/Resources/GDP.pdf>

of qualified experts. In this regard, the "Croatia progress report 2007 of the EU" explicitly states, that public administration reform "continues to represent a major challenge for Croatia."<sup>4</sup>

However, after improving cooperation with the UN and suspending most recently a fishing dispute with Slovenia and Italia, Croatia now paved the way towards full EU membership. European Commission President Barroso announced in March 2008, that the talks would be finished by the end of next year. In this case, Croatia could already join the Union in 2010.<sup>5</sup>

After overcoming internal and external difficulties, the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** (FYROM) is ranked among the most auspicious Western Balkan countries. In the aftermath of the declaration of independence in 1991, the young country got involved in a long and damaging conflict with Greece concerning the official name `Macedonia`. Whereas the Macedonian administration referred to the fact, that the term "Macedonia" was used for the region since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Greece obstinately refused to accept an independent nation bearing the same name as the historical Greek province. In the course of the conflict, Greece imposed an embargo on Macedonia, which severely hit the economy of the young republic. To this day the country's name remains a contentious issue. The self-designated name is Republic of Macedonia, whereas the provisional designation Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is used by NATO, UN and EU.

Due to the end of the embargo in 1995 and the membership in all relevant international organisations, Macedonia was soon able to cope with the external and economic problems. Yet a few years later it was confronted with a severe ethnic conflict, leading the country to the brink of civil war.<sup>6</sup>

Being a multi-ethnic nation, Macedonia is marked by a fragile ethnic structure. During the Kosovo War in 1998-99, 360,000 Albanians took refuge in Macedonia and therefore destabilized the already fragile relation between the Macedonian majority (64,3%) and the most important, Albanian minority (25,2%). In the year 2000 the serious tensions culminated in an armed conflict, which was only ended by two NATO missions.

In the aftermath of the violent outbursts, the European Union and the United States installed a series of talks between Albanian and Macedonian representatives, which led to the so called "Ohrid-Agreement" in 2001. This treaty is supposed to be the institutional framework of a democratic, peaceful and multi-ethnic Macedonia and can be regarded as a milestone on the road towards political stability.

The European Union appreciated the following economic and political development by granting candidate status to Macedonia in December 2005. In the latest Enlargement Strategy of the EU for 2007 and 2008 the state receives high marks in several key areas. Yet inspite of the good progress, there are still some political shortcomings. The main threat to political stabilization is the "frequent tension and insufficient cooperation between political actors"<sup>7</sup>, which threatens the normal functioning of institutions and slows down reforms.

Whereas the ongoing rivalry between the Albanian minority and the Macedonian majority still poses a potential threat to the undoubted progress in political terms, the economic situation is without any doubts very stable and flourishing. According to estimations of the IMF the Macedonian economy will record a expansion-rate of more than four percent in 2008.<sup>8</sup> In order to attract more foreign investors, the government introduced in 2007 a flat-tax on profits of enterprises. A recent forecast by the IMF shows, that this measure proved to be succesfull. Consequently, the World Bank ranked Macedonia among the top five reformers in the world.<sup>9</sup>

Even if the economy still faces serious problems such as a permanently high unemployment rate of almost 40 %, the overall macroeconomic situation is performing well. Therefore, the EU, where 53,1 %

<sup>4</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2007/nov/croatia\\_progress\\_reports\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2007/nov/croatia_progress_reports_en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/croatia-handed-2009-target-date-conclude-eu-talks/article-170961>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.nato.int/docu/review/pdf/i4\\_en\\_review.pdf](http://www.nato.int/docu/review/pdf/i4_en_review.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2007/nov/strategy\\_paper\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2007/nov/strategy_paper_en.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.bayernlb.de/ar/Internet/de/Downloads/0100\\_CorporateCenter/5700Laender/LaenderanalysenL-Z/Mazedonien/Mazedonien.pdf](http://www.bayernlb.de/ar/Internet/de/Downloads/0100_CorporateCenter/5700Laender/LaenderanalysenL-Z/Mazedonien/Mazedonien.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.doingbusiness.org/features/Reform2007.aspx>

of the Macedonian exports are sold to, expects that the local economy "should be able to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the Union in the medium term."<sup>10</sup> Minding this backdrop, accession talks with Macedonia could already start at the end of this year.

### III. Serbia, Montenegro and Albania

**Serbia** recovered well from the NATO Air raids in 1999. Starting from a weak position, the Serbian economy was marked by GDP expansion rates up to eight percent since 2000. In October 2005 negotiations with the EU about a Stabilisation and Association Agreement started, but are not signed yet due to insufficient Serbian cooperation with the International Criminal Court for Former Yugoslavia and irreconcilable differences about the status of Kosovo.

The political landscape is marked by the antagonism of nationalistic forces on the one hand and western-oriented streams on the other. This disturbs the normal functioning of the institutions. After Montenegro had declared its independence, a new constitution was adopted in October 2006. However, Democracy and rule of law have to be further strengthened. In 2007 normal functioning of the parliament and government was considerably affected several months by sharp political divisions. Concerning the judicial system, there are also some problems left. The necessary judicial reform is lagging behind and a new legal framework is still lacking.<sup>11</sup>

The Serbian economy is gradually developing to a functioning market economy. Regarding several macroeconomic data, Serbia is performing well. According to estimations, the ongoing growth will continue in 2008 and inflation stays under control. Yet, persistent high unemployment at about 20% and an expected budget deficit still pose a serious challenge.<sup>12</sup> Further development significantly depends on the controversial Kosovo issue. The decision of 18 EU nations to recognize the independence of Kosovo has provoked a fierce reaction in Belgrade. The difficult trade-off between national integrity and EU integration will be the main challenge in the near future.

After declaring independence in 2006, **Montenegro** became a sovereign member of the international community. Immediately afterwards the Union launched negotiations with the new state about a "Stabilisation and Association Agreement", which was signed in October 2007. This can be seen as a proof of the western and reform-oriented government, visibly aiming to accomplish necessary reforms.

By the adoption of the new constitution in 2007, a basis for political stability and democratic development was established. However, there still remain a lot of challenges for the young state. Parliament's and government's efficiency need to be further enhanced and the judicial system still lacks political independence. The backlog of civil and criminal cases is considerably high and corruption is still widespread.<sup>13</sup>

In contrast, the economy can be regarded as comparatively stable. Macroeconomic stability was overall improving. The last years were marked by permanent growth, light inflation and low unemployment. Yet, in order to master the competitive pressure of the EU market over the long term, major reforms are still needed. The main challenge will be beyond any doubt the ongoing process of state-building

Although being one of the poorest countries in Europe, **Albania** has medium and long-term development perspectives. However, whereas its economy has continued to expand strongly, the fragile political landscape still poses a major challenge to further progress. Mainly the absent democratic

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<sup>10</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2007/nov/strategy\\_paper\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2007/nov/strategy_paper_en.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2007/nov/strategy\\_paper\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2007/nov/strategy_paper_en.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.bayernlb.de/ar/Internet/de/Downloads/0100\\_CorporateCenter/5700Laender/LaenderanalysenL-Z/Serbien/Serbien1107.pdf](http://www.bayernlb.de/ar/Internet/de/Downloads/0100_CorporateCenter/5700Laender/LaenderanalysenL-Z/Serbien/Serbien1107.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2007/nov/strategy\\_paper\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2007/nov/strategy_paper_en.pdf)

culture among key political actors affects the effective functioning of the institutions. Due to corruption and political influence, the judiciary still falls short of EU criteria. Furthermore, corruption is widespread. Albania ranks 105th out of 179 countries in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index for 2007.<sup>14</sup>

Despite of a large informal sector, undermining the tax base, Albania's economy is constantly growing. The macroeconomic situation is supposed to be stable. Over the last few years, GDP growth has been marked by expansion rates at about five percent.<sup>15</sup> Inflation and unemployment are overall under control. Yet, due to the lack of legal security, the investment climate remains not promising which is why far-reaching reforms and a changing political climate are needed.

Even if the Albanian government is planning to join the European Union in 2012, full membership seems unlikely before 2016.<sup>16</sup> However, the fact that Albania achieved the NATO candidate status in April 2008 draws attention to the country's rising importance.

#### IV. Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo

Due to permanent tensions between the three constituent peoples – Bosnians, Croats and Serbs – the situation in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** remains complicated. While the Serbs sometimes consider separating from the country, the Bosnian majority (which constitutes 50% of the total population) insists on territorial integrity. Thus, even in the aftermath of the "Dayton Agreement", Bosnia and Herzegovina still longs for political stability. Owning considerable legal and governmental powers, the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina is still monitoring the civilian peace implementation. In 2007, the EU uttered strong disappointment about the political stagnation, claiming "that the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina have not demonstrated the capacity to take further political ownership and responsibility."<sup>17</sup>

Despite of persistent high unemployment rates and widespread corruption, the macroeconomic stability has been maintained. The GDP is marked by stable growth and inflation is conforming to EU norms. Due to its balanced budget, growth is expected to be sustainable.<sup>18</sup>

Further development will depend on a constitution reform, simplifying the complicated and cost-intensive tripartite administration. Yet recently, the police reform laws were finally adopted by parliament, which paves the way towards signing the "Stabilisation and Association Agreement".<sup>19</sup> Another fact, pointing at the country's western orientation, is its admission to the NATO "Partnership for Peace Programme" in 2006.

After the unilateral declaration of independence in February 2008, **Kosovo** remains a thorny issue. Kosovar officials introduced the name Republic of Kosovo, provoking fierce reaction in Serbia. Referring to the former status as constituent republic, Serbian officials, in reference to UN Resolution 1244, are still speaking of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija. The non-acceptance of the new state by China and Russia on the one hand and the acceptance by countries such as the USA and Germany on the other hand, shows the rising gap amongst the international community.

#### V. Conclusion

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<sup>14</sup> [http://www.transparency.org/policy\\_research/surveys\\_indices/cpi/2007](http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2007)

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.bayernlb.de/ar/Internet/de/Downloads/0100\\_CorporateCenter/5700Laender/LaenderanalysenA-K/Albanien/Albanien-Daten.pdf](http://www.bayernlb.de/ar/Internet/de/Downloads/0100_CorporateCenter/5700Laender/LaenderanalysenA-K/Albanien/Albanien-Daten.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.bayernlb.de/ar/Internet/de/Downloads/0100\\_CorporateCenter/5700Laender/LaenderanalysenA-K/Albanien/Albanien.pdf](http://www.bayernlb.de/ar/Internet/de/Downloads/0100_CorporateCenter/5700Laender/LaenderanalysenA-K/Albanien/Albanien.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2007/nov/strategy\\_paper\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2007/nov/strategy_paper_en.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.bayernlb.de/ar/Internet/de/Downloads/0100\\_CorporateCenter/5700Laender/LaenderanalysenA-K/Bosnien-Herzegowina/Bosnien0408.pdf](http://www.bayernlb.de/ar/Internet/de/Downloads/0100_CorporateCenter/5700Laender/LaenderanalysenA-K/Bosnien-Herzegowina/Bosnien0408.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/index\\_de.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/index_de.htm)

A closer look at the Western Balkan Countries shows remarkable differences concerning economic and political stability. For example, whereas Croatia in 2006 had a GDP per capita of about 7700 Euro, it was only 1100 Euro in Kosovo.<sup>20</sup> Democratic stability and a functioning market economy will allow Croatia and Macedonia to join the Union in the short and medium term and thus to become member No. 28 and 29 respectively.

In contrast, the other potential candidate states still face some problems. Nationalism and ethnical tensions, corruption and the lack of a democratic culture still pose major threats to the development of a market economy and the rule of law. However, it is important to emphasize that all countries strive for improvement and are involved into negotiations with the EU and NATO. This mutual rapprochement is undoubtedly a win-win situation, allowing positive perspectives for the EU members as well as the Western Balkan countries.

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<sup>20</sup> [http://www.nzz.ch/nachrichten/startseite/kosovos\\_wirtschaft\\_vor\\_riesigen\\_herausforderungen\\_1.670822.html](http://www.nzz.ch/nachrichten/startseite/kosovos_wirtschaft_vor_riesigen_herausforderungen_1.670822.html)

# EU policies and strategy towards the Western Balkans: where is it heading?

Illir Kalemaj

## INTRODUCTION

To analyze the current policies of the European Union towards the Western Balkans and consequently, the strategy that drives them, it is not an easy task. Nevertheless, through the insights of the supranationalism view on integration versus that of the intergovernmentalism rationale, I argue the implications and the effects of the current, "frozen" enlargement process and the reasons that led to such an outcome. Specifically, in juxtaposing the theoretical approaches of neo-functionalism with that of liberal intergovernmentalism, I seek to find out the reasons that are leading the process of enlargement toward a 'dead end' point, with no clear perspective for the Western Balkans' countries in the near future. Starting with a short comparison between supranationalism views on the EU, and an intergovernmentalist understanding, I will then follow with a theoretical discussion of the two most elaborated approaches on European Integration field, namely neo-functionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism. Afterwards, I analyze the current situation of EU policies toward the Western Balkans while applying the theoretical frame that suits mostly the case study. Finally, I come at a conclusion of the vision or strategy that the European Union has toward the region (if any), and what can be some of the effects of the prolongation of the process.

## Theoretical Framework

Supranationalism in the European integration discourse encompasses a broad generic view of a European Union that closely resembles the one of the national political systems. It looks upon the Commission as the driver of the integration process and links it to a strong executive role that brings in mind the governments of most member states. One of the things that is strongly emphasized by the supranationalism in the European studies is the shift of loyalties that takes place from the member states toward a new centre. This clearly contravenes the basic tenet of intergovernmentalism that maintains the continuous central role of the member states. Roughly speaking, if supranationalism believes that centers of decision-making are moving away from the states toward new, autonomous institutions, the intergovernmentalism points at the fact that the ultimate power remains with the state. Ernst Haas, describes political integration as "a process where actors shift their loyalties and expectations toward a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states. The end result of a process of political integration is a new political community, superimposed over the pre-existing ones" (Lindbergh, 1963, p.4).

On the other hand, the intergovernmentalists believe in a more 'realist' notion of the world and point at the states as the only significant actors. As Hoffman has correctly observed: "[a]ny international system, would be likely to produce diversity rather than synthesis among the units" (Rosamond, 2000, p.76; Hoffman, 1966). This means that the units (states) would be unwilling to relinquish power, but they may bargain to increase their share of profits. Thus they create these institutions for the simple purpose of preserving their interests and increasing their possibilities of gaining more, rather than with the intention of delegating real, independent authority to them. But to have a better understanding of how supranationalism and intergovernmentalism can be applied to the study of European integration, it is better to interpret their basic tenets, through the lenses of neofunctionalism and liberal intergovernmentalism, two of the most elaborated theoretical approaches on EU.

To start with neofunctionalism, it is interesting the fact that it has been identified as a 'pluralist theory', by one of the most prominent writers in the European studies field (Lindbergh, 1963, p.55). It is a self-explanatory term of this theory that points out at a variety of different actors, rather than viewing

states as the only units of the world politics. The main assumption of this theory is that it “contemplated the replacement of power politics with a new supranational style, built around a core procedural consensus which resembled that of most domestic political systems” (Rosamond, 2000, p.73). Framing the understanding of the European integration in this way, it ‘revolutionized’ the traditional explanation of realist and intergovernmentalist views of the “perpetuity of power politics” and triggered a powerful “intergovernmentalist backlash” as a rival theoretical approach in explaining European integration (Rosamond 2000). But before turning to the insights and rationale of the most distinguished intergovernmentalist approach, Moravcsik’s liberal intergovernmentalism, it is of importance to mention the notion of ‘spill-over’ in the neofunctionalist approach. Spill-over refers to the economic integration in one sector that would lead to further integration in other sectors as well as “greater authoritative capacity at the European level” (Rosamond, 2000, p.60), as Haas has defined it. Hence, the process of integration is looked upon in incrementalist terms from the neofunctionalists, believing in a step by step approach to understanding the historical course of it and to find a rationale of the direction to where this Union without a “pre-defined end or *finalite politique*” (Verhaeven, 2004, p.274), is headed.

“Instead the Treaties have included the ambition of an ‘ever closer union’, suggesting deeper political integration as an end in itself, without explicitly stating the final political or constitutional destination” (Verhaeven, 2004, p.274). It is important to note though that Haas, latter on, in his writings, relegated neo-functionalism to the status of pre-theory, “alongside federalism and communications approaches, because they do not provide an explanation of a recurring series of events made up of dimensions of activity casually linked to one another” (Rosamond, 2000, p.87). This rational analysis of the cause-effect linkage that Haas has observed in a latter phase of his career, tells a lot about the neofunctionalism and its limits in providing empirics for the explanation of the European integration. I turn now at the liberal intergovernmentalism to provide a rational explanation of the European integration and bring some of the insights of this theoretical approach in this field of study.

Schimmelfennig, while talking for the LI theoretical approach, mentions at one moment (jokingly) that: “Liberal intergovernmentalism is a theoretical ‘school’ with no ‘disciples’ and a single ‘teacher’, Andrew Moravcsik” (Schimmelfennig, 2005, pp.78-79). Of course, this is an oversimplified view of it, considering that Schimmelfennig himself has devoted an entire chapter in explaining the basic tenets of this theory and the works of many others. Rosamond describes this theory as a “two-level game” in explaining both the “national preference formation and an intergovernmentalist account of strategic bargaining between states” (Schimmelfennig, 2005, p.79). Turning to Moravcsik, he has described the European integration as resulting from national made choices “by national leaders who consistently pursued economic interests... - that evolved slowly in response to structural incentives in the global economy” (Moravcsik, 1998, p.3). Furthermore, he emphasizes that: “economic interest, relative power, and credible commitments- account for the form, substance, and timing of major steps toward European integration” (Moravcsik, 1998, p.4). Therefore, Moravcsik offers a more ‘realist’ *explanada* of the integration process and he strongly believes that national states are the primarily actors of international politics. They act rationally and have given preferences before entering the ‘bargaining table’ where they negotiate only and with the sole purpose of preserving their interests and increasing their benefits. In relation to the role and power of the institutions, Moravcsik states that governments created and delegated sovereignty to these institutions only “to secure the substantive bargains they had made” and “for the express purpose of committing one another to cooperate” (Moravcsik, 1998, p.4). *Ergo*, the states remain in full control of the decision-making process and are not constrained in their choices by these institutions.

Not only these institutions do not act independently of the states that created them, but they reflect the will and interests of those governments. One famous quote of Moravcsik gives us a ‘full’ meaning of what LI is all about: “There will never be a United States of Europe... I refuse to identify myself with those who promote the disappearance of the nation state...I seek instead a federation among strong nation-states” (Moravcsik, 1998, p. 472). In this sentence it is actually hard to discern if it is

only a wishful thinking by the part of the author or a realistic view of the present situation. Notwithstanding this 'slip' of Moravcsik, I still rely on the insights of LI for the purposes of finding a rationalist explanation of the current policy framework of EU versus the Western Balkans. Nevertheless, for the purposes of a comparative analysis, I also look at supranationalist empirics, mostly in the form of Commission drives of the integration process.

## **The current policies of the EU toward Western Balkans**

The enlargement of the EU in 2004 to twenty-five members, with several more countries to join in the course of the next decade, it radically changed the nature of the EU (Liebscher et al., 2004). This is reflected in the everyday business in Brussels, where an enlarged bureaucracy is keener to be criticized for a slow down of daily operations and where agreements are harder to negotiate and agreed upon. If so, the question then remains why the EU has expanded and has even recognized the possibility of further accession if conditions are met by prospective countries? Moravcsik provides an answer when he writes that: "Just as occurred in the past, leaders of the current EU members are promoting accession because they consider enlargement to be in their long-term economic and geopolitical interest" (Moravcsik & Vachudova, 2003, p.43). He and Vachudova also stress that EU is gaining from enlargement in both "geopolitical stabilization" and "economic revitalization" of the European borderlands which in turn, is likely "to diminish nationalist conflict and make illegal immigration more manageable and reduce the costs of managing a border with potentially disorderly neighbors" (Papa, 2006). In this regard, LI offers a rationale of the EU is actually acting on pursue of their interests when they make the decision to further enlarge or not. And if the governments of the member states think that it is worthy to further enlarge at a given time and period, they go ahead with it after deliberating the issue in the Council.

On the other hand, it is true that not all members show similar stances and attitudes toward enlargement; the ones that are to gain more are the border states, because of the vicinity with the prospective countries. This is why, as Schimmelfennig emphasizes: "EU border states have a strong interest in enlargement" (Schimmelfennig, 2003, p.178). And this in turn, explains why most of the Southern states, led by France, gave their support to Bulgaria, Romania and the Southeastern candidates, while the Northern countries were more supportive of Vishegrad and Baltic states (Schimmelfennig, 2003). Furthermore, if we look only from a rationalist LI perspective, the previous 2004 accession of the ten new EU members, we fail to grasp the whole picture. Economically speaking, the accession of these ten new countries was not a very successful story for the older member states. Breuss has analyzed,- even before the accession took place,- that "[o]n average, the EU will become even poorer: measured in PPP, GDP per capita will be lower by 9 per cent" (Breuss, 2004, p.296).

but e continues by also stressing that the EU Enlargement was a sound political project rather than an economic project. He mentions that "enlargement will end the political separation in Europe" (Breuss, 2004, p.296).

To shortly turn now at the applicant countries and the way they look at the dual partnership with member states, they often have found themselves in "weak negotiation position and accordingly have conceded much in exchange for membership" (Moravscik and Vachudova, 2003, p.44). Although both parties will both benefit from the enlargement, the applicants are going to benefit even more and for this reason they are willing to concede a lot in the pre-accession negotiation period. According to this rationale, the applicant countries are having short term costs, but will have long term benefits, whereas the contrary can be said for the member countries. In this light, we may summarize that it is in the EU interest to prolong the pre-accession period of the 'aspirant' countries and in a way, force them to adhere to the strict conditionalities, before any further step is to be taken. Considering also the fact that candidate members, -not to mention those that have acceded already-, have much more comparative advantage in terms of financial aid, compared to the associated countries, it becomes clear that the gap is deepening along the way and that the Western Balkan countries cannot be expected to perform miracles in order to catch up with the rest.

Nevertheless, realistic or not, the EU has already well understood that “the membership carrot has become one of the main instruments of the EU to support its normative power” (Juncos, 2005, p.93). Considering the past failures of the EU in the area, notably the failure to take the lead in the Yugoslavian wars, or to intervene in providing stability in Macedonia, not to mention Kosovo and the ‘inferiority’ in which has found itself as compared to the strong interventionist policy of the U.S., the EU has to (re)establish itself as a major player in its borders. As Juncos reminds us: “one of the lessons of the Bosnian conflict was that “real wars” had not disappeared from the continent and that they could erupt only a two-hour flight away from Brussels” (Juncos, 2005, p.95). In order to maintain the momentum and not to let these countries fall in ‘despair’ and become flourishing areas of organized crime and trafficking, the EU is playing a difficult role and handing out promises as the only efficient mean at hands. As Moore reminds us:

For Brussels, integrating the western Balkans means that there will be no “black hole” in the middle of the EU -- especially after Bulgaria and Romania join -- in which organized crime could flourish. By offering the prospect of membership, the EU has a powerful lever to influence precisely the kind of changes -- called “reforms” -- that it wants to see implemented (Moore, 2005).

Nevertheless, without institutional and financial back-up, the rhetoric of the EU, starting with the Thessaloniki summit and onward, can turn into a kind of “double-bluff, in which the EU pretends to offer membership, while the countries of the region pretend to implement reforms” (Lehne, 2004, pp. 121-122). This ‘empty’ rhetoric will serve for nothing, since at its best can only preserve the ‘hopeless’ status quo, whereas at its worst, it can provoke despair and unrest. On the other hand, “in the case of the EU’s policy of “stick and carrots,” the EU certainly uses more than persuasion and temptation; it aims to alter the political attitudes of other countries through the use of traditional forms of coercion and seduction” (Peshkopia, 2005, p.46). But, nevertheless the disputable policies of European Union, they remain the best hope to see things moving ahead and maintain the pace on reforms and democratization of the region. The European Commissioner for Enlargement, Olli Rehn, insisted that notwithstanding the failure of the draft constitution and the present political crisis, “the momentum for enlargement should continue based on the principles of consolidation, conditionality and communication” (European Policy Center Briefing, S34/05, 2005). Enlargement, according to Rehn is a great success story and one of the most important EU instrument for stabilizing the region and showing itself as a “civilian power” (European Policy Center Briefing, 2005). The policies of the Union toward the Western Balkans can thus be seen as a way to maintain the momentum, preserve the stability and increase the pace of reforms on one hand and (re)establish the EU as a strong, powerful player in the region. These features are in line with the moral values embedded on the institutional framework of the EU and a way of promotion as an influential world player.

## **EU (lack of) strategy towards the region**

Consensus has been established among European leaders over how the EU should proceed with enlargement. Speaking at the European Council on 14-15 December, Commission President Barroso,- repeating what Rehn had pointed out before,- explained that the pace of enlargement depends on the EU’s capacity to integrate new members. “Consensus is clearly emerging around what I call the three Cs, consolidation, conditionality and communication,” (Enlargement yes., p.1), he said.<sup>1</sup> While the door to enlargement remains open, candidate countries must respect all the criteria. In reality, it is hard for these

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<sup>1</sup> Here we may discern some kind of coherence in the public declarations of the EU officials that may qualify as a build-up strategy toward the Western Balkans.

countries to adapt the criteria on their own, without a 'push' from the EU. And if they ever succeed in this impossible task, they might grow in eurosceptics, like in the case of Croatia or Turkey.<sup>2</sup> The reasons might be different, but the economic revival, - reached after adhering to the rigid criteria set by the EU, - in association with political costs that accompanies the process, might transform themselves in powerful anti-European levers that may set the integration process back in years.

Now, this is just a speculation, but even if it is a least likely outcome, it should be considered in the EU's strategy toward the Balkans before the matters could precipitate. Also, considering the little economic cost that EU faces in the case of incorporation of the whole region (roughly the size of Romania) and the incentives that it can get, especially in terms of increasing its level of influence, should be enough for the EU to re-consider its current strategy (if any) toward the Western Balkans. One author has described the current enlargement process of the EU as stalled, because of "the reluctance of the older members to give up larger parts of their financial positions to the newcomers, while the latter should be satisfied with much less benefits than hoped for and have hard conditions to apply the *acquis communautaire*" (Balla, 2005). And since the hope for a fast integration has been waned, some of these candidate or associated countries have sided with the United States, "against some of the EU founding members who took a decided anti-US course" (Balla 2005).

Of course, it cannot be in the interest of the EU to let these countries shift their interests and its strategy has already taken some precautionary measures on preventing this. To be more explicit, the case of Kosovo, which is going soon to 'change hands' from the U.S. backed up UNMIK to an entirely European made up force, is a significant policy change in that regard that is part of coordinated moves from the EU to become more visible and engaged in the Western Balkans. Moreover, the EU has been leading the multinational efforts in BiH, through the incentive of prospective integration. More concretely, the Commission has submitted a Feasibility Study which has linked "the beginning of negotiations on an SAA with progress on 16 reform priorities" (Lehne, 2003, p.119). Also, the EU has helped build multiethnic peace and stability in Macedonia, granting this country the candidate status, notwithstanding some failures to comply with all the imposed criteria. This is in line with what Pippan has argued while talking about the possible course of action toward the region and has emphasized that "the accession of Albania, BiH, Croatia, FYROM and Serbia and Montenegro to the EU is a matter of when and how, rather than whether" (Pippan, 2004, p.228).

If all these policy approaches of the EU toward the region rise up to a clear cut strategy for the Western Balkans, or qualify only as snapshots that do not essentially try to change the status quo, this is a matter for debate and cannot be answered by taking an inductive analysis in such a short paper. Furthermore, the empirical evidence on occasions seems contradictory, because the EU has not stucked to a single, coherent and declared strategy. On the contrary, it has changed its position regarding the region, according to various economical, geo-political, cultural or other factorial considerations. Nevertheless, to conclude the argumentation about the strategy of the EU toward the region, I would like to mention the rationale offered by Judy Batt when she says that the EU does not have an 'exit strategy' for the Western Balkans; it has an 'accession strategy', as EU leaders have repeatedly affirmed. This strategy draws in part from the experience accumulated with the ten newest members of the EU, but "it cannot take for granted that its success will repeat itself in the Western Balkans" (Batt, 2004, p.125).

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<sup>2</sup> In the case of Croatia, Croats began to pay more attention to the high unemployment rates in some EU member states, the inflationary problems that followed the introduction of the euro currency and the heated debate over the proposed EU constitution. They also grew bitter because of the Gotovina affair. Whereas in Turkey's case I can quote its ex-foreign minister, Mr. Yasir Yasin when mentioning that "if the EU will not integrate us now, in the future we might not be interested." (Present author's notes in a conference about the future of Europe, organized in October 2006 in Budapest).

## Conclusion

This essay has sought to find an explanation of the current policies and strategy of the European Union toward the Western Balkans. In doing so, it has analyzed the actions and rhetoric of the EU, through the theoretical lenses of Liberal Intergovernmentalism and Neo-functionalism approaches. The author recognizes the shortcomings that both these European integration semi-theories have in fully explaining different aspects of the integration process and is well aware of the limited scope and space of this essay. Trying to maintain a logical flow in linking the theoretical insights with the empirical evidence, I tried to guard myself against falling into a fallacious trap while discussing the long-term policy and strategy of the EU. This is mainly because of the thin (divisional) line that exists between 'speculation' and 'argumentation'. I am mentioning this because of the actuality of the topic that I have chosen and the risk of falling into a nebulous endeavour in trying to find a rationale of the current policies and 'discover' the strategy of the EU toward the region. Moreover, it is not easy to set up a coherent analytical frame, while trying to maintain an utmost objectivity, in such a limited space. Nevertheless, these two sub-theories of European Studies can provide some very powerful tools in explaining different parts of the integration process and they both offer a pro-integrationist rationale of the Union's attitude toward the region.

They depart on the debate about the role and the strength of the supranational institutions that serve as drivers of the enlargement process, namely the Commission. Whereas the neo-functionalist view maintains that the Commission is behind the policy actions and serves as a powerful engine in promoting any strategy toward further enlargement, the intergovernmentalist position firmly upholds the central bargaining role of the member states in the negotiating table. This paper provided some empirics on this issue while stressing the 'supranationalist' statements of some Commissioners, (notably Rehn and Barroso), that have delineated a prospectus of the future stance that the EU would maintain with the Western Balkans. The European position will be conditionalized by the 'three Cs' principles and that fulfillment of the accession criteria on individual basis would be the first step that would pave the way for these countries to integrate themselves. Furthermore, I argued that the economic reasons are not the determinants of the process and provided evidence while comparing and contrasting the Western Balkan countries with both CEECs and the newest members of the EU, notably Romania.

On the other hand, the evidence provided in this paper, can also be explained through the negotiation power that remains on the hands of the governments of the member states and how they make rationalist driven decisions that serve their own ends. In the end, the European Council comes out with general guidelines, like the ones established by the Copenhagen summit in 1993, that are to be followed and 'translated' into concrete policy actions from the Commission. And is the Council who has the last word on Enlargement and can vote on further incorporation of new member states only through unanimity. Therefore, we can conclude that both these theoretical approaches can serve to understand the current politics and politics of the EU toward the Western Balkans and both of them can be used to find a common set of preferences that may qualify as a strategy of the Union toward this region.

All in all, the European Union has temporarily 'frozen' its further enlargement toward the Western Balkans for internal problems that relate to the structural absorption capacity of it for the moment and the provisions of the Treaty of Nice that call for a re-structuring, after the number reaches twenty-seven. But on the other hand, the EU has shifted the main part of the responsibility toward these aspirant countries and has repeatedly made clear that only the fulfillment of the conditions would qualify them for accession. Individual evaluation on the merits has left the ball on the Western Balkans' side and concrete reforms are awaited from them. The compliance with these reforms is a *sine qua non* for these countries if they ever want to see the 'green light' for accession into the EU, although this is only half of the story. The other half is the willingness of the European Union to integrate these countries and to basically give signs of this willingness, notwithstanding its internal divisions or absorption capabilities, in order not to leave this region to its fate and further succumb or deteriorate. This will provide a much

needed impetus for the Western Balkan countries to push ahead with the rest of the reforms and democratize at a faster pace, while simultaneously complying with other conditions.

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# A COMPARATIVE STUDY: THE PERCEPTION OF EU ENLARGEMENT IN FRANCE AND MACEDONIA

Lydie Gerboin

## INTRODUCTION

It is easy to guess that making a comparative study between France and Macedonia on a subject like enlargement to European Union will lead to different conclusions for both countries, since they have not many similarities apart from their belonging to the European continent. France is, after Germany, the largest European country in terms of population (about 63 millions) and has always been one of the major actors on the international scene. As a founding member of the European Union, the country had to deal with the issue of enlargement as early as the first accession negotiations with Great Britain in 1961, creating, almost every time, a heated intern debate. Now, in 2007, the European Union is composed of 27 member states and an increasing number of French are becoming skeptical about further enlargement of the EU, especially to Turkey.

Macedonia, as one of the smallest European country in terms of area and population, has been historically part of the biggest empires (Byzantine, Roman, Ottoman) or of a federation, but only became a sovereign and independent state sixteen years ago, gaining international recognition at the same time. Thus, its place on the international scene is recent, even though since 1991 Macedonia has joined major international organizations like the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the World Trade Organization or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Since 2005 Macedonia is an official candidate for joining the European Union, and has also applied for NATO membership. The perception of Macedonia regarding EU enlargement is that of a small country in the middle of its economic transition, which has nothing to loose by tempting to join the European Union family, while France's prerogatives within the EU might be threatened if EU enlarges. As a consequence, each of them having different histories, economic situations, internal problems, their relation to EU and their perception of EU enlargement can only be different.

The last European summit that took place in June 2007 has led with very much difficulty to the settlement of an Intergovernmental conference aiming at drafting a new European treaty. This "mini treaty" should reform the European institutions so that the decision-making process can work with 27 members. Even though agreements were found, especially with Poland and Britain, it also clearly showed that some European nations were not ready to give up their prerogatives. It showed however that there was a strong willing for the European Union to progress after the French and Danish "no" to the referendum on the constitutional treaty that led Europe to a dead-centre. What is more, with the election of new French president Nicolas Sarkozy in May 2007 and the appointment of Bernard Kouchner as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, France is likely to be very active and influential regarding many international and European issues. Thus one can reasonably expect France to lead a key role regarding the enlargement process, especially during the French European presidency in 2008. At the same time Macedonia has been granted status of official country since 2005 and is waiting now for a clear date for the beginning of the accession talks.

In this general European context, such a comparative study is particularly relevant in order to have a better understanding of what is at stake for France if EU enlarges and how the French perceives a further enlargement, compared to the perception of enlargement in Macedonia, a non-member state strongly willing to join the European Union. Such a comparison can help take hindsight and bring moderation to ideas found in discourses of politicians or in public opinion, for a more objective approach to enlargement.

*What are the general tendencies regarding enlargement in both countries?*

Surveys have been led in each country regarding the support to EU enlargement, the results being closely linked to the perception of the European Union in various topics as well as the perception regarding the living standards in the country.

The last Eurobarometer poll<sup>1</sup> published in June 2007 shows that only 32% of the French are in favor of further EU enlargement in the forthcoming years, which represents one of the lowest results together with Germany (34%), Luxembourg (25%) and Austria (28%), the average figure among EU member states being 49% in favor of enlargement. A survey led in February-March 2004<sup>2</sup>, that is, just after the largest enlargement of European history and one year before the referendum on the European Treaty, showed that this strong skepticism regarding further enlargement was already present, with the same figure of 32% in favor and 47% against. Moreover the French also expressed very weak support to the new enlargement with 47% opposed to it. In October 2003<sup>3</sup>, just before the 2004 enlargement, a majority of people were in favor of further enlargement, despite a big increase of those against it. The poll showed that the younger, more educated, intellectual professions and activities were the most favorable to a new enlargement.

In January 2006<sup>4</sup> however, the opinions were less contrasted: 49% thought the 2004 enlargement had been a bad thing and 47% a good one. Among those who perceived this enlargement as a bad thing were people above 40 years old, those who has ended their education before 21, the inhabitants living in rural areas, and eventually those politically closer to the right-wing parties. In January 2006, those who had voted against the constitutional treaty mostly rejected the integration of Romania and Bulgaria, while a majority of French supported it but on a rather long-term perspective. The support regarding enlargement to Turkey and Croatia was more contrasted: if 38% of the people thought Turkey should never integrate the EU, 59% considered the accession of Turkey on a short or long term perspective. French people seemed in favor of Croatia joining EU even though, most of them declared they preferred it to happen in several years. Again the results showed that those who had rejected the constitutional treaty were the less favorable to enlargement to Turkey and Croatia. Thus it cannot be denied that French people have been expressing, for the past years, some reluctance regarding further enlargement, especially on a short-term period. They seem however in favor of it as long as it happens in several years. The opinions are still rather contrasted, depending on several factors such as age, education, residence area or political tendencies.

As far as Macedonia is concerned, a poll realized in June 2007 showed a strong enthusiasm about the accession of Macedonia to EU with 95% of the people interviewed in favor of it, a figure that only slightly fluctuated since for the past four years. When asked about when this could happen, the average answer is within 7.3 years, whereas in March 2006, Macedonians would rather estimate the country to integrate the European Union within 9.3 years. These results tend to show an increasing enthusiasm and optimism among the Macedonian public opinion, especially following last year's parliamentary elections. In fact, the number of citizens who believed that Macedonia was moving in the right direction (34%) outpaced for the first time the pessimist citizens.

These attitudes towards enlargement cannot be separated from the perception of the European Union as well as the internal situation of the country. In the case of Macedonia, the same 2007 study reveals that Macedonians are still very much preoccupied by the state of the economy, with 37% of them stating their economic situation was worse (and 20% better) while there were 68% of them in the beginning of 2003. Almost three quarter stated their life was better before the breakup of Yugoslavia, an attitude which is often heard in Macedonia by elder people who are nostalgic of this

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<sup>1</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 67, Public opinion in the European Union, European commission, June 2007

<sup>2</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 61, Public opinion in the European Union, European Commission, Spring 2004

<sup>3</sup> Poll BVA-SIG, The French, the European construction and the European enlargement, October 2003

<sup>4</sup> Flash Eurobarometer 178, What Europe? The European Construction for the French opinion, European Commission, March 2006

period that provided them with employment and allowed them to travel wherever and whenever they wanted. This nostalgia could explain that, for more than half of the Macedonians (55%), unemployment is considered as the most serious problem facing the country today, but also that since November 2006, abolishing visas is the most important foreign policy issue for 38% of the people, before recognition of the name. Thus, the link between entering the EU and the hopes for better economic situation and living standards can be firstly made.

Regarding France, the case is not very different, since, even though there is a general enthusiasm about the European construction, 54% of the people thinking that France has benefited from belonging to the European Union in 2007. However, like in Macedonia, unemployment was, in autumn 2006, the very first preoccupation of the French, a strong majority of them judging the employment and economic situation bad or very bad. Moreover, the French consider the effects of the European integration as positive when it comes to the influence of France in the world and the national security, which contrasts with the effects on employment and economy where the opinions are much more mixed.

As a consequence it seems that the general enthusiasm over the European integration in Macedonia is linked to the hope for a better economic and employment situation, while most French people, while recognizing they have benefited from the European construction, express feelings that it did not have very positive effects on priority issues for them like employment. Almost three quarter (72%) of the French thought, in March 2006, that a new EU enlargement would create problems on the national labor market, and only 21% thought previous EU enlargements had decreased the prices of many products. Once more it appears through this poll that the weaker people (elder people, less educated, unemployed or the lower incomes) expressed most fears of a new enlargement.

### ***France: what reasons could be put forward to explain these tendencies?***

- Historical perception of enlargement in France (until 2004)

“Community enlargement should not, as is so often the case, be viewed only in terms of the risks.”<sup>5</sup>

Throughout the history of the European construction, France's role has been paradoxical. As a matter of fact, the country usually played a leading role in the European construction but was also one of the strongest detractors. France was a founding member of the European coal and steel community which led to the drafting of the Treaty of Rome in 1957. The first project of European defense community, an idea suggested by the French famous europeist Jean Monnet, was ratified by France's five European partners (future founding members of the EEC), but failed to obtain ratification by the French parliament in 1954, because of Gaullist and communist fears. Another clear example is that of the European constitutional treaty. The French former President Valery Giscard d'Estaing was the president of the convention responsible for drafting a constitution for the European Union, which failed to be ratified by the French population in 2005, leading to the paralysis of the European Union.

While France gave birth to the most famous europeists (Monnet, Schuman) which played an influential part in the creation of the European Union, and while it has often been an engine, together with Germany, to make EU progress (as has been the case in June 2007 with Sarkozy being very active in the negotiations for the simplified treaty), there has been a historical reluctance before each enlargement that would not end beneficial or that would threaten France's prerogatives. In January 1963, the General de Gaulle, which favored a political cooperation between sovereign states

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<sup>5</sup> Speech delivered by Jean-François Poncet, French Foreign Minister, 5th December 1979 in front of the French National assembly

and rejected any supranational integration, expressed its firm opposition to the accession of Great Britain in the European Common Market (CEE). He did not trust the firm relationship between Britain and USA, wanted to reaffirm the autonomy of France's nuclear defense as opposed to USA, and feared the new application would jeopardize the Common agriculture policy. He vetoed the British application twice (1963, 1967), until it finally integrates in 1973, under the French president Pompidou.

France supported the accession of Greece mostly for political reasons, since the strengthening of the democratic regime was an absolute priority and it affirmed the European presence in Eastern Mediterranean. In terms of economy, France was not threatened by Greece since it had long been exposed to Greek competition and the treaty of accession comprised safeguards for the French interests. Moreover, Greece's economy growing rapidly, it meant new openings for the French agriculture and industry, and an easier access to Greek market.

France first opposed the accession of Spain and Portugal since, against a background of economic recession, there were much concerns about Spanish agricultural products flooding the European market already threatened by its own surplus production. Many farmers in Italy violently demonstrated their opposition, and the farming lobby as well as communists and Gaullist members of parliament put pressure on the government to slow down the negotiations with Spain. In a period of high unemployment rate, there were many concerns that free movement of workers would lead to an excessive wave of emigration or an excessive pool of labor in EEC. Thus real skepticism and even reluctance was expressed and relayed by the Medias, which focused in the serious economic consequences, bringing the idea that the main winner would be the powerful companies of Northern Europe making larger profits out of a cheap workforce with a weaker social protection.

The fourth enlargement to Austria, Finland and Sweden (1995) did not provoke major negative reaction since these countries were small, democratic, and traditionally neutral. Moreover they had a high standard of living with a GDP and per capita income among the highest in Europe, so they did not need community subsidies. The main difficulty that arose was the strengthening of the structures of the European Union so that it could cope with an increase in the number of member states, but the EU institutions were then adjusted so as to accommodate the three new member states.

- Context: the last two enlargements and the referendum on the constitutional treaty

The 'no' to the referendum on the constitutional treaty and the accession of twelve countries, ten of which being part of western and central Europe and having gone through an economic transition since the collapse of communism in 1989, brought an atmosphere of general skepticism to the benefits of the European Union for the French population. If, for the Eastern Europe countries, the period before accession must have seemed long, it is not the same for France and many other member states. Indeed the public opinions seemed to realize suddenly that Europe was going to enlarge whereas the enlargement had been planned at the Copenhagen summit in 1993. They had the feeling that they were forced to accept an enlargement which was badly prepared, and felt the EU could not possibly integrate ten new members without explanations.

The 'no' to the European constitution in 2005 in France (55% against) was not directly linked to the rejection of these new countries, even though they were presented by some politicians as threats for the western European social model. Indeed eurobarometer polls found that only 3% of the no-voters in France cited 'opposition to enlargement' as a motivation in their vote. Beyond the fact that the constitution was too complex for non-specialists, the main arguments developed against it were that economic liberalism was 'graved in the marble', the free market being written in such a document as a 'constitution' fixing the economic orientations of the EU forever. Moreover some arguments said that the treaty would lead to a reduction of public services, which, in a country like

France, is not easily accepted. The image of the 'polish plumber', coming to lower the wages of the workers, became the symbol of the polemic surrounding the debate in the constitution, referring to a very unpopular project of directive presented by Fritz Bolkestein that aimed to liberalize the European service market.

According to the analyst Pascal Perrineau, national concerns were actually the leading issues in the media coverage and the voters' motivations. There were very few debates on the first two parts of the constitution that were specifically European (the charter of fundamental rights and the reform of the institutions), the discussions being focused on Franco French concerns links to unemployment or the future of the social protection. This nationalization of the vote is closely linked to a deep social and political crisis. In May 2005 in France three elements were gathered that could only lead to a refusal of the European referendum: the unpopular government of JP Raffarin, the strong social and economic pessimism (high unemployment rate and social movements) and a strong heterophobia illustrated by the concern over professional mobility in EU with 25 member states (the polish plumber) as well as the omnipresence of the Turkish issue. So, in France, Europe is becoming the 'scapegoat' against which euroscepticism and nationalism can express.

However it would be wrong to say that euro-skepticism is generalized in France. The referendum has at least made clearer the distinctions between the different European projects, showing there is not one European vision that gathers all the citizens. One can thus distinguish between those with a sovereign vision, very euro-skeptical, concerned with the decline of France, reject any kind of supranational entity and favor state cooperation. This vision gathers the extreme right-wing parties which despise Brussels bureaucracy. The liberal vision, supported by Nicolas Sarkozy, considers that the goal of EU is to change the French social model so as to decrease the unemployment rate. The liberals consider that Europe must help France adapting to the new framework of globalization in order to strengthen its competitiveness. Social democrats think EU is a means to control globalization and want to balance the market by bringing social aims to the economic ones. Finally the vision of the extreme left-wing parties and the communist party is anti capitalistic: they tend to refuse competition, want to maintain public monopolies and fight against liberal globalization.

Thus, even though there still is a general enthusiasm over the European construction in France, the public opinion is divided over the main goals and benefits of the European Union, and so European enlargement. The most extreme parties have not hesitated to make Brussels responsible for many internal problems, while there has been few discourses stating the advantages of the country being EU member state. Eventually, beyond the debate about the consequences of the EU policies, the major problem in France is a lack of information and clear explanations to the citizens.

- The circulation of the information about EU and EU enlargement in France

A poll realized in mars 2003, less than a year after the 'no' to the referendum, revealed that more than two third of the French feel they are not well informed on the EU. They think French politicians and Medias should talk more about EU. It also showed that those who rejected the treaty felt they were less informed on the EU, because they were generally less politicized. Another survey led in autumn 2006 showed that more than 60% of the French were rarely or never looking for information about EU. When asked about the running of the institutions, 50% gave the correct answers in average, but it appeared that only 43% knew that the European deputies were directly elected by the EU citizens. Moreover, the poll revealed that the French overestimated the operating costs of EU with 23% thinking the most important part of the community budget went to the administrative expenses, whereas in 2006 43% of the budget was dedicated to agriculture and only 6% to administrative costs.

This deficit of information on EU in general can explain the strong debate when it comes to adopt a highly symbolic document like a constitution. In autumn 2006, 57% of the French declared they were interested by national issues while 40% were interested by European issues. In a report drafted in 2005, shortly after the reject of the constitution, the French deputy Michel Herbillon denounces the failure of the communication policies on EU because of modest budget resources, late campaigns, a limited impact and a context not very favorable for pedagogy. Indeed, the natural mediators of the EU information, that is, the elected representatives, the Medias and the teachers are faltering. The deputy insists on the fact that on general the information campaigns on Europe are too late, since they happen once the political decision is taken. For example the enlargement has not been anticipated and the information campaign on enlargement only started a few weeks before the accession, while the enlargement schedule was known for a long time. Thus there is a time lag between the moment of the decision (Turkey has been a candidate country since 1999) and the moment of the information, causing frustration and incomprehension.

Concerning the potential enlargements to the Balkan countries or Turkey, it is clear that all the debate is focused on the Turkish application, the Balkan countries being completely left apart. The lack of knowledge of the Balkans is obvious, since the only information that are given on the region deals with either the status of the Kosovo, the trial of criminals from the wars in Bosnia or Croatia, or the problems of corruption and trafficking in these countries. As a consequence, the general impression is that the Balkan countries are too poor, not stable enough and not ready to join the EU. This lack of knowledge is a particularly important to underline since incomprehension is often the source of rejection and fear of the unknown.

As far as Turkey is concerned, there is a real debate concerning whether or not it should access the European Union. This country seems to be the only issue really relevant concerning enlargement in discourses of politicians, but also in the Medias and among the people.

### ***Macedonia: EU accession as a priority goal for the country***

- Historical relations with EU: a perspective from a non-member state

Until its independence in 1991, Macedonia, as a Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, has maintained close contacts with member states of what was then the European Community. As it was not compulsory to get a visa, it was rather easy to travel through Europe. Like Serbia and Croatia, the country played an important role as a transit area between Greece –already a member of EU- and Austria, Hungaria and Slovenia as well as other farer countries. These close and ancient contacts with the current territory of European Union, especially since the accession of Bulgaria, is one of the reasons explaining the popular enthusiasm for a quick integration in EU, even though the country is divided on the linguistic policy and political preferences.

But the relations between Macedonia as an independent country and the EU are still very recent. International recognition did not come immediately after independence, partly because of Greece which considered the name “Macedonia” as belonging exclusively to the Greek heritage. The dispute led to a Greek trade embargo against Macedonia in February 1994, which had consequences on the Macedonian economy, and still have consequences today as far as European integration is concerned, since Macedonia is a candidate country and Greece already a European member state.

Even though it had to face a rather unfriendly regional environment, Macedonia was the only former federal republic that did not take part in the Yugoslavian conflict. The first contractual relation between EU and Macedonia were initiated in 1996 when the PHARE program on restructuring the economy was being signed. A cooperation agreement was signed in 1997 and in 2001 Macedonia was the first country in the Balkans to formalize a Stabilization and Association Agreement with EU in

2001. However, the conflicts that broke in 2001 between the Albanian minority and the Macedonian government revealed the difficulties for the country to cope with its mosaic of ethnics, cultures and religions. The first annual report of the Commission on the Stabilization and Association Process stated that the conflict in 2001 had a largely negative impact on the Macedonian economy as well as on the democracy and the administrative capacity to take forward the process of reform. It has to be reminded that, together with NATO, EU played a key role of mediation to pacify Macedonia and get a peace agreement (the Ohrid Agreement).

It was during the 2003 summit in Thessaloniki that all the western Balkans countries including Macedonia received the promise of accession, in a long-term period, to the EU. In December 2005, only four years after the end of the conflict, Macedonia became the second non member state Balkan country to be granted the official status of candidate to the accession. Since then, the country is still waiting, and strongly asking for the opening of the accession negotiations.

- General enthusiasm among the Macedonian population

'The prospect of EU entry is a cohesive force in Macedonian society'- Professor Edward Moxon-Browne

As already said previously, 95% of the Macedonian population are in favor of the European integration, also a top priority for the government. Public opinion across ethnic and political divides is strongly supportive for EU accession. For the Macedonians, integrating EU means the promise of better economic and living standards. In fact, an opinion poll conducted in June 2007 shows that since December 2005, when Macedonia was granted the status of official candidate, people thinking that Macedonia economy will get better in the next two years have outpaced those who think it will get worse.

It is highly understandable that the Macedonian population wishes to join EU since, as most of the other European countries acknowledges, it is rightly European, on geographical, historical and cultural terms. So what is at stake with the Macedonian application differs in many ways with the Turkish application. Indeed there is a strong debate on the question to know if Turkey is a European country or no. For Macedonia, beyond the hope for better living conditions, the symbolic aspect of integrating EU is very important. Europe is very present in the popular Balkan mentality. So there are no reasons why the Balkan Peninsula would be out of the European community since the region, as a basis of the Greek antiquity, is the birthplace of modern civilization.

The accession of Bulgaria, a border country, has moreover been felt as good news for Macedonians, since it was perceived as new possibilities of economic development for the eastern part of the country. On this field the politicians seemed to be more optimistic than the citizens, who feared that the Bulgarian integration would mean a reduction in trade or in the free movement of people, capital and goods between the two countries, since there were negative consequences of the accession of the Central European countries on Macedonia. For politicians, the Bulgarian accession will be positive not only for the bank sector (there are more than 35 foreign banks in Bulgaria) but also for the development of eastern Macedonia, with the possible delocalization of Bulgarian dairy firms in Macedonia.

The Government discourses also relay this general support for EU enlargement. In an interview realized in July 2007, Gabriela Konevska-Trajkovska, the vice-president responsible for European integration in the government, reveals her optimism following the success of the June summit in

finding a compromise on the Intergovernmental conference mandate for the reform of the institutions. According to her, the positive atmosphere prevailing in EU will be reflected in its enlargement policy, and she strongly hopes the country will receive a positive recommendation (for the beginning of the negotiation talks) by the end of 2007-beginning of 2008. She also believes that the Macedonians are really willing to support the necessary reforms in order to become part of the European family. Even if she is aware that the country still has to work hard to fulfill political and economic criteria, she also believes it is ready for negotiations. In an article written by the minister of foreign affairs Antonio Milososki, he considers that Macedonia is managing its transition well. His message is clearly to assert that Macedonia could be ready for joining EU in 2010, and that enlargement fatigue is not a problem since, as Macedonia is a small country, EU could easily integrate it, sending a positive signal to the rest of the region. Analyzing the member of governments' discourses clearly shows their optimism for the country's future, and their strong hope for a quick settlement for the beginning of the negotiation talks.

### ***France: issues raised by the enlargement of the European Union***

- The main French concerns

The main French popular concerns raised by the last two enlargements are closely linked to an "enlargement fatigue" also visible in other member states. The whole dynamics that had been the engine of the previous enlargement is weakening; the enthusiasm that followed the collapse of the Berlin Wall has seriously reduced. These enlargements have raised many popular questions linked to current hot topics like economic globalization, the combined impact of legal and clandestine immigration, demographic changes, relation to Islam, security challenges in the close European neighborhood.

The preoccupations of the average people are related to the economic side of enlargement and to their confidence in the internal situation of the country. The farmers fear a cut in subsidies after Poland, a country with an important agricultural sector, accessed EU. Many workers from the industrial sector fear delocalization of their firms to countries where the labor market is cheaper like Romania or Bulgaria. Employees of the third economic sector have expressed their concern over liberalization of the public services that could mean the end of small public facilities in rural areas (this was actually the main campaign theme of Gérard Schivardi, a candidate for the French presidential election). This skepticism is closely linked to the confidence in the internal economic situation of the country. The last Euro barometer (june 2007) shows that only 26% of the French people think the economic situation is good. If the living standards and the unemployment rate do not change in a positive manner over the next years, it is possible that the reluctance towards the next enlargements (to the Balkans, most probably) increase, even though the concerns are mostly related to the internal governance of the country.

The enlargement to Bulgaria and Romania had a contrasted welcome. For Sylvie Goulard, the president of the French European Movement, this enlargement to former communist country is a good thing, even though both sides were maybe not perfectly ready for it. According to her the decision to let them integrate has a political character, it was impossible to keep them waiting, even though they have still to make a lot of progress. Even though the institutional limits of a system that was not made for 27 countries have been reached, the integration of these two countries is an important achievement if we consider their situation twenty years ago. According to her, it was not very welcome in France because of the "depressed" climate, whereas the Germans have well understood what meant the end of the cold war. Moreover they will become more prosperous and all the EU member states will benefit from it. On the other hand, the journalist Jean-Michel Demetz expresses his disappointment that their integration has almost been decided secretly (whereas it has been prepared and negotiated for about fourteen years). For him, the European political model has

been challenged since the failure of the constitutional treaty, and the enlargement to ten new members was probably too early. So this new enlargement happened whereas the two main engines of the European dynamics- enlargement and deepening- are broken down. Charles Grant, the director of the Centre for the European Reform, also warned that if Bulgaria and Romania happen to be unable to manage the European programs and policies, and try to embezzle European funds through organized crime, the whole enlargement process will suffer. The consequences for the rest of the Balkans, who are waiting for the determination of their future, could be disastrous, and Europe would not win anything at the end.

Other EU experts and academics have also raised the problem, noticing the frequency of the enlargements and the growing number of states, from six to twenty-seven, which challenges the running of the institutions. They have raised important questions that are related to the European project itself: between enlargement and deepening, what should be achieved first? Should the rule of unanimity be kept with 27 member states? Should the institutions be reformed before or after enlargement? (Up to now it was always realized before)? Will European integration be possible with 27 or 30 member states? Are the newcomers "Euro compatible"? Will EU be able to absorb new countries indefinitely? Where do the European boundaries stop? All these problems are linked with the topic of enlargement and far from being answered yet.

Enlargement to Turkey is the most debated topic as far as enlargement is concerned. The new president Nicolas Sarkozy have clearly said he was not in favour of the Turkish integration but rather if a "euromediterranean union". Former president Jacques Chirac favoured the integration of Turkey, because he feared the country might develop integrism if the European door is closed in front of it. The Turkish accession would, according to his views, extend peace and democracy, while Ankara would bring incredible power to the EU facing other important regional poles. In France the opinions are really diversified regarding this topic, since many arguments can be used in favour or against the accession of Turkey. For instance it is true that part of Turkish territory is in Europe, but the 2/3 of the country is in Near-East. Turkey has had long historical relations with the European continent, but also with Asia. The usual argument against are the absence of European traditions or values and the Muslim heritage, whereas Europe has a Christian heritage. So its position astride between the European civilization and the Arabian/Asian civilization makes it a complex case. But what is sure is that it is an official candidate country and the perspective of enlargement has been existing since 1963.

- What can be expected in the future?

Concerning enlargement to Turkey, one of the most controversial issues about enlargement, the election of Nicolas Sarkozy in May 2007 has changed the official French position. In fact Jacques Chirac was in favor of the accession of Turkey into EU while Nicolas Sarkozy, as said previously, have brought the idea of a Mediterranean Union (that would gather countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea), an idea rejected by the Turkish authorities. He has agreed to let the talks between EU and Turkey continue but has however succeeded in blocking one important chapter in the negotiation talks that opened in July 2007 (on economic and monetary policy) since France threatened to oppose its veto. On this issue, if France goes on using its veto to block further negotiation chapter, it could upset the Nordic countries, Spain, the UK and Germany who want the negotiation accession to continue. Maybe Sarkozy will be reminded by Merkel, Barroso and politicians from other EU countries that EU has taken the pledge to let Turkey in when it fulfils the necessary criteria. The accession process would help Turkey to become more stable and prosperous. Some analysts in Turkey fear that blocking new chapters on the grounds that it would bring Turkey closer to full membership will derail the whole process while giving credibility to Turkish nationalists. Two things can be encouraging for Turkey: the fact Sarkozy's other European plans are controversial

(more protectionist trade policies) should bring him to be more careful on a fight over Turkey. What is more, he appointed Bernard Kouchner, who is openly in favor of the Turkish application, as a minister for Foreign affairs. Eventually the issue of the Turkish integration will depend on the evolution of EU in the next 10 years. If EU turns to evolve in a hard core surrounded by a large market, then Turkish can integrate. In the current state of affairs EU has to strengthen before integrating such a state as Turkey which is still in political, cultural and demographic transition.

Concerning enlargement to the rest of Europe and especially the Balkan countries, the position of Sarkozy is clear: he declared several times that EU enlargement had to be suspended as long as the institutions were not reformed, since the absorption capacity of the EU was not endlessly extendible. But for him a distinction has to be done between the countries who are to develop a privileged partnership (euro - Asian and Mediterranean countries) and those whose future integration to EU is not a problem for anyone. He meant all the countries clearly belonging to the European continent that will be joining whenever they want (Norway, Switzerland, and Island) or whenever they are able to (Balkans). The European council of December 2006 decided as well of a pause on the enlargement process after the integration of Romania and Bulgaria. However, since the last European summit in June 2007 when an agreement was found on the opening of an intergovernmental conference aimed at drafting the final version of a new European treaty, the reform of the institutions is in progress. Even though the issue of enlargement was not dealt with directly, the aim of the new treaty is to facilitate the running of the EU with 27 member states and diversified fields of action. The goal is to be working with institutions adapted to an enlarged Europe and more democratic, since up to now the EU had been running with institutions mostly inherited from the EEC with 6 member states. The Balkan countries thus are bound to join the EU when they are ready; however, as far as France is concerned, a referendum is from now on necessary to ratify the accession of new countries. The risk that the French fears compromise new enlargement exists.

### ***Macedonia: confronting hopes and expectations to obstacles and challenges on the road to EU***

It is rather common in Macedonia to hear middle-aged and elder people who have lived in the communist time talk with nostalgia about the good old time when the Macedonians had a better lifestyle under Tito and Yugoslavia, when they could travel much easier, they all had a job and did not have to pay for medical care... A survey led in June 2007 shows that 71% of the people think their life was better before the breakup of Yugoslavia. Since gaining its independence from the former Yugoslavia in 1991, Macedonia has faced a troublesome political and economic transition. The symbolic value of the EU is clearly important for the Macedonians: since 1957, EU enlargement has consolidated democracy, human rights and respect for the rule of law across the continent, as well as extended the area of peace and stability. In economic terms it has helped to increase prosperity and competitiveness (for example with the case of Spain or Ireland). Thus it is understandable that joining the EU means the prospect of better living standards, political stability, less unemployment with the opening of markets, an increase in foreign direct investment.

Another benefit the people would gain when integrating EU is the resolution of the visa problem, which is psychologically a crucial issue and seems to be one of the first short-term interests of EU accession for the Macedonians. With the last European enlargement, Balkan countries like Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Serbia remain locked in a shrinking economic space, since, as the new guardians of the European Union's frontiers, Romania and Bulgaria had to tighten their borders in order to protect the common European space. There is a risk that EU enlargement might lead to a 'ghettoization' of the Balkans. For some analysts, many of the European Union's current policies on the Balkans and its visa policy in particular, have far-reaching economic consequences. For example it makes it much more difficult, if not impossible, for families in eastern Macedonia that were living on trading of foodstuffs between Macedonia and

Bulgaria to conduct their business. Regular business trip across EU member states can require multiple visas, which requires many documents, time and money. And these are just a few examples of the problem the visa policy entail, let alone the psychological humiliation that is part of the process. In April 2007, the EU and Macedonia concluded a visa facilitation agreement that, when it comes into force, will decrease visa fee rate and accelerate application procedures for the Macedonians who want to travel within the EU territory. It represented a first step towards visa-free travel even though before that the country will have to improve significantly, in particular its capacity to fight organized crime, corruption and illegal migration and to strengthen border control. A survey led in 2007 reveals that abolishing visas is since January 2007 the most important foreign policy issue facing Macedonia for 38% of the population, before the issue over the name.

In October 2006, new Macedonian Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski said his country wanted to join EU in 2013, that is, in six years. While calling on the EU to set a date for starting negotiations next year, he also admitted the disappointment of Macedonians over the growing anti-enlargement atmosphere linked to the Union's absorption capacity, which was not a reason since Macedonia had only two millions inhabitants. The disappointment of the Macedonians reveals they are maybe not aware that the implementation of reforms, and not the Union's absorption capacity, is the major restraint to Macedonia's faster integration, especially since the European institutions are being reformed. The almost unanimous support for EU accession reveals the Macedonians are not well informed on what EU accession really means. The impression is that EU is seen as an Eldorado, which is far from being a realistic approach of EU. In fact, when the visa regime will disappear and people will be able to travel easily in the EU area, the EU support will inevitably decrease because of the increasing awareness of the reality of EU. There is the risk that, when comes the time to adopt and implement all the European norms necessary for the economic, political and legal adaptation of the country, it wont be easily accepted by the Macedonians, all the more so since their will be repercussions on the everyday budget with the increase of taxes. So the realistic approach to support for EU accession should be 60 to 65%. However the Macedonians seem interested in the EU affairs and are willing to have information about it. At least thirty persons daily visit the EU Information Centre in Skopje, and the EU issue is constantly treated in the Medias.

As a consequence, Nikola Gruevski's hopes for Macedonia to join EU in 2013 seem optimistic, but even though it was the case, it does not really help Macedonia to focus on the efforts to make. In fact, it's up to the European commission to assess, in its annual report on the progress of the country, if the country has met all the standards. So, the date to start the negotiation talks will be given when Macedonia has implemented the necessary *acquis*. For the moment Macedonia is not ready for that, since numerous obstacles still remain on Macedonia's road to EU. Many reforms have been implemented since the Macedonian application in 2004 and this have been acknowledged by the European Commission, for example in December 2005 when Macedonia was granted the status of candidate, recently with the launch of the visa facilitation and readmission agreement with the EU, and, most importantly, the implementation of the Ohrid agreement as well as the fruitful consultations between the government and the opposition on the use of the Albanian language in public institutions.

But, even if the perspective of the Macedonian accession is ensured, many Macedonians are probably not aware that the criteria to join EU are very strict and very technical. The annual report drafted by the European Commission on the progress made by the country criteria by criteria testifies of the complexity of the European accession on practical cases such as the standard of the civil aviation system, construction and maintenance of the railway system... Thirty-three chapters examine the country's ability to assume the obligations of membership, that is, the *acquis* as expressed in the treaties, the secondary legislation and the policies of the union. It also analyses the country's administrative capacity to implement the *acquis*.

In 2005, the European council decided to grant Macedonia candidate status as an acknowledgement of the implementation of the Ohrid agreement framework, but also as an incentive to continue implementing further reforms. The council also decided that negotiations for accession will be opened when Macedonia has fulfilled its obligations to a suitable extent under the Stabilization and Accession Agreement. The short-term and medium-term priorities were also given. The opening of the negotiations will not happen this year, the commission being unable to make a favorable report since all the five short-term priorities have not been implemented, among which the police and judicial reform, which also concerns the problems of corruption and organized crime. Legislation have been adopted on these issues over the last year, however it is not sufficient since the implementation also has to be monitored, which will be impossible to assess before the next report of the Commission in November 2007. Regarding the respect of the obligations of the SAA, reforms on intellectual propriety or liberalization are still not totally implemented. The reforms regarding the electoral code and the registration system of new companies have been implemented. However, as long as the five key priorities are not fulfilled, the negotiations cannot start. Administration is mobilizing, for example in the police and justice fields the means are progressively increasing. There's also an increasing mobilization in some agricultural sectors, the business world, universities... The internal political crisis also added another preoccupation, since it revealed a crisis in the institutions, political stability being one of the EU criteria and one of the main reasons for receiving the candidate status.

#### What can be expected in the future?

The perspective of Macedonia to integrate EU is certain. The European Union has already integrated the Balkans in many European policies which precede their accession and make it clear that EU and Macedonia are interdependent. Only the Macedonians can decide on the date the negotiations will start, depending on the implementations of the necessary reforms. Even if the date for the beginning of the negotiation talks is fixed next year, it has to be reminded that they can last a long time. However in the case of Macedonia, the negotiation talks may be shorter since Macedonia already has links with European politics. But they can also be suspended if the country does not comply with the accession criteria, as it was the case with Turkey. The conditions for integration will be the capacity of the country to implement necessary reforms.

Two elements can also play a role, but will not have much impact on Macedonia as far as EU integration is concerned. The first one is the possible turmoil the settlement of the Kosovo status could entail. It seems very unlikely that an independent Kosovo provokes new conflicts with Albanians. The modernization of country is having a positive contribution to the rest of the region; Macedonia has developed fairly good relationships with its neighbours and helps for the stabilization of the whole Balkan region. The status of Kosovo is a bilateral problem between Belgrade and Pristina, and in that sense Macedonian officials have stated the country would support any agreement that would be found between them. The conflict with Greece over the name remains a frustration for Macedonians. As an ongoing issue discussed in UN, EU would agree on any position between the two countries under United Nations. EU officials declared recently that the name dispute was not part of the conditions for organization accession. However Greece, as any member state, has the possibility to veto Macedonian accession. In late June Greece threatened to seek a veto on Macedonia's bid to join EU unless the name dispute was resolved in its favor. According to the latest poll conducted in June 2007, more than 80 percent of Greek citizens would block their neighbor's bid to join EU under name "Macedonia," while some 60 percent would block it regardless of which name it was registered under. But can Greece really afford it? The dispute over the name is a bilateral dispute, and moreover the integration of Greece in 1981 was made without the approval of the European Commission. Greece is one of Macedonia's greatest investors and the agreement found in 1995 on a temporary name for Macedonia allowed Macedonia to integrate other international institutions. Macedonia is in a better position now since most of the major world powers support Macedonia in the case or have demonstrated a complete lack of interest in the

dispute. Eventually, for some analysts, any attempt by Greece to block Macedonia's EU accession would be a major expenditure of political capital. In the end, Greece would be blamed for inhibiting the Euro-integration of the Balkans, especially since EU wants to make more credible the European policy to the Balkan people that are rather skeptic with the international promises.

The European Commission is not going to take risks and will only give a date for negotiation talks on the basis of a solid report on the progress made by Macedonia in implementing the criteria. The negotiation talks being based on a double system between an Intergovernmental Conference (member states) and the Commission, the member states need to be convinced that Macedonia is ready to enter so that the final decision, which requires the unanimity rule, does not compromise the whole process.

### ***Conclusion- Recommendations***

This comparison between France and Macedonia on the approach to enlargement shows that they do not – and cannot- have the same perceptions on the issue. As a non member state willing to join the EU club and in the process of reforms and transformations, Macedonia is willing to be given a clear sign that its efforts will be rewarded. For now the government is especially calling for the settlement of a date to open the negotiation talks, and hopes to be ready to access EU by 2010-2013. For the government, Macedonia is managing its transition well and is getting ready fast, and so find the perspective too far away, while many EU or foreign diplomats working in Macedonia are skeptical as to the reality of EU membership, and finds the EU perspective too close due to the complex and difficult situations met by the Balkans, including Macedonia. The Macedonian government thinks a too late settlement of a date would remove hope and motivation for Macedonia it its way to reform. A clear date could act as a focal point, an incentive for implementing reforms. As Miloski put it in March 2007, "the appeal of membership pushes us to adopt reforms and helps us keep the peace. Giving Macedonia a date to start our membership talks is a win-win for all. The EU internal process is unlikely to be impacted in any way by this decision, and yet, democracy, reforms, and economic progress in the region will win out in the long-run. By opening up to Macedonia the EU would send a positive signal to the region". Nikola Gruevski also underlined in October 2006 that "progress in Brussels toward EU membership was vital because it would encourage people in his country to support tough measures needed to revamp the economy and institutions required for admission to the elite club."

Instead of asking constantly for a date, the Macedonian government should focus on meeting the rigorous standards, each applicant country's performance being a condition for the pace of enlargement. As Michael Leigh, Director General of European Commission's DG for Enlargement, said in 2006, "applying a rigorous conditionality is for the benefit of all. It is the means for the EU to promote political, economic and administrative reforms in the candidate countries. (...)A well-functioning Union is in the interests of both present and future members. Therefore, the EU will and must remain firm in demanding that aspiring members fulfil all the requirements before they join". Of course much progress has been made since 2001, however the November Progress report of the commission has noted that the pace of reforms have slowed down in 2006. For Leigh, there are several priorities for the country: first, to ensure political consensus. Political leaders must work together in a spirit of consensus – which implies mutual concessions. Constructive and permanent dialogue among all political parties will be essential for adopting and implementing important political reforms and related legislation. Secondly, the country needs to go on implementing the necessary reforms in order to comply with the criteria.

Most importantly, the citizen has to be put at the centre of the political action and the national interest before any other interest. In that sense the Macedonian politics have to modernize. There should also be a general mobilization in every levels of society, since it is not only the government responsibility to lead reforms and start changing thins, but also the universities, the companies, the NGOs, associations etc. The way to Europe is an individual and collective responsibility, and in

Macedonia there is the feeling of a general lack of popular will in that sense. The necessary reforms to implement, whether economics, judicial, police, have to be seen primarily as a way to improve the daily life of citizens rather than a way to please the European Commission. The reforms of the economic, judicial, police systems should be encouraged by the citizens as a way for the life to improve. The perspective of integration should not be the first incentive for the implementation of such reforms. In that sense more pedagogic programs should be put into place in order for every people to understand the complexity of EU integration and the different parameters at stake. It would probably make them more involved in the general transformation of their country.

However there is much hope considering the new generation coming which is trained, more educated, seem to understand better the imperatives and are more prepared to bring Macedonia inside the EU. Moreover the general support for accession is likely to put pressure in order to make the necessary reforms.

As far as France is concerned, the image of Balkans does not correspond to reality, the Medias are talking about the region whenever there are fights, but the everyday life, the opening to modernity, is never treated. There is obviously a lack of information and education. It is necessary to cross a mental boundary as regards to the Balkans and stop imagining them as people always fighting. It is necessary to promote a better knowledge of Balkan countries in order to facilitate the enlargement process, and destroy stereotypes and preconceived ideas that are the basis of fears and reject of the unknown. Turkey is a different case since the parameters are different, it is not entirely in the European continent, the majority of its inhabitants are Muslims... Here information is also necessary but the issue at stake is different. While the Balkan countries are certain to integrate EU one day, the case of Turkey will depend on the approach taken by EU.

That is why the goal of the European project has to be defined clearly soon, in France but also in other western countries, otherwise further enlargement, especially to Turkey but also to the Balkans, shall be compromised if EU citizens are not clearly explained the motives and benefits for further enlargement. Some essential questions have to be answered: where EU is going to extend? Can EU with 27 or more countries become a global actor? Two main approaches can be defined: a visionary approach of those who think EU cannot become a global actor without Turkey, and a pragmatic approach of those who think a new enlargement would threaten the stability and the internal development of EU? On these two approaches, it's difficult to say which one is going to frame the future of Europe.

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